Wildwood



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Wildwood

Table of Contents

Preface 3
Product Summary 3
The Oath of the Hunt 3

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Forge 4
Seven Domains and their Masters 4
Races of the Forge 8
The Nature of the Forge 20

Chapter 2: An Overview of Wildwood 22
Arrival in Wildwood 22
General Features 25
Geography of Wildwood 26
Inhabitants of Wildwood 32
Venturing through Wildwood 34
Politics of Wildwood 38

Chapter 3: Ecology of Wildwood 41
Forests 41
Jungles 43
Coniferous Forests 44
Swamps 45
Caverns and Pits 47
Rivers and Lakes 47

Chapter 4: The Taming of the Wilderness 49
Pindara 50
Vertumnos 52
Boritarra 54
Penumbra 57
Canopus 58
Oppulammel 59
Tanastadt 60
Eringall 62
Edanne 62
Nagg-tuug 63
Sevenil & Vicinity 63

Chapter 5: The Forbidden Wilderness 65
The Witch's Marsh 65
Lake of Sorrow 68
The Charred Woods 70
The Scarlet Forest 72
The Dragons' Graveyard 75
Garden of Fasalai 78
The Crater of Haiel 80
The Grove of Naltanseera 82
The Stones of Blood 84
The Circle of the Weeping Trees 85
The Melodious Copse 86
Crescent Falls 86
Heart of the Nkoll 87
Runegates 87
The Dead Exchange 88

Chapter 6 Predators 89
Haiel 89
Mastuu Dargus 94
The Hexed 98
Tressen Gonaway 102
Molamort 105
Kansu Asammel 109
Maneau Galle 112
Vaam Ranasyr 114
Diamestress 116
Pimbattu 118
Razorclaw 119
Ishiraccan 121
Shatch Palinaggon 122

Chapter 7: Lost Civilizations 124
Peohautilan 124
Anawal 127
Thebbylar 130
Lashu Micho 132
Hsang-Tao 133
Monndant 133
Quaymong Monastery 134

Chapter 8: The Bounty of the Sea 136
The Northern Ocean 136
The Central Ocean 137
Lakes 137
Rivers 138

Chapter 9: The Thrill of the Hunt 141
The Mechanics of Hunting 144
Feats and Skills 149
Skills 150
Wilderness Equipment 151

Chapter 10: The Breadth of Life 154
Armamen 154
Bern 156
Musai 158
Ologatu 161
Urgoda 164
Prestige Racial Levels 166
Prestige Racial Levels 168
Gifts 180

Chapter 11: Symbiots 183
The Process 183
Harvest 185
Transplant 187
Acceptance 188
Benefits and Drawbacks 189
Appendages and Limbs 190
Bodily Organs 192
Sensory Organs 193
Structures 194
Conclusion 195

Chapter 12: The Belly of the Beasts 196
Adventure Background 196
Adventure Synopsis 196
Preparation 198
Scaling the Adventure 198

Adventure Hooks....198
Episode 1: An Intriguing Proposition....199
Episode 2: Into the Woods....204
Episode 3: River Alluun....206
Episode 4: Tamurasott....208
Episode 5: The Telesponder....210
Concluding the Adventure....212

Appendix A: Stats....214
Episode 1: The Mission Revealed....214
Episode 1: Foes Revealed....215
Episode 2: Under Attack....216
Episode 2: Hunting Party....216
Episode 3: River Alluun....216
Episode 4: Tamurasott....216
Episode 5: Telesponder....217

Appendix B: Core and Prestige Classes....218
Feral Warrior....218
Hunter....221
Pathfinder....223
Sekara....224

Appendix C: Spells and Magic Items....227
Spells....227
Magic Items....230

Appendix D: Monsters....235
Arboreal Defender (Template)....235
Bayowulf....Bayowulf Huntmaster 236
Bloodfrog....238
Coobachara....239
Maakantu....245
Nkoll (Wild)....246
Thageera....249

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Preface

Wildwood is a supplement for the *Oathbound* campaign setting published by Bastion Press. Although Wildwood is one of the Forge's seven domains, this supplement provides enough background material to run a Wildwood campaign without the core rulebook, *Oathbound: Domains of the Forge*, and any of the other campaign supplements including *Plains of Penance*, *Wrack & Ruin, Arena* and *Mysteries of Arena*. For GMs opting to choose this route, the subsequent chapter, **Introduction to the Forge**, provides the necessary information about the world of the Forge to effectively run a Wildwood campaign without the aforementioned products.

Wildwood is the Forge's second largest domain, a primeval world overrun by prolific vegetation and terrifying beasts. While sentient beings and the forces of civilization reign supreme in other domains, nature is the dominant power in the primordial jungle, forests and swamp of Wildwood. Feral creatures as well as its beleaguered humanoid population merely struggle to survive in a heartless world where even the fiercest predators eventually play the role of prey.

Millions of years ago, a coalition of potent deities imprisoned one of their divine enemies within the heart of a lifeless planet, forcing seven of his most wondrous and beloved creations to serve as his perpetual jailors. Sworn to remain here as part of their solemn oath, the diverse collection of beings known as the Black Flock languished in the barren world until they discovered their ability to transport all forms of living and inanimate matter onto the world of the Forge. Over the course of countless eons, they transformed the desolate landscape into the vibrant and diverse world known as the Forge.

The Oath of the Hunt

With vines and saplings we bind thee,
In forests of green shall you be.

A ring of trees to be your cage
Forever your wanton heart shall rage.
Where cruel instinct and blood lust roam
In this realm you'll make your home.

To chase, to hunt and then to kill
All for glory and the thrill
One the predator; the other prey
Nary the hunter rues the day.

Where life and death forever duel
Only the fittest here shall rule.

Product Summary

This sourcebook is divided into twelve chapters plus four appendices. Game masters are encouraged to read the entire book before beginning play, while players should avoid reading chapters four through seven inclusive.

Chapter 1 provides a brief overview of the world of the Forge, describing all seven domains and the Feathered Fowl lording over them. This chapter also provides a brief description and racial traits for many of the races from the core rulebook as well as the supplements. This chapter is primarily intended to serve as a resource for GM's utilizing this sourcebook as a stand-alone campaign.

Chapter 2 presents a sweeping overview of Wildwood describing its terrain, inhabitants, politics and relations with its neighbors. It also provides a cursory introduction to Haiel, the overlord of Wildwood.

Chapter 3 discusses the flora, fauna and hazards encountered in each of the six varying ecosystems.

Chapter 4 highlights several of the important settlements along with a number of lesser towns and cities.

Chapter 5 details specific wilderness areas that defy the laws of nature. Commonly referred to as the Forbidden Wilderness, these tracts of land exhibit unique properties not found elsewhere in Haiel's kingdom.

Chapter 6 outlines the most powerful predators inhabiting Wildwood explaining their role within the ecosystem as well as describing their territories and lairs.

Chapter 7 describes some of the abandoned civilizations found scattered throughout Wildwood.

Chapter 8 provides a concise overview of Wildwood's four rivers and two lakes as well as a brief discussion regarding the two oceans bordering the immense landmass.

Chapter 9 explains new mechanics to adjudicate wilderness pursuits along with a new attack form, twelve feats and a catalog of wilderness equipment.

Chapter 10 presents five new PC races and prestige racial levels, which replace the prestige races, along with a host of new arrival and earned gifts for characters dwelling within Wildwood.

Chapter 11 details the mechanics and consequences of transplanting living tissue from one being to another.

Chapter 12 is a freestanding adventure that takes characters from the northern settlement of Penumbra into the coniferous forest in search of a lost civilization and its wondrous treasure.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Forge

"A host of men, women and children suddenly appeared with mouths agape and terror in their eyes. Bewildered and frightened, their blank facial expressions belied their horror as the familiar, yet inexplicably unfamiliar streets and buildings of their mighty city now teemed with all manner of foul, ravenous beasts. The unspeakable carnage was swift as blood pooled in the streets as rain after a mighty storm."

-- Arax Woll, a druid describing the destruction of Izymar.

Unlike countless other worlds, the Forge is not the product of an orderly natural progression or the culmination of eons of evolutionary development. While these processes undoubtedly exert some influence over the planet and its inhabitants, the driving force behind its creation, transformation and maturation are the seven divergent individuals that lord over the vast landscape. Blessed with virtual omnipotence, this eclectic assembly of unusual creatures fashion their domains in accordance with their divergent wills. Known as the Black Flock, these four-horned, vaguely humanoid beings with large, feathery wings are entrusted not only with the mastery of their unique kingdoms but also with a far more important task.

In a distant epoch before the dawn of recorded history, a potent deity threatened the order of the universe. As the expanse of his dominion increased exponentially, so did the jealousy of his divine rivals. Seeking to put an end to the god's ambitious plans, his almighty enemies banded together and set about the daunting task of destroying all that he had created. With methodical precision, they obliterated all of his worlds before confining their beaten adversary to a lifeless, rocky prison at the heart of his plane. To ensure his perpetual incarceration, his jailors constructed seven mighty citadels to function as magical locks barring his escape. Naturally, his captors needed potent guardians to maintain his bonds; therefore they forcibly compelled seven of his most trusted and favored servants, (the Black Flock or the Feathered Fowl as they are sometimes known by), to uphold an oath to eternally defend each of their appointed citadels. After acquiescing to the exacting terms of their solemn vows, the gods placed their inanimate physical bodies within the heart of each of these ominous structures before granting them virtually limitless power through their avatars.

For seemingly incalculable millenniums, the Feathered Fowl remained confined to their own penitentiaries within their barren and desolate fiefdoms. However, ceaseless boredom and a longing for freedom prompted some of them to carefully scrutinize the wording of their complex oaths, and over time they discovered a critical flaw that enabled them to shape the very fabric of their domain and perhaps culminate in their eventual liberation. The Great Oath allowed them to import creatures and objects from other worlds into their realms. In short order, the seven members of the Black Flock began to populate their kingdoms with a diverse array of life closely mirroring their personalities and motivations, transforming the Forge from a bleak, dead planet into a vibrant contrast of differing environments and inhabitants. From the humble beginnings spawned by this magnificent revelation, the Forge steadily evolved into its current incarnation.



Illustrated by Terry Pavlet

Seven Domains and their Masters

Blessed with the astounding ability to craft a world in the likeness of their perceived images, the topographical, ecological and climactic conditions of each domain bestows valuable insight into the thoughts and desires of the entity responsible for its creation. Similarly, the political, economic and religious institutions established by the Black Flock's subjects reinforce the traits displayed by the landscape itself. In most cases, the unique evolution of each realm is hardly accidental but rather part of a grand design to either acquire freedom from the bonds of the Great Oath or to serve some other ulterior purpose. Regardless of the motivation, the persona and goals of each of the Feathered Fowls serves as

the impetus for the development of their individual kingdoms.

Anvil

The dominion of Orif'elle, the scourge of the wind, Anvil is a rugged, inhospitable land constantly bombarded by the ravages of turbulent weather. Howling winds and violent lightning storms constantly race across the rugged, mountainous terrain, forcing all but a handful of gargantuan residents, such as its giants and dragons to seek refuge in subterranean cities wracked by devastating earthquakes of epic proportions. Its land mass is not the only terrain under constant siege from the elements as its oceanic regions are also tormented by the relentless pounding of massive waves capable of easily capsizing even the largest sea vessels.

Considered the most powerful member of the Black Flock, Orif'elle is the prodigy of Israfel and the captive god confined to the core of the planet. Before the imprisonment of her divine father, she served as the Bringer of the Storm, a role that she still performs with great zeal. The aloof mistress of the winds shows little regard for her subjects except for a small but powerful sect commonly referred to as the Stormbringers. Through her intervention, she plans to transform the tiny band of beings into copies of herself so that one of their ranks may someday replace her as Anvil's ruler and thus sunder her bonds.

Arena

The largest of the seven domains, Arena is a massive desert of red sand interspersed with numerous oases. Immense armies of sentient beings wage ceaseless wars on its crimson dunes in an effort to control its limited supplies of water as well as acquire the vast deposits of gold, silver, platinum and other precious metals buried beneath the earth. Avaricious warlords stand at the helm of these gigantic military machines, bringing untold carnage and savagery to the battle scarred landscape. It is a realm where combat prowess and unbridled ambition reign supreme much to the delight of the attentive mistress of battle presiding over the brutal festivities.

From her iron citadel rising high above the murky depths of the Sea of Tears, Barbello, the impetuous ruler of Arena pulls soldiers from countless worlds onto the bloody dunes of her desolate wasteland. Also known as the Mask of Fury, the impulsive prodigy of Israfel and the bound god endlessly strives to fashion a mighty warrior capable of supplanting her position by creating an atmosphere of perpetual violence and savagery. Utterly bereft of subtlety, Barbello seems incapable of concocting the intricate machinations commonly associated with her manipulative mother. Instead, she frequently acts according to her whims, a personality flaw that often leads to disastrous consequences.

Eclipse

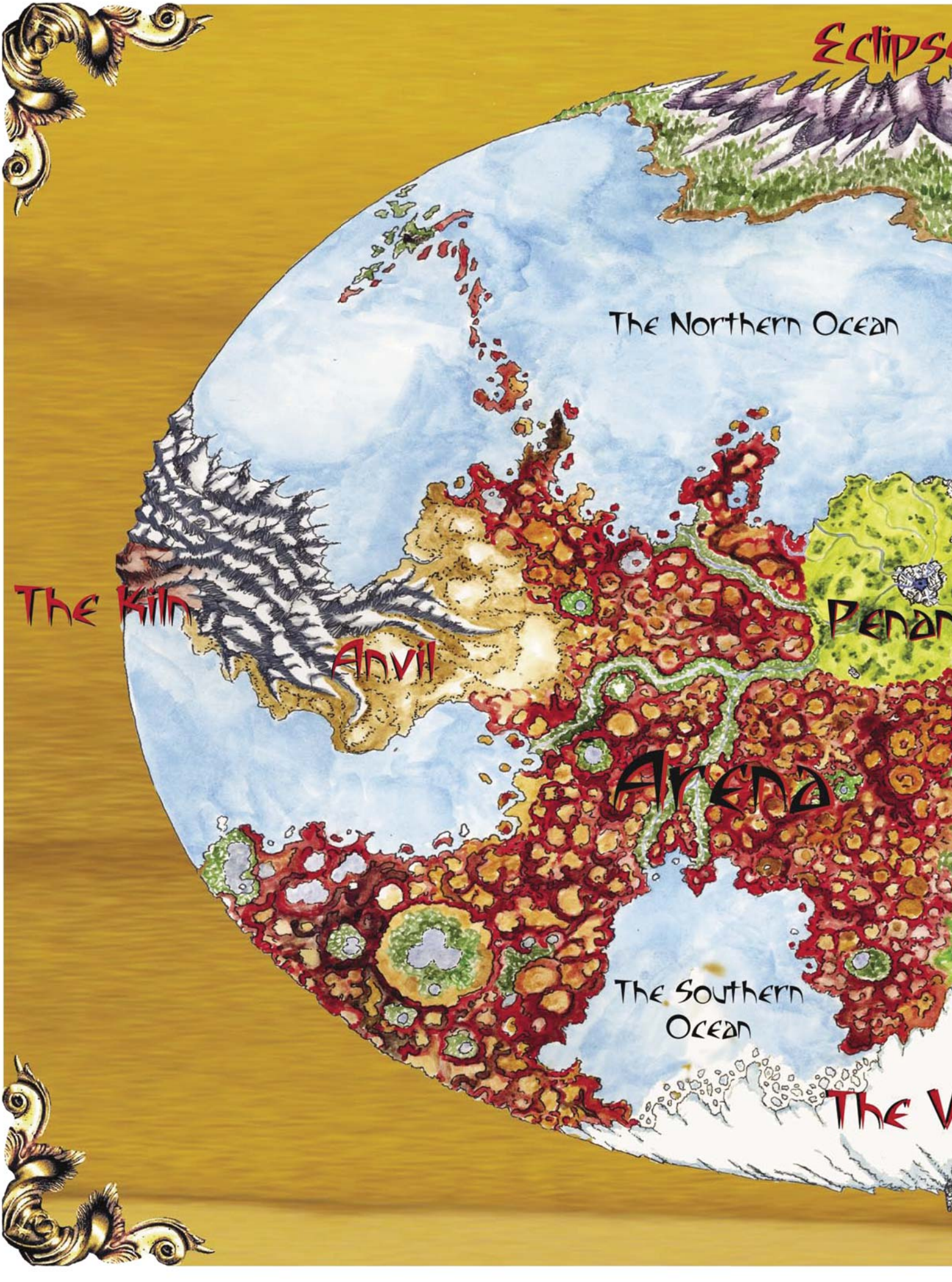
Bathed in perpetual darkness, the rocky, largely subterranean realm was formed when the rust moon wrenched itself from the planet's surface leaving behind a gaping crater that became Eclipse. The realm is completely inaccessible to other areas of the Forge except for a few winding, cavernous passageways and deep underwater caves leading to Wildwood and Arena respectively. Because of the total absence of light, Eclipse is the only domain bereft of humanity; however the population of its settlements is only exceeded by those found in Penance. Races capable of seeing under these conditions dominate the cities where nearly every resident engages in thievery in an effort to survive. Not surprisingly, the greatest of these cutthroats also became the master of this nefarious domain.

The being currently known as Colopitiron is the only mortal to usurp one of the Feathered Fowl from their illustrious position. Known as Annoxus during his mortal life, the daring rogue destroyed the original Colopitiron and inherited his fate as well as the continuously dark domain of Eclipse. Still uncomfortable with the notion of immortality, the cunning and cruel Colopitiron revels in his former pleasures, freely taking material riches and lovers from the ranks of his downtrodden subjects. Unlike his counterparts, the master of Eclipse rarely pulls outsiders into his domain and instead focuses his attention on acquiring aesthetic treasures rather than powerful magical artifacts and weapons.

The Kiln

Easily the smallest and most isolated of the seven domains, the Kiln is a volcanic land plagued by jarring earthquakes and cataclysmic eruptions. Completely surrounded by the inhospitable domain of Anvil, the remote realm is shrouded in mystery and intrigue. The overwhelming majority of its population is confined to the surface cities found in the shallow waters of the Central Ocean along the southern coastline. Highly competitive and territorial, these rival civilizations continually vie against one another for the region's limited and extremely coveted resources. However, a much smaller society of monks and other individuals seeking wisdom and enlightenment reside in close proximity to the volcanic stronghold of the Forge's most reclusive and cerebral member of the Black Flock.

Bathkol is the enigmatic ruler of the isolated domain of the Kiln. While the other members of the Black Flock endeavor to sunder the physical bonds tying them to the Forge, the hermetic Feathered Fowl's psyche has apparently achieved what his body failed to do. His enlightened mind wanders through the universe of endless possibilities on a quest to attain a higher state of consciousness beyond the realm of the tangible world. Whether he has accomplished this task remains the subject of intense debate since no one has seen Bathkol for nearly a thousand years.


Eclipse
The Northern Ocean
The Kiln
Anvil
Penan
Arena
The Southern Ocean
The V


Wildwood
Anvil
The Kiln
The Central Ocean

Penance

The most populous domain of the Forge, Penance is a sprawling land of forests and grasslands dominated by the immense, cosmopolitan city bearing its name. Boasting a citizenry of nearly forty million residents, Penance is a bustling metropolis divided into numerous political entities known as bloodholds. In accordance with a strict set of laws laid down by Queen Israfel, the Feathered Fowl responsible for the creation and maintenance of Penance, individuals referred to as bloodlords exert political authority over the inhabitants dwelling within these territories. Beyond the walls of the great city, the fertile domain sports an eclectic array of smaller settlements, pristine woodlands and vast tracts of cultivated farmland.

The wife of the nameless god, Queen Israfel is the most influential member of the Black Flock. She discovered the loophole that allowed her and her counterparts to import living beings and objects from other worlds onto the Forge and uses it to her best advantage. Yet, unlike her compatriots, Israfel not only desires her freedom but she also longs for the day when she and her beloved husband are reunited. In furtherance of this end, Israfel seeks out seeds displaying the personality traits she deems most important including ambition, charisma, wit and a burning desire to succeed irrespective of the cost.

The Vault

Previously known as the domain of the Glimmer, the actions of a malevolent being transformed the once bright and vibrant landscape into a frigid wasteland. A few isolated tribes of barbarous humanoids eke out a meager living along the domain's coastal areas; however most of the icy terrain is inhabited by the Warlocks, the undead servants of the Vault's lifeless master, Nemamiah. This assembly of liches ceaselessly toils under the direction of their benefactor in an effort to fabricate a mystical artifact capable of ending Nemamiah's miserable existence.

The oldest member of the Black Flock, Nemamiah previously served as the Charioteer of the Sun presiding over a lush and fertile landscape. However, a deranged madman ended his idyllic existence when he shattered the mirrors bestowing light and warmth to Nemamiah's paradise. The transformation of his domain also shattered the will of its master. Unable to bear the devastation wrought by the actions of a lunatic, the broken Feathered Fowl now known as the Leper desires nothing other than his own destruction.

Wildwood

While the Vault serves as the realm of the dead, Wildwood is its antithesis. Life abounds in the verdant domain as countless predators roam through its lush woodlands in the daily ritual of the hunt. Its forests and jungles teem with endless varieties of insects, animals, beasts and plants imported from a plethora of alien worlds by its aloof overlord Haiel.

Before the imprisonment of the bound god, Haiel served as the Defender of Nature, a role that greatly influenced the metamorphosis of his domain. Haiel's motivations and outlook as well as Wildwood's inhabitants are discussed in much greater detail later in this sourcebook.

Races of the Forge

Imbued with the ability to rip a multitude of beings from their indigenous environment, the Black Flock has populated the Forge with countless races pulled from an assortment of alien worlds. The overwhelming majority of them are confined to remote, isolated corners of the world; however an elite handful of hardy specimens have managed to thrive in the wildly diverse living conditions of the varying domains. This section is intended to provide GM's and players unfamiliar with the Oathbound® setting enough information to use these races in a Wildwood campaign. More complete descriptions appear in Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge* as well as the subsequent sourcebooks; however these entries have also been updated to comply with the 3.5 version of the *PHB, DMG* and *MM*. (Thorns and wild frey initially appeared in Oathbound: *Plains of Penance*, while vogels are found in Oathbound: *Arena*.) Chapter 10 provides more detailed examples of races exclusive to Wildwood.

Racial Levels

In lieu of gaining experience in a particular character class, some individuals pursue a divergent path through the discovery and refinement of their previously latent abilities and talents. Many of these remarkable powers are the result of genetic programming; whereas others are attributable to countless generations of cultural indoctrination. If a character opts to venture down this less traveled road, he acquires new skills and traits unique to his people. Many of the races presented in this sourcebook have three racial levels. Mechanically, racial levels are identical to class levels with two crucial exceptions. They must be attained when the character starts his adventuring career, and once an individual gains a class level, he cannot acquire additional racial levels. For instance, a frey with two racial levels decides to become a wizard. He is now a 2nd level frey, 1st level wizard. Because he has acquired a class level, he can never become a 3rd level frey. Unlike typical classes, the embodiment of one's inner being is a single-minded pursuit.

Asherake

This aggressive species of winged humanoids are the dominant race of Arena, comprising roughly 15% of the warmongering domain's total population. They fill many important positions within the ranks of the violent realm's multitudinous armies, often serving as elite shock troops or front line officers. An elite handful led by the mighty Grand Asherake has

Asherake Racial Levels

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+1	+1	+0	Dive bomber
2nd	+2	+1	+1	+1	Blood feast
3rd	+3	+2	+2	+1	Go for the kill

even attained the coveted title of warlord. Although they are most often encountered on the crimson sands of Barbello's bloodthirsty realm, they are also found in significantly lesser numbers in the forested regions bordering the neighboring domains of Anvil, Penance and Wildwood. The average asherake stands approximately 7 ½ feet tall and weighs 300 pounds. Physically, they sport an odd combination of avian, feline and humanoid traits. They have a humanoid body shape with a clearly defined torso, two arms, two legs and a head; however their humanoid similarities primarily end there. Like a bird of prey they have a colorful pair of immense feathered wings that protrudes from their upper back while their feet are little more than stumpy, clawed talons. Affixed to the base of the spine is a slender, furry tail similar to a lion's tail. Wickedly sharp claws are attached to the ends of their fingers, yet their hands are capable of grasping and manipulating objects with astounding precision. The asherake's skull resembles that of a predatory cat with some notable differences. Its facial features are far more angular and elongated than a typical feline, and it also has eight pointed horns of varying shapes and sizes jutting out from the top of its head. As a result of these divergent traits, it is impossible to accurately pinpoint the asherake's ancestry.



Outlook: Blessed with tremendous strength and agility, asherakes readily assert their physical superiority in their relationships with other humanoids. Renowned for their barbarous cruelty and martial ideologies, asherakes thrive by instilling fear in their potential rivals. Most of their fellow humanoids intensely dislike them; however their remarkable combat prowess and intimidating demeanor earn them a measure of respect from their typically outmatched opponents. In accordance with their grim perspective of the world, the overwhelming majority of asherakes pay little, if any attention to deities, although a small percentage of those in the armies of Arena come to profess their faith in the militaristic gods of their comrades in arms.

Names: Building upon the preceding philosophy, asherakes typically assume fearsome sounding names with little emphasis on the individual's familial origins. In addition to their given monikers, many also adopt a terrifying nickname describing one or more of their unique traits such as "the fleshshredder" or "neckripper".

Male Names: Grashnak, Karanth, Brundlag, Threklin.

Female Names: Krintarka, Jarlenda, Nanfel, Sheilon.

Clan Names: Lakratakk, Skydark, Fury's Fel, Bloodrain, Fearcaller.

Racial Traits:

- Asherakes gain a +2 to Dexterity and Strength, while suffering a -2 penalty to Charisma and Intelligence.
- They are considered Large creatures, suffering a -1 penalty to AC and attack rolls as well as a -4 penalty to Hide checks. Their base speed is 30 ft. and their fly speed is 60 ft. (average). Their space/reach is 10 ft./5 ft.
- Asherakes are monstrous humanoids.
- Darkvision 60 ft.
- Not proficient with armor or weapons.
- +3 natural armor bonus
- Scent
- The asherake's two claws deal 1d6 points of damage, while its bite inflicts 1d8 points of damage. These attacks are considered natural weapons. The asherake's claw attacks are its primary weapons while its bite is its secondary weapon.
- Asherakes reach middle age at 40, old age at 60 and venerable at 80.
- P*acial Hit Dice*: Asherakes start with two levels of monstrous humanoid giving them 2d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +2 and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +0, Ref +3 and Will +3.
- *Racial Skills*: An asherake's monstrous humanoid levels bestow 5 x (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) skill points. Its class skills are Intimidate, Listen, Spot and Survival.
- *Racial Feats*: The asherake's two monstrous humanoid levels give it one feat.
- *Automatic Languages*: Avian and Battlespeak; Bonus Languages: select from Ceptu, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Goblin and Orc.
- Level Adjustment +2
- *Favored Class*: Barbarian

According to the race's archetypical beliefs, armor and weapons are the implements of the weak. The asherake's potent natural weaponry and rigid skin are another example of his supremacy in comparison to his innately defenseless humanoid foes. Asherakes taking racial levels embrace the savage, bestial nature of their distant ancestors, reveling in the blissful delight of

Illustrated by Jeremy Jarvis

tearing their enemies apart with their wickedly sharp claws and powerful jaws.

Hit die: d10

Skill points at each racial level: 2 + Int bonus

Racial Skills: Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (geography)(Arena), Knowledge (history)(Arena), Knowledge (local)(Arena), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Weapon and armor proficiency: Asherakes espouse the virtues of fighting with their natural weaponry; therefore they gain no armor, shield or weapon proficiencies.

Dive bomber (Ex): The terrifying sight of an infuriated asherake hurtling from the sky toward an opponent is enough to give pause to even the most courageous warriors. They can make a dive attack, which is identical to a charge except that the asherake must be airborne, move a minimum of 30 feet and descend at least ten feet. (Because this attack functions as a charge, the asherake cannot move after attacking.) When performing a dive, the asherake can only attack with his claws; however a successful hit deals double damage (2d6 points of damage). Whenever an asherake makes a dive attack, his opponent must make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ asherake's HD + his Cha modifier [treat a negative Charisma modifier as a positive modifier]); otherwise the opponent is Cowering for the remainder of the round, is unable to take actions, suffers a -2 penalty to AC and loses his Dex bonus to AC (if applicable). An opponent that makes a successful Will save against this ability is immune to its effects for the remainder of the encounter even if a different asherake attacks him. This is a mind-affecting fear effect; therefore creatures immune to mind-affecting attacks or fear ignore the effects of this ability.

Blood feast (Ex): Whenever an asherake hits the same opponent with both claws during the same attack sequence, the asherake gains a +2 bonus to his attack roll with his bite attack. If his bite attack hits; it deals double damage. Any benefits gained from this ability disappear at the end of the asherake's turn.

Go for the kill (Ex): Whenever an asherake scores a critical hit that deals maximum damage, he can immediately take an extra attack against that opponent, using the same attack bonus as the attack that scored the critical hit. He can only take this extra attack against the same target as his previous attack, and he can only utilize this ability for attacks made during his turn. Furthermore, he can only receive the benefits of this ability as the result of a die roll; therefore any spell or spell-like effect that causes him to automatically deal maximum damage does not satisfy the prerequisites for the usage of this ability.

Dover

Dovers are noble, bipedal canines with a profound love of nature. Most dovers instinctively gravitate toward the primeval forests and jungles of Wildwood where they comprise the largest percentage of the domain's humanoid population, whereas the minority settles in the tamer woodlands of Anvil or the cosmopolitan centers of Penance. Many humanoids believe that they are an intelligent offshoot of the common wolf or an evolved form of werewolf based upon their lupine facial features and their highly sociable nature. Dovers are a unique synthesis of humanoid and canine physiology. Dovers walk upright, and they have opposable thumbs; however the remainder of their anatomy is distinctly canine. A thick layer of fur, usually brown or black in color, covers their entire body including their stubby, seemingly vestigial tail. In contrast to their delicately structured hands and dexterous digits, the dovers' feet are very similar to a wolf's paw. These distinctly different appendages enable them to enjoy the benefits attributable to both species, allowing the dover to grasp and manipulate objects with his humanoid hands while his nimble paws grant him added traction and speed when moving through wilderness areas. The typical dover reaches a height of 5 ½ feet and weighs around 140 pounds.

Outlook: Dovers are generally tolerant of other races, and not surprisingly, most other creatures reciprocate their benign attitudes. Regardless of whether they are currently taking up residence in an untamed forest or in the heart of a bustling city, the preservation of the natural world is a focal point in the lives of nearly all dovers. At some point during their lives, dovers throughout the Forge make the arduous trek to the race's cultural and spiritual center, the fabled settlement of Pindara deep in the forest of central Wildwood. Here they pay homage to their race's wondrous achievements and to their revered deity, Vaaldaru, the goddess of the green. Her most devout worshippers embody her oxymoronic mantra, "peaceful aggression overcomes violence and oppression".

Names: Family names are extremely important in dover culture. The achievements or failings of one's ancestors have an important bearing on the individual's status in their society. The most renowned families keep extensive written journals recording their lineage's greatest deeds and heroic acts. Conversely, dovers hailing from families with a checkered past face a lifetime of shame and degradation from their peers.

Male Names: Alagor, Manyon, Odyar, Zallon.

Female Names: Celon, Grenis, Megaera, Quiyona.

Clan Names: Khan, Tasmon.

Racial Traits:

- Dovers are Medium creatures; therefore their attack rolls and AC are unaffected by their size. Their base speed is 30 ft.
- Dovers are humanoids (canine).
- +4 racial bonus to Listen checks
- The dover's bite delivers 1d6 points of damage and is considered a natural weapon.
- Dovers are born ambidextrous; therefore they automatically start their careers with the Two-Weapon Fighting feat even if they do not meet the feat's prerequisites.

Dover Racial Levels

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+1	+0	Dodge projectiles
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+0	Apprehensive
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+1	Versatility

- Scent
- Dovers reach middle age at 32, old age at 48 and venerable at 64.
- *Automatic Languages*: Canine; Bonus Languages: select from Common, Draconic, Druidic, Elven, Feline, Green, Gnoll, and Sylvan.
- *Favored Class*: Ranger

Dovers embracing the tenets of their racial ideologies combine their affinity for nature with their noble and culturally sophisticated tendencies. While most dovers opt to pursue careers as rangers or druids, those following this uncommon path are equally at home in an untamed wilderness or in the regal court of a pompous monarch.

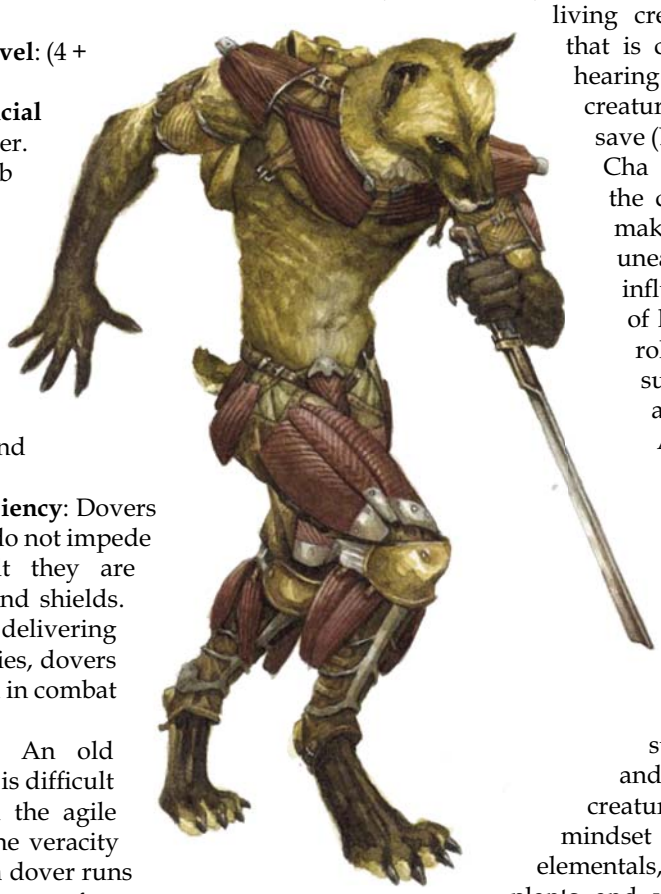
Hit die: d8

Skill points at 1st racial level: (4 + Intelligence modifier) x 4.

Skill points at higher racial levels: 4 + Intelligence modifier.

Racial class skills: Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).

Weapon and armor proficiency: Dovers favor protective devices that do not impede their mobility. As a result they are proficient with light armor and shields. Although they are capable of delivering a powerful bite to their enemies, dovers can wield any simple weapon in combat without penalty.



Dodge Projectiles (Ex): An old adage rightfully claims that it is difficult to hit a moving target, and the agile dover undoubtedly proves the veracity of this statement. Whenever a dover runs through an area with any degree of cover, regardless of whether it is in a wilderness or urban setting, the dover retains his Dexterity bonus to AC. Ultimately, the GM must determine if a particular locale meets this qualification, but as a general rule, any site with natural or manmade obstacles, such as trees, bushes, rocks, buildings or furniture, satisfies the criteria. In addition, a dover that moves at least 30 ft. during his turn can negate a successful ranged attack made against him as long as he is in an area that provides cover as described previously, and he is aware of the attack. To do so, the dover makes a Reflex save using the successful attack roll as the Difficulty Class. If he makes his Reflex save, the damage is negated. He must declare his intention to use this ability immediately after being hit, and he is only entitled to one Reflex save per successful hit. He can utilize this ability two times per day plus an additional number of times equal to his racial level; therefore a 2nd level dover can dodge projectiles up to four times per day.

Apprehensive (Ex): Dovers are renowned for keeping their cool even under the most extreme conditions. A number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier, the character can attempt to diffuse a tense situation through a combination of body language, universally recognized gestures and verbal communication. (A dover with a Charisma modifier of 0 or less, can still utilize apprehensive once per day.) This ability is effective against a designated living creature within 30 feet that is capable of seeing and hearing him. The affected creature must make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ his HD + his Cha modifier); otherwise the dover's mere presence makes him tremendously uneasy. While under the influence of this ability, all of his attack and damage rolls against the dover suffer a -2 penalty. In addition, the opponent's AC and saving throws also receive a -2 penalty against the dover's attacks. These penalties remain in effect for 1d4 + 3 rounds. Apprehensive has no effect against non-living creatures such as constructs and undead or against creatures with an alien mindset such as aberrations, elementals, oozes, outsiders, plants and vermin. Initiating this ability requires a standard action, but it does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Apprehensive is a mind-affecting attack.

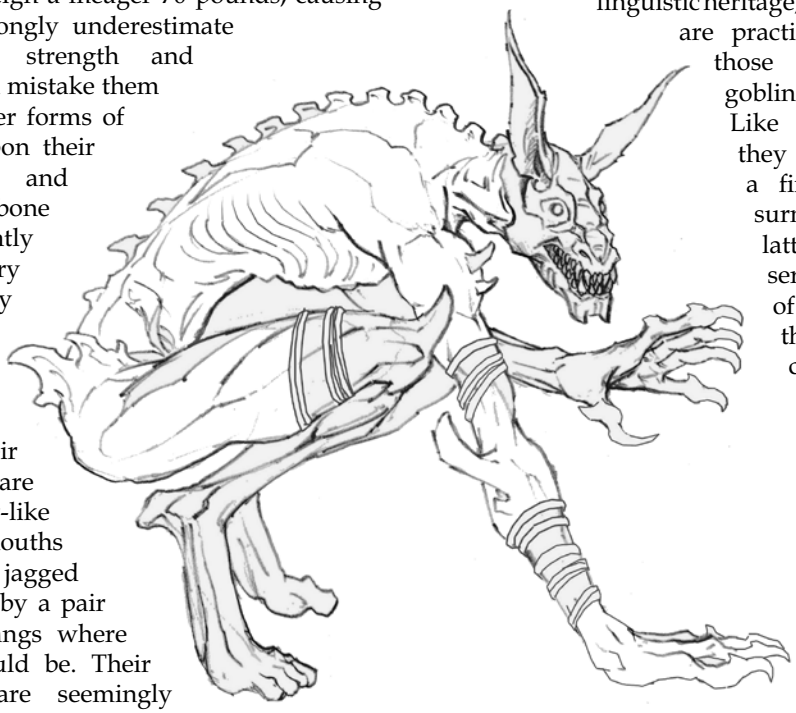
Versatility (Ex): Up to six times per day, the dover can double his ability modifier to any die roll; hence a dover with a +2 Strength modifier instead adds +4 to

Illustrated by Jeremy Jarvis

any attack or damage roll as a result of versatility. He must declare his intention to use this ability prior to making the die roll, and the usage of this ability counts toward his daily allotment regardless of the die roll's outcome.

Faust

This race of dark-skinned, gaunt humanoids predominately dwells in the forests of central and northern Wildwood, while a small percentage makes its abode within Penance proper and to a lesser degree, its sprawling Wrack. They stand roughly 4 ½ feet tall and weigh a meager 70 pounds, causing many foes to wrongly underestimate their surprising strength and agility. Some even mistake them for wights or other forms of undead based upon their feral appearance and the protrusion of bone through their tightly wrapped, leathery flesh. Although they are undoubtedly bipeds, their anatomy is more bestial than humanoid. Their fingers and toes are tipped by dagger-like claws, and their mouths are filled with jagged teeth highlighted by a pair of interlocking fangs where their molars should be. Their facial features are seemingly carved from a block of stone with prominent ridges and deep fissures. Strangely, their cartilaginous ears always remain in an upright position. Most humanoid races do not hold fausts in high regard, viewing them as conniving and evil. However, they are well-suited for a variety of nefarious tasks, making them a desirable commodity for those in need of such services. Extreme caution is strongly advised to anyone considering entering into such a business arrangement with this sly and crafty race of beings.



Outlook: Despite the commonly held perceptions of the faust as a wicked, untrustworthy race, they generally view themselves as opportunistic entrepreneurs simply performing the bidding of others for a handsome fee. In fact, they actually prefer the company of outsiders to their own kin, a surprising trait undoubtedly born from their fiercely territorial nature. Despite their ability to coexist with other sentient beings, their reputation for treachery is often well deserved. They are exceptionally exacting in their interpretation of their employer's instructions and frequently construe even the slightest faux pas as a terrible insult. Anyone inciting the ire of a faust is virtually guaranteed to meet a swift end courtesy of a precisely placed blade to the heart.

Names: Faust speak an archaic form of Goblin emphasizing the guttural and gloomy sounds common to this ancient tongue. As a result of their linguistic heritage, many faust names are practically identical to those shared by their goblin counterparts. Like most humanoids, they typically have a first name and a surname with the latter moniker also serving the purpose of distinguishing the individual's clan affiliation.

Male Names: Chukuz, Galak, Thorsh, Yorn

Female Names: Doriem, Florn, Sorada, Velmeda

Clan Names: Mabon, Nathrash

Racial Traits:

- Faust gain a +4 to Dexterity and a +2 to Strength.
- They are considered Medium creatures; therefore their size does not affect their AC or attack rolls. They have a base speed of 40 ft.
- Faust are humanoids (goblinoids).
- Darkvision 60 ft.
- +4 natural armor bonus
- +4 racial bonus to Hide, Listen and Move Silently checks.
- The faust's two claws deal 1d8 points of damage, while its bite inflicts 2d4 points of damage. These attacks are treated as natural weapons. The claws are considered its primary weapon while its bite is its secondary weapon.
- Faust reach middle age at 50, old age at 75 and venerable at 100.
- *Automatic Languages*: Goblin; Bonus Languages: select from Canine, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnoll, Gnome, Green and Sylvan.
- Level Adjustment +2

Faust Racial Levels

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Twist words
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+1	Nightstalker
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+2	Cunning

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- *Favored Class*: Rogue

None of the more commonly encountered races has been altered more by the nature of the Forge than the faust. This observation leads many to falsely presume that they are incapable of acquiring racial levels; however the extremely versatile and highly adaptable race predictably proves its critics wrong.

Hit die: d6

Skill points at 1st racial level: (6 + Intelligence modifier) x 4.

Skill points at higher racial levels: 6 + Intelligence modifier.

Racial class skills: Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (local)(Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str) and Tumble (Dex).



Weapon and armor proficiency: Faust place an emphasis on stealth and mobility; therefore they are proficient with light armor. Furthermore, they prefer attacking enemies with their natural weaponry, but they are also proficient with simple weapons.

Twist Words (Ex): Faust are renowned for their uncanny knack to manipulate language for their betterment. Whenever a faust makes a skill check that requires verbal communication such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information and Intimidate, he simultaneously rolls two d20's and uses the better result. A faust can use this ability three times per day plus one for every racial level that he has acquired; therefore a 3rd level faust can twist words six times per day. Twist words requires that the target can hear the faust and is capable of understanding what he is saying.

Nightstalker (Ex): Accustomed to operating in the complete absence of light, faust are highly skilled at seeing, moving and attacking opponents in the dark. The range of their darkvision is doubled to 120 feet, and they receive a +2 circumstance bonus to their Hide and Move Silently skills while immersed in darkness in addition to a +2 circumstance bonus to their melee attack rolls against an opponent also cloaked in darkness. The faust receive the bonus to their skill checks and attack rolls for the duration of the encounter. The faust only receive the aforementioned circumstance bonuses if his opponent does not possess darkvision or another means of detecting his presence such as blindsight or the spell *true seeing*. In addition, he does not receive the benefits of this ability if he is also incapable of seeing; hence a blinded faust or a faust enveloped in magical darkness does not gain the +1 circumstance bonus to skill checks and attack rolls.

Cunning (Ex): Faust are highly unpredictable, making it extremely difficult for enemies to get a read on their intentions. Faust can often catch an opponent off-guard, instantaneously turning a jovial conversation into a life and death struggle. Three times per day, the faust can use his Bluff check in place of his normal initiative check, if he has spent at least one round interacting with his opponents in a non-combat situation. Because this ability relies on verbal interaction between the faust and his potential adversaries, he cannot utilize cunning when combating non-intelligent creatures. He must declare his intention to use this ability prior to rolling any dice. If he has the feat Improved Initiative, he still adds the +4 bonus from this feat to his die roll. The faust must be the initiator when using this ability; hence he cannot use employ cunning if he is surprised or otherwise unable to act first.

Frey & Wild Frey

This race of bipedal felines comes in two closely related but distinctly different varieties, frey and wild frey. The highly social frey are well suited to urban environments as well as the wilderness areas surrounding humanoid settlements such as the expansive plains of Penance and the rolling foothills of Anvil. Frey comprise a substantial portion of Penance's population and account for roughly 15% of Anvil total population with significantly lesser numbers found in the unruly domain of Wildwood. The average frey stands roughly 3 ft. tall, weighs 35 pounds and resembles a domesticated housecat. On the other hand, their much larger, wild cousins are better acclimated to the primordial woodlands of Penance and Wildwood. More akin to their predatory ancestors, wild frey reach a height of 5 ft., tip the scales at approximately 120 pounds and look very similar to a leopard.

Outlook: Despite their common lineage, frey and wild frey display completely different perceptions of their world. Frey care little about the accumulation

Frey Racial Levels

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Curiosity
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+1	Independent
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+2	Nine Lives

Illustrated by Jeremy Jarvis

Wild Frey Racial Levels

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+1	+1	+0	Chase
2nd	+2	+1	+1	+1	Improved Trip
3rd	+3	+2	+2	+1	Pounce

of earthly riches or temporal power, but are instead consumed by insatiable curiosity and a rugged sense of independence. Even extreme danger fails to dissuade the frey from gaining a better understanding of their surroundings in their ceaseless quest for discovery, although frey adventurers exercise a surprisingly high measure of caution and strategic planning in the face of grave peril. Despite their disdain for rules and authority, they are loyal to their most trusted friends even if their devotion results in their death.

In stark contrast, the fiercely individualistic wild frey are more akin to their predatory relatives like lions and tigers than intelligent humanoids. Hunting, sleeping and mating are the overriding concerns in their lives, yet they are also driven by an instinctual need to preserve the sanctity of their feral habitat against incursions from the forces of civilization. Consistent with their unfavorable attitude toward humanoid society, wild frey do not establish settlements and typically lead a solitary existence in the trees. In an effort to preserve their nomadic lifestyle, wild frey have forged an unlikely alliance with the thorns, a sentient species of plant that commonly shares their environment with the bestial cats. The origin of this strange partnership is steeped in mystery, but there is no denying that the symbiotic relationship works for the betterment of both races.

Names: Frey typically possess a clan name, often describing a prominent physical, familial trait in addition to a more lighthearted given name. Similarly wild frey also possess a surname derived from their mother as well as a given name, but in most instances their given names typically have no meaning or significance outside of distinguishing one member of the race from another.

Male Frey Names: Timogen, Dylan, Shadilan, Jupiter

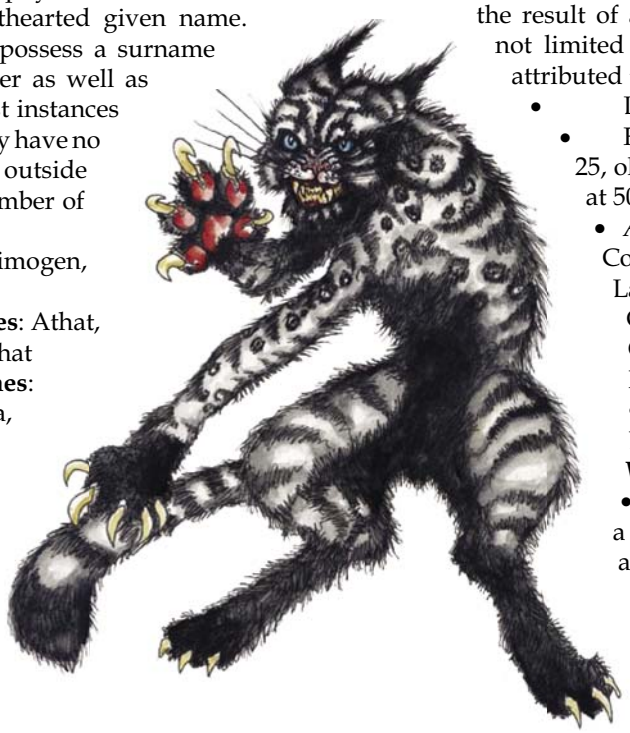
Male Wild Frey Names: Athat, Hakk, Nkhkah, Sath, Tavhat

Female Frey Names: Chauntea, Kiki, Aliykka, Josephina

Female Wild Frey Names: Elith, Girin, Jinn, Siff, Viltt

Frey Clan Names: Greytuft, Bootleg, Hoarfang, Brighteye

Wild Frey Clan Names: Brukk, Dulut, Kuuth, Pruug, Surt



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Frey Racial Traits:

- Frey gain a +2 to Dexterity and Charisma while suffering a -2 penalty to Strength and Constitution.
- Frey are Small creatures giving them a +1 bonus to AC and attack rolls as well as +4 bonus to Hide checks. While walking upright their base speed is 20 ft.; however if their hands are free, the frey can move as a quadruped increasing its speed to 30 ft.
- Frey are humanoids (feline).
- +2 racial bonus to Listen and Move Silently checks as well as a +8 bonus to Climb checks.
- The frey's two claws deal 1d2 points of damage, whereas its bite deals 1d3 points of damage. These attacks are considered natural weapons. The frey's claws are his primary attacks whereas his bite is a secondary attack.
- **Stinging Strike (Ex)**: Once per day per character level, the frey can increase the damage from a successful melee attack by 1d4 points. This ability only applies to damage dealt by a frey's natural weapons or a handheld weapon. He must declare his intention to use this ability before making his attack roll. If the attack misses, the usage still counts towards his daily limitation. This ability is ineffective against creatures immune to critical hits or sneak attacks.
- **Remarkable Retreat (Ex)**: Acutely aware of their surroundings, frey receive a +4 dodge bonus to AC against all attacks of opportunity. A condition that negates the frey's Dexterity bonus to AC also cancels out his dodge bonus to AC.
- **Springing Leap (Ex)**: When calculating the result of a Jump check, the frey is not limited by a maximum distance attributed to his height.
- Low-light vision
- Frey reach middle age at 25, old age at 37 and venerable at 50.
- *Automatic Languages*: Common and Feline; Bonus Languages: select from Canine, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Green, Halfling and Orc.
- *Favored Class*: Bard

Wild Frey Racial Traits:

- Wild frey gain a +2 bonus to Dexterity and suffer a -2 penalty to Intelligence.
- Wild frey are Medium creatures; therefore size does not affect their AC

or attack rolls. While moving in an upright fashion, they have a base speed of 30 ft; but if their hands are free, they can move as a quadruped increasing their base speed to 40 ft.

- Wild frey are humanoids (feline).
- Darkvision 60 ft.
- Wild frey have a Climb speed of 20 ft. They gain a +8 racial bonus to all Climb checks as well as the benefits described under the Skills chapter in the *Player's Handbook*.
- +2 racial bonus to Listen and Jump checks
- +4 racial bonus to Move Silently checks
- The wild frey's two claws deal 1d6 points of damage and possess a threat range of 19-20. Its bite delivers 1d6 points of damage with a critical multiplier of x3. These attacks are considered natural weapons. The wild frey's claws are its primary attacks while its bite is its secondary attack.
- **Land on Feet (Ex)**: Whenever the wild frey is subject to damage from falling, it can make a Reflex save (DC 12) to ignore damage from the fall's first 20 feet.
- Scent
- Wild frey reach middle age at 20, old age at 30 and venerable at 40.
- *Automatic Languages*: Feline and Green; Bonus Languages: select from Canine, Common, Elven, Gnoll, Halfling, Orc and Sylvan.
- *Favored Class*: Barbaian

Despite their common ancestry, the abilities derived from the accumulation of racial levels differ substantially between the two varieties of frey. The easily adaptable and gregarious frey thrive in a large city or its surrounding outskirts as opposed to their more bestial relatives. Frey racial levels reflect these profound dissimilarities.

Hit die: d6

Skill points at 1st racial level: (6 + Intelligence modifier) x 4.

Skill points at higher racial levels: 6 + Intelligence modifier.

Racial class skills: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (any)(Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Tumble (Dex) and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Weapon and armor proficiency: Their lithe physique and small stature make it difficult for them to wield large weapons or wear tremendous amounts of gear. Frey are proficient with simple weapons and light armor. They are also capable of utilizing a buckler in combat without penalty.

Curiosity (Ex): Frey are inherently inquisitive about their surroundings, enabling them to gather more information about their environment than less perceptive races. Frey can reroll any Listen or Spot skill check, but the player must declare his intention to do so immediately after making his initial roll. This action is not considered a retry. The character uses the better result to determine success or failure. Frey may utilize this ability once per day per racial level plus his Wisdom modifier; therefore a 3rd-level frey with a +3 Wisdom modifier can utilize curiosity six times per day.

Independent (Ex): Frey do not respond well to taking orders even when influenced by spells and spell-like effects. As a result, frey gain spell resistance, (13 + ½ his levels exclusive of his racial levels), against all spells and spell-like effects with the compulsion descriptor. For instance a 3rd level frey/6th level sorcerer has spell resistance 16 [13 + 3 (half of 6)]. This ability applies to effects such as *confusion* and *suggestion*.

Nine Lives (Ex): According to a time-honored adage, cats supposedly have nine lives and the frey are no exception. Although they do not actually live nine times, they display an uncanny ability to evade danger and escape a precarious situation unscathed. Up to nine times per day, the character can add a +1 luck bonus to his AC for one round or to any saving throw. He must declare his intention to use this ability prior to any dice being rolled.

Life in the wild has drastically altered the wild frey's evolutionary path from that of their much smaller and more docile cousins. Agility and ferocity are their prized traits, enabling the predatory cats to thrive in the hostile domain of Wildwood and the feral forests of Penance.

Hit die: d8

Skill points at 1st racial level: (2 + Intelligence modifier) x 4.

Skill points at higher racial levels: 2 + Intelligence modifier.

Racial class skills: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str)

Weapon and armor proficiency: Wild frey loathe the trappings of humanoid civilization; hence they are not proficient with any weapons or armor.

Chase (Ex): The wild frey's speed increases by 10 feet. Furthermore, once per hour he can move five times his normal speed when making a charge.

Improved Trip (Ex): Wild frey are extremely skilled at knocking opponents off their feet. As a result, they acquire the Improved Trip feat even if they do not meet the feat's prerequisites.

Pounce (Ex): Whenever a wild frey charges at any enemy, he can make a full attack with his natural weaponry just like a leopard or a lion. Unlike his quadruped cousins, wild frey do not receive rake attacks.

Nightling

It is a probably a safe statement to assert that none of the Forge's sentient races is as lazy and parasitic as the lizard-like nightlings. These muscular, 6 ½-foot tall olive-colored humanoids demonstrate remarkable strength and endurance; however they loathe any

Illustrated by Jeremy Jarvis

Nightling Racial Levels

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+1	+0	+1	Convince
2nd	+2	+1	+1	+1	Bark orders
3rd	+3	+2	+1	+2	Two-handed weapon fighting

form of physical labor and instead occupy their time leeching vital goods and services from others. Like most reptiles, nightlings have rough, leathery skin and a thick, scaly tail but they also differ from most members of their biological family in several other respects. Their necks are broad and disproportionately elongated while numerous gangly braids of loose skin hang from their chin and the back of their somewhat flattened skull. They are equally well suited to life in the Forge's bustling metropolises or in the feral forests of Anvil, Penance and northern Wildwood as well as the sunless realm of Eclipse. As long as someone else is available to do the work necessary for their survival, nightlings quickly adapt to practically any type of climate or terrain.

Outlook: Many humanoids fervently swear that some omnipotent power must shower his divine favor upon this race of lethargic, gluttonous beings because no other theory can explain how they almost always seem to attain an authoritative position within virtually any society without exerting any visible effort. While humans toil in anonymity in the commercial, civic and industrial centers of most major cities, their conniving and sycophantic nightling counterparts meteorically rise through the ranks of bureaucracy and assume places of great importance within the governmental and aristocratic hierarchy. Although their detractors adamantly swear that dumb luck is solely responsible for such events, this assessment sells the manipulative and clever nightlings somewhat short. It is undeniable that they have little tolerance or patience for manual labor, yet they are hardly averse to using their size and physical attributes as part of a concerted and tireless effort to intimidate, manipulate and swindle others. According to their perception they are the ultimate panderers, but in their case, the product that they are selling is themselves. Nightlings enjoy interacting with their fellow humanoids, viewing them as just another mark for their confidence schemes; however the same cannot be said for their potential victims who frequently keep a suspicious eye on these bombastic charlatans.



Names: Nightlings have a given name as well as a clan name that they typically use when dealing with members of rival clans or other outsiders. Nightlings dwelling in urban environments often no longer have any clan affiliations; hence their clan name functions as a surname.

Male Names: Borilis, Miischt, Narcis, Venil

Female Names: Balise, Dorissa, Lammise, Xanthia

Clan Names: Samothar, Trolgar, Zorrenta

Racial Traits:

- Nightlings gain a +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution and a -2 penalty to Intelligence.
- Nightlings are Medium creatures; therefore their AC and attack rolls are unaffected by their size. They have a base speed of 30 ft.
- Nightlings are humanoids (reptilian).
- Darkvision 60 ft.
- +2 natural armor bonus
- **Spell-like Abilities (Sp)**: Twice per day cast *cause fear* and *darkness* as a 3rd level sorcerer. The save DC's are Charisma-based.
- **Light Sensitivity (Ex)**: Nightlings suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the area of effect of a *daylight* spell.
- Nightlings reach middle age at 40, old age at 60 and venerable at 80.
- *Automatic Languages*: Common and Draconic; Bonus Languages: select from Canine, Elven, Feline, Giant, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling and Orc.
- Level adjustment +2
- *Favored Class*: Rogue

Although nightlings are more commonly associated with thievery and deceit, they are also accomplished warriors highly skilled in the effective usage of two-handed weapons. Their racial levels reflect the synthesis of their martial heritage with their proclivity for sloth and material excess. Those that

mistake lethargy for cowardice or incompetence often pay for the error with their lives.

Hit die: d8

Skill points at 1st racial level: (4 + Intelligence modifier) x 4.

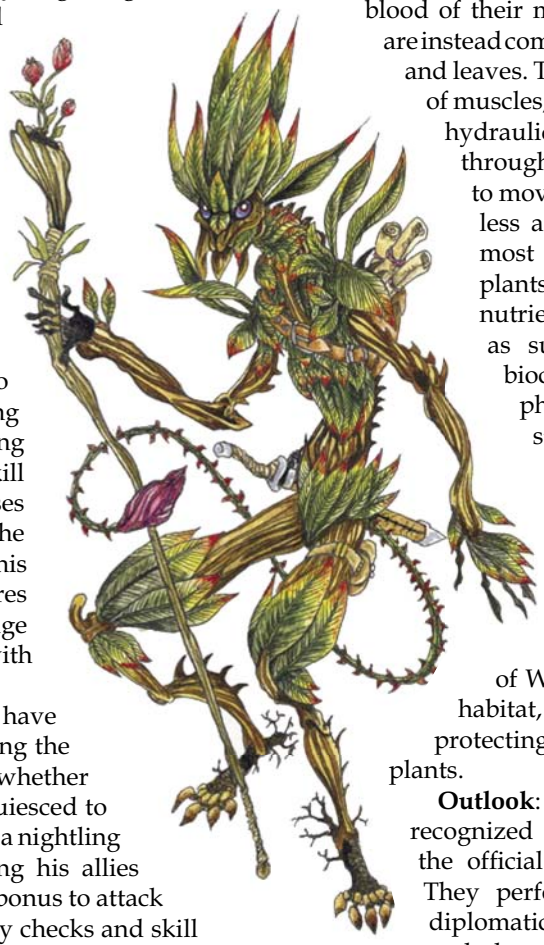
Skill points at higher racial levels: 4 + Intelligence modifier.

Racial class skills: Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (local)(Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Weapon and armor proficiency: Nightlings are proficient in the use of all types of armor; however they are not proficient with shields. Nightlings exclusively wield two-handed weapons in combat; therefore they are proficient with all simple and martial two-handed weapons.

Convince (Ex): Nightlings are innately attuned to figuring out precisely what other creatures want to hear and then telling it to them in an extremely convincing manner. Whenever a nightling makes a Bluff or Sense Motive skill check, he rolls two dice and uses the better result to determine the outcome of the skill check. This ability is ineffective against creatures that do not speak the same language as the nightling or against those with an Intelligence score of 2 or less.

Bark Orders (Ex): Nightlings have an extraordinary talent for donning the mantle of leadership regardless of whether their unwitting subordinates acquiesced to their perceived authority or not. If a nightling spends a full round action telling his allies what to do, his allies receive a +2 bonus to attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, ability checks and skill checks on the following round plus an additional round per racial level. (The nightling himself does not benefit from this ability.) He can utilize this ability more than once during an encounter, although each usage counts against his daily allotment and its effects do not stack. He can perform this action a number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier plus his racial levels. If his Charisma modifier is less than zero, it is treated as zero for determining how many times he can use this ability during the course of a given day.



Two-handed weapon fighting (Ex): Nightlings wielding a two-handed weapon add a +1 bonus to their attack rolls and receive a +1 shield bonus to their AC. The AC bonus is only applicable against melee attacks directed at the nightling.

Thorn

Thorns are a sentient race of plants that share the same anatomical features as humanoids. They have familiar bodily structures such as two arms, two legs, a clearly defined torso, a tail and a head complete with two eyes and a mouth; however they lack the flesh and blood of their mammalian counterparts and are instead comprised entirely of vines, wood and leaves. To compensate for the absence of muscles, thorns utilize a sophisticated hydraulic system that pumps fluids through their bodies, enabling them to move their extremities albeit with less agility and coordination than most humanoids. Like all green plants, thorns obtain essential nutrients from the soil as well as sunlight through a complex biochemical process known as photosynthesis. A mature thorn stands 6 feet tall but weighs a meager 100 pounds. Thorns predominately inhabit the forested regions of Anvil and Penance, while a much smaller percentage of their numbers makes their abode in the more hostile domain of Wildwood. Regardless of their habitat, thorns dedicate their lives to protecting the interests of their fellow plants.

Outlook: Thorns are universally recognized by most humanoids as the official ambassadors of the forest. They perform this often contentious, diplomatic duty with tremendous zeal and devotion, attempting to strike a mutually acceptable balance between the interests of the local humanoids and the needs of the indigenous flora. In most cases, they can accomplish this difficult task without conflict through counseling and instruction. Races with an inherent understanding and respect for nature such as the dovers and the elves require little education from the thorns and are typically on very friendly terms. On the other hand, predatory sentient beings like the fausts rarely heed the thorn's advice and in these cases, direct intervention is often necessary to ensure the land's continued survival. When they are forced to resort to violence, thorns call upon their wild frey allies to assist them in removing the threat and preserving the sanctity of the wilderness. In return for the cats'

Thorn Racial Levels

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+1	Nature's warrior
2nd	+1	+1	+0	+1	Nature's champion
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+2	Nature's beloved

Illustrated by Jeremy Jarvis

military support, the thorns maintain the integrity of their hunting grounds.

Names: Thorns do not have an alphabet like nearly all other languages; therefore words are distinguished from one another based upon frequency and pitch. Thorn names translated into the Common tongue are the same as those given to particular plant species. Thorns do not have a gender and care little for their familial heritage thus they are typically known only by their given name.

Given names: Baban, Bloom, Cyprus, Lantana, Sameril, Sathonia, Rowan, Willow.

Thorn racial traits:

- Thorns gain a +2 to Wisdom and a -2 penalty to Dexterity.
- Thorns are Medium creatures; therefore their AC and attack rolls are unaffected by their size. They have a base speed of 30 ft.
- Thorns are plants.
- Low-light vision
- Immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns and morale effects).
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning.
- Not subject to critical hits.
- +6 circumstance bonus to Hide checks in foliated areas. This bonus improves to +10 if the thorn closes its eyes.
- +2 natural armor bonus
- Like other plants, thorns do not require solid food but instead obtain nutrition from the soil as well as photosynthesis. They must spend at least one hour per day rooted in the ground; otherwise they suffer the same effects as a human does from starvation. Thorns still require water like humans, although they can obtain water while being rooted in moist soil. It takes a thorn 1d3 rounds to root or uproot itself during which time its legs are unable to move. While rooted, thorns cannot be tripped but they also lose any special abilities dependent upon the ability to move such as evasion and suffer a -2 penalty to Reflex saves against area spells and spell-like effects. Thorns can be forcibly uprooted by a successful bull rush attack or grapple check. Because of their sturdy root system, thorns receive a +4 bonus on any check made to resist being uprooted by a bull rush or grapple attack. If a thorn is successfully uprooted, it takes 1d6 points of damage, and its speed is reduced by half until it can use its regrowth ability to repair its damaged legs.
- **Regrowth (Ex)**: If a thorn loses a body part, including its head, the body part is regrown 1d4 hours after being restored to full health as long as the thorn remains rooted during the entire process. If he uproots during the regeneration, the partially restored body part withers and dies 1d4 minutes later forcing him to begin the process anew.
- ***Speak with Plants*** **(Ex)**: Thorns can *speak with plants* as per the druid spell at will. The thorn uses its HD to determine its caster level.
- Thorns are prohibited from using any items including armor and weapons constructed from plant matter.
- Thorns reach middle age at 100, old age at 150 and venerable at 200.
- Level adjustment +2
- *Automatic Languages*: Common and Green; Bonus Languages: select from Canine, Draconic, Druidic, Elven, Feline, Gnoll and Sylvan.
- *Favored Class*: Druid

Thorns are nature's spawn thus their racial levels reflect their inexorable link to the natural world. However, thorns following this trek into their distant past are far more proactive in the defense of their environment than their contemporary counterparts. While modern day thorns act as the spokesmen for plants, those embracing the tenets of their long deceased ancestors serve as their champions, violently confronting anyone intent on despoiling the sanctity of nature for their personal gain.

Hit die: d8

Skill points at 1st racial level: (4 + Intelligence modifier) x 4.

Skill points at higher racial levels: 4 + Intelligence modifier.

Racial class skills: Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (nature), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).

Weapon and armor proficiency: The concept of crafting weapons or protective devices from plant matter borders on the blasphemous for thorns taking racial levels. However they are proficient in the use of light armor, shields and simple weapons constructed from non-plant materials such as metal and stone.

Nature's warrior (Su): As a standard action, a thorn can channel the intangible power of nature and transform his body into a frightening weapon. The thorn's bark instantaneously hardens and his hands change into spherical masses of gnarled wood, preventing him from grasping objects as long as he remains in this state. His knotted fists are now potent natural weapons dealing 1d8 points of bludgeoning damage. In addition, the thorn receives a +1 bonus per racial level to his attack roll and natural armor; hence a 2nd-level thorn adds +2 to his attack rolls while swinging with his fists and his natural armor improves by 2. The natural armor bonus stacks with those derived from other sources, such as the spell *barkskin*. The metamorphosis is extremely taxing to the thorn's physiology; therefore he can only endure the process a number of times per day up to his Constitution modifier. (A thorn with a Con modifier of 0 or less can still use this ability once per day.) He can only spend a cumulative total of 8 + his Constitution modifier rounds in this state; hence a thorn with a Constitution modifier of +3 can employ

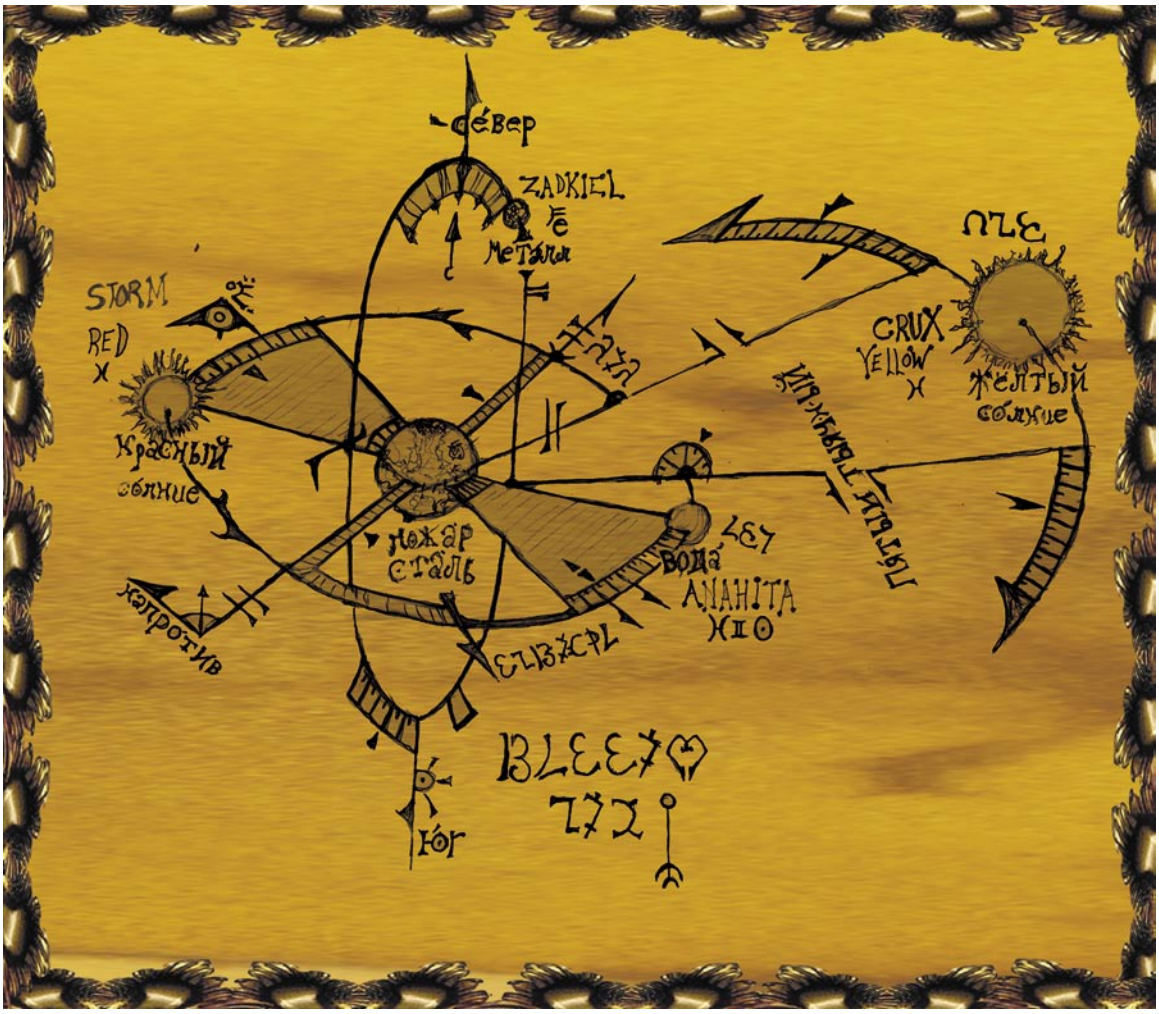
nature's warrior up to three times per day for a total of eleven rounds spread out over as many as three usages. Returning to its original state is a standard action. Any round spent transforming to or from this state does not count towards the ability's daily time limitations.

Nature's champion (Su): Thorns typically employ this ability whenever they are surrounded by their enemies or are preparing to receive an opponent's charge. Most colorfully refer to it as "Sunflower's Last Stand", a moniker associated with a legendary figure from their ancient history. As a move action, the thorn imbeds its roots in the soil rendering it unable to move from that particular spot. (This ability is ineffective in an area lacking a sufficient quantity of earth. For instance, a thorn trying to implement this ability while standing on a stone floor automatically fails.) As long as it remains anchored in place, it adds a +2 bonus to its Fortitude and Will saves while also benefiting from damage reduction 2/-. The thorn is considered to be rooted as described in its racial traits, although it gains a +8 bonus on all ability and grapple checks made to resist being uprooted. Nature's champion ends when the thorn leaves his position or one minute elapses, whichever comes first. The thorn can remain rooted when the ability's duration expires or it can uproot during or at the end of the ability's duration as a move action. Thorns can employ this ability up to three times per day.

Nature's beloved (Su): Nature is an omnipotent, but often fickle entity. It frequently demands sacrifice from those beseeching its aid; however receiving its gracious blessings is hardly a certainty even for a race as attuned to the natural world as the thorns. Despite these obstacles, thorns continue to call upon their capricious mistress in the desperate hope of receiving a reply. Most efforts fail, but there are times when this intangible force hears the cries of its servants and rewards them accordingly. Calling upon nature is a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity but causes the petitioner to suffer nonlethal hit point damage in the attempt. Prior to determining success, the thorn announces how many points of damage he is willing to suffer up to a maximum of six and then adds that number to his d20 roll against DC 20. If the roll fails, the thorn takes the damage and cannot try to utilize this ability again until the damage is healed. If it makes the roll, nature grants it one of the following effects for three minutes, but it still suffers the damage. (The recipient decides the effect.)

- +4 to any ability score (thorn's choice)
- +2 divine bonus to all saving throws
- +2 divine bonus to AC
- +4 competence bonus to all skill checks

This ability cannot stack with itself. Furthermore, unlike most special abilities, the daily usage of nature's guardian fluctuates. At the beginning of each day, the thorn rolls 3d8 and then adds three times his Con modifier to this total. This is the maximum number of hit points that he can sacrifice over the



Illustrated by Todd Morasch

course of the day to activate this ability. Every time he suffers hit point damage as the result of this ability, it is counted against his allotment for the day regardless of whether the effort succeeded or failed.



Vogel

This placid, good-natured race of avian humanoids resembling bipedal sparrows dwells within many of the oases scattered throughout Arena as well as the chain of islands stretching from the northeastern coast of Wildwood all the way to the northwestern shores of Arena. Their anatomy is clearly avian; however unlike typical birds, vogels also have humanoid arms ending in three-fingered hands capable of grasping objects. Standing roughly 4 feet tall and weighing around 35 pounds these feathered creatures are generally well received by most other humanoids, although their implacable optimism can irritate companions with a more realistic outlook on life. Many of their humanoid counterparts, especially the more aggressive races, view them as indecisive pacifists; however this perception reflects an ignorant perception of their complex culture. Their communal society is built upon consensus; hence vogels are unaccustomed to taking orders or directions from other beings without at least having their say in the matter. Consistent with their demeanor, vogels always make a concerted effort to avoid conflict regardless of the circumstances. For them, violence is always a last resort.

Racial traits:

- Vogels gain +2 to Wisdom and +4 to Dexterity. Conversely, they suffer a -2 penalty to Strength and a -4 penalty to Constitution.
- Vogels are Medium creatures; therefore their AC and attack rolls are unaffected by their size. They have a base land speed of 30 ft. and a base fly speed of 60 ft. (average). They are unable to fly if they carry more than a light load.
- Vogels are humanoids (avian).
- Vogels are able to wear only light armor and carry bucklers because of their lightweight bone structure. They can wear magical protection including magical armor and shields without any weight.
- Vogels gain the feats Dodge and Weapon Finesse.
- Vogels reach middle age at 30, old age at 45 and venerable at 60.
- *Automatic Languages*: Avian; Bonus Languages: select from Aquan, Auran, Canine, Common, Draconic, Elven, Feline, Gnoll, Green, Ignan and Terran.
- *Favored Class*: Rogue

The Nature of the Forge

As previously mentioned, the Forge is an unnatural world created for the sole purpose of preventing the deity incarcerated within the heart of the planet from leaving. As such, it does not abide by the laws of physics commonly encountered in other worlds formed as the end result of millions of years of evolution. Instead, rules constructed by its builders and sometimes manipulated by its guardians govern every aspect of its physical existence.

Arrival and Departure

The overwhelming majority of seeds appearing on the Forge arrive here as the result of a magical process known as the pull. Each member of the Black Flock possesses the unique ability to actually move creatures from another world onto their domain to serve their own unique purpose. To accomplish this task, the Feathered Fowl dispatch a flock of birds to engulf the intended target and then mystically teleport him to the initiator's intended destination. Before the individual sets foot on the soil of the Forge, the being responsible for his transport can sort through his personal belongings and remove any items that he desires. This process is generally known as the Sifter, and all beings brought to the Forge in this manner are subject to it. After undergoing this procedure, newly arrived seeds generally receive a gift that augments one of their existing powers or grants them a previously undiscovered ability. Creatures relocating to the Forge as the result of any other means such as a spell or magic item also undergo the ordeal of the Sifter; however they do not receive an arrival gift.

In contrast, the same forces that prevent the Black Flock from abandoning their posts also prevent the

Table 1.1: The Four Seasons

Blooming (Days 1-7): The first week of the month. It is the earth equivalent of spring.

Wasting (Days 8-14): The second week of the month. It is the earth equivalent of autumn.

Seething (Days 15-21): The third week of the month. It is the earth equivalent of summer.

Sleeping (Days 22-28): The fourth and final week of the month. It is the earth equivalent of winter.

Illustrated by Todd Morasch

Forge's residents from escaping the prison planet. Only the fabrication of a seven-piece contraption known as the *key of binding* allows a character to break the shackles confining him to the Forge. The item's components consist of an object indigenous to each of the seven domains. Many of these components are easily found in the city of Penance; however some require additional searching and monetary resources to attain. The *key of binding* costs approximately 1,000 gold pieces per level, and it is specifically attuned to the individual for whom it was created.

Astronomy

Four celestial bodies, two suns and two moons, orbit around the Forge. Crux, the Forge's larger yellow sun and Storm, the smaller red sun, circle around the planet's equator. Crux completes its journey around the planet in roughly 364 days, whereas its counterpart requires a meager twenty-eight days to finish its cycle. The Forge's calendar coincides with these solar cycles; therefore each month consists of twenty-eight days while each year is comprised of thirteen months or 364 days. Similarly, Anahita, the bigger of the two moons, follows the same path as Storm; however it always remains on the opposite side of the planet from its cohort. In contrast, Zadkiel, the remnants of the Forge torn from the domain of Eclipse does not abide by any standard orbit and instead wanders through the heavens via an erratic and wildly unpredictable course.

Because of the heat and radiance generated by the Forge's dual stars, the planet's unique properties greatly affect the passage of the seasons as well as the amount of sunlight received over the course of the day. The realms' residents experience each season over the course of a month as evidenced by **Table 1.1: The Four Seasons.**

Similarly, the days of the week and the hours of the day also abide by the same general principles as detailed on **Table 1.2: Hours of the Day** and **Table 1.3: Days of the Week**.

Table 1.2: Hours of the Day

0 – Shroud	12 – Spark
1 – First Shroud	13 – First Spark
2 – Second Shroud	14 – Second Spark
3 – Third Shroud (Slumber)	15 – Third Spark (Repast)
4 – Fourth Shroud	16 – Fourth Spark
5 – Fifth Shroud	17 – Fifth Spark
6 – Sixth Shroud (Stir)	18 – Sixth Spark (Haven)
7 – Seventh Shroud	19 – Seventh Spark
8 – Eighth Shroud	20 – Eighth Spark
9 – Ninth Shroud (Toil)	21 – Ninth Spark (Regale)
10 – Tenth Shroud	22 – Tenth Spark
11 – Eleventh Shroud	23 – Eleventh Spark

Table 1.3: Days of the Week

- **Anew:** As the first day of the week, the Forge's inhabitants view it as a day of labor.
- **Demure:** Like its predecessor, Demure is another day of labor that is typically construed as the most "normal" day of the week by most natives.
- **Hope:** After two days of work, residents relax somewhat and explore new possibilities and opportunities.
- **Glory:** The symbolic midpoint of the week, it is also the day when laborers work their hardest and are most productive.
- **Sate:** As the week draws to a close, the Forge's inhabitants tie up their loose ends from earlier in the week and conclude their labors.
- **Linger:** With the work week over, the day is normally spent attending to personal needs.
- **Fade:** The week has come to an end, and laborers spend the day resting, preparing for a new week.



Illustrated by Jason Engle

Chapter 2: An Overview of Wildwood

"Be on your guard, many strange creatures and treacherous hazards lie within the impenetrable jungle. Stay close to me, and perhaps you'll live to see another day."

-- Margon, a dover guide to a group of adventurers

Stretching from the remotest shores of the Central Ocean to the furthest reaches of the Northern Ocean, Wildwood's size is only eclipsed by its western neighbor, Arena. The immense domain practically bisects the Forge into two distinct halves, allowing it to share a border with every other domain with the exception of the Kiln. As its name suggests, Wildwood is predominately a feral, untamed wilderness teeming with countless species of plants and wild creatures rounded out by a significant but scattered population of sentient beings. Enormous trees and tangled masses of undergrowth cover much of the sprawling landscape interspersed with an assortment of aggressive and somewhat intelligent, carnivorous plants that lurk throughout its dense jungles and verdant forests searching for their next meal. Fearsome predators imported from a plethora of strange and alien worlds also stalk the realm's shadowy surface, endlessly hunting for prey amidst the lush greenery. Despite the omnipresence of ferocious beasts, humanoid races adapting to the rigors imposed by the natural world surrounding them thrive in this primeval realm, carving out wondrous settlements within this primitive and largely unspoiled environment. The supreme architect responsible for the creation of this primordial world mixing unbridled savagery with pristine beauty is the domain's aloof overlord, the feathered fowl Haiel.

From his island citadel off the eastern shore in the heart of the Northern Ocean, the blade of the green as he is known in some circles intently watches the inhabitants' basic struggle between life and death continuously unfold. Unlike the other members of the Feathered Flock, he possesses no ulterior motive prompting him to hone the skills and powers of his subjects in an effort to sunder the shackles of his oath. In contrast to his counterparts, Haiel greatly enjoys his role as the unquestioned master of his overgrown kingdom of unchecked greenery and terrifying monstrosities, assuming his role as the divine personification of nature; a deviation from the title that he relished during his mortal lifetime. Entrusted with the position of Defender of Nature during his tenure in the service of the bound god, Haiel views his current situation as a reward for his previous service, precipitating a fundamental change in his attitude towards the residents under his rule. Indifference supplanted advocacy, as Haiel views living creatures as nothing more than devices for his amusement in an anarchic domain where nature runs utterly amuck.

Devoid of any form of centralized government, political boundaries and aspirations are virtually non-existent within Wildwood. While a small handful of settlements exert limited control over the land adjacent to their dwellings, the concepts of sovereignty and dominion prove completely alien to the overwhelming majority of the domain's inhabitants. Instead, the forbidding landscape functions as a gigantic hunting ground populated by countless predators in a competitive search for prey. The most potent of these terrifying hunters lay claim to vast stretches of territory as their personal reserves, stealing kills and treasures from lesser beings occupying their dominions in a deliberate effort to assert their dominance, all while Haiel observes the ceaseless drama with exuberate delight.

Arrival in Wildwood

Dense webs of vines and vicious man-eating plants skulk throughout the crowded and cluttered chambers of Haiel's imposing citadel resting on the floor of an extinct volcano on the largest island of the Forge. Amidst this tangled mess of greenery, Haiel scries distant worlds in a perpetual quest to find the mightiest creatures and pit them against a foe of his choosing as part of his grand experiment. Like a child gleefully watching rival colonies of ants wage war, the blade of the green callously observes the gritty spectacle spiral toward its inevitable conclusion as the two participants play a deadly game of cat and mouse. In some instances, the outcome is practically certain as Haiel matches a ferocious beast embodying his desired characteristics of brute strength, tenacity and cruelty against boastful explorers that rarely live up to their self-aggrandizing reputations. The winner of the mortal contest receives a gift from Wildwood's grateful overlord before he releases the victor into the wilds. On the other hand, Haiel plunders the ravaged body of the vanquished participant, adding the spoils to his hoard or putting the newly acquired treasure aside for another purpose.

Haiel generally pulls two types of creatures into his domain, the most vicious, bestial predators and sentient beings arrogantly declaring their civilization's conquest of nature. In the former case, Haiel selects creatures belonging to a wide array of species ranging from tiny, venomous vermin and carnivorous plants to gargantuan magical beasts and horrifying outsiders. Size and intelligence are not important factors in this decision, as he bases his choice primarily upon his target's hunting prowess and predatory predilection. Upon arriving in Wildwood, Haiel deposits the newcomers into an elaborate hunt and chase scenario that he intently monitors with keen interest. On rare occasions, Haiel foregoes his flying ability and personally partakes in the action, sating the primitive urges still coursing through the fiber of his being. He prefers dropping the participants into the most inhospitable regions of Wildwood, particularly the domain's dense jungle or its swampy thickets where numerous natural hazards such as quicksand and virulent contagions

ensnare their fair share of unwary visitors. The latter situation proves far more complex and insidious than the simplistic cat and mouse game that he employs against less intelligent creatures.

As part of a strange perversion of his previous role as the Defender of Nature, a base and overwhelming compulsion drives him to seek retribution against individuals and societies proclaiming supremacy over nature. Haiel readily disposes of braggadocios through the usage of savage predators that he simultaneously imports into his domain, but punishing an entire civilization poses a more challenging dilemma. In furtherance of this end, Haiel meticulously crafts an exacting replica of an entire city, placing numerous magic items and artifacts culled from fallen prey throughout the barren settlement. After completing his painstaking duplicate, Haiel pulls a substantial portion of the disoriented and startled populace into their new home. The transplanted inhabitants either reject their misguided, urban philosophy and adapt to their surrounding environment, or they stubbornly cling to their beliefs and inevitably perish at the hands of marauding predators and the swelling growth of destructive plant life. In a relatively short time, the hardy survivors abandon the trappings of civilization and adjust to the rigors of life in the untamed and frequently hostile wilderness. Decaying ruins overrun by the encroaching foliage provide ample testimony to Haiel's proclivity for dragging entire civilizations onto his grand stage to partake in this folly for his exclusive amusement. Regardless of their origins, the sudden and inexplicable arrival in Wildwood serves as a comeuppance to many.

Naturally, the preceding suppositions only apply to creatures pulled into the domain by Haiel; however they do not address travelers venturing into the feral landscape of their accord from neighboring domains. Penance accounts for the overwhelming majority of traffic crossing over the border into Wildwood via the waterborne route of the two branches of the River Tanais or through oceanic travel into the resorts along their common shoreline on the southern edge of the Northern Ocean. Immigrants hailing from other neighboring domains consist predominately of renegades seeking asylum in its remote hinterlands. For these new arrivals, safety usually proves fleeting as the unprepared, solitary dissidents succumb to the abundant monstrous denizens and treacherous hazards prevalent throughout the ominous woodlands.

The Pull to Wildwood

Unlike his fellow guardians, the blade of the green does not endeavor to fashion a successor from the seeds drawn into his world, a crucial distinction that separates him from the other members of the Black Flock. Haiel scours the farthest corners of the universe searching for creatures that pique his innate curiosity and spur his vivid imagination rather than scanning other worlds for powerful beings capable of usurping his cherished dominion over his bestial playground. Not surprisingly, he shuns pulling sentient adventurers into his domain except to punish haughty beings that intentionally transgress the laws of the natural world. When he does make exceptions to the aforementioned guideline, he typically chooses druids, rangers and humanoid races with an inherent affinity for nature such as the dovers and elves. When his legions of avian spies spot a potential target, Haiel carefully devises an apropos scenario to test the prospective newcomer's hunting prowess and predatory inclinations by pitting it against an equally matched foe. From his relatively secure perch high above the ground, the thoroughly engrossed overlord views the unraveling drama awaiting the inevitably lethal outcome.

When he sets his sights upon a suitable mark, the physical transplantation from an alien world to Wildwood is unstoppable and takes little more than a fleeting moment. Black ravens tinged with olive green streaks swiftly envelop the intended target and instantaneously transport the bewildered creature from its homeland into Haiel's barbarous domain where he immediately subjects it to a life or death challenge. While the process is relatively simple when applied to individuals or small groups of creatures, the spontaneous migration of thousands of beings from a city into a painstakingly accurate facsimile necessitates meticulous planning that ultimately culminates in a fantastic sight rarely witnessed by mortals. An immense horde of birds resembling a voracious plague of locusts suddenly descends upon the hapless inhabitants, engulfing the befuddled humanoids in a maelstrom of swirling feathers and a deafening cacophony of piercing screeches. A few moments later, the disoriented citizens reappear within the confines of the manufactured copy of their settlement, encircled by a ring of massive trees, dense foliage and swarming packs of bloodthirsty predators.

Living creatures are not the only entities that capture Haiel's attention. Precarious natural hazards such as deceptive bogs of quicksand, virulent diseases and other hidden dangers enhance the thrill of the chase for Wildwood's voyeuristic master. He typically incorporates these concealed threats into his fabricated hunt and chase scenarios, throwing these insidious obstacles into the paths of the unsuspecting participants. In most cases, these wicked menaces linger long after the completion of a particular hunt, posing an additional impediment to adventurers exploring the domain's vast, uncharted hinterlands.

Haiel's Sifter

The items and possessions of all seeds pulled into the Forge are subject to search and confiscation at the discretion of the Feathered Fowl responsible for drawing them into their domain. The procedure lasts only a few seconds, revealing the exact functions of any magic items and artifacts belonging to the creature. Like the other members of the Black Flock, Haiel removes certain categories of mystical creations that flout his ideology from all newcomers arriving in Wildwood. Devices that detract from the exhilaration of the hunt by bestowing total concealment, such as a *ring of invisibility* or flight, such as a *carpet of flying*, immediately attract the ire of the blade of the green.

Illustrated by Terry Pavlet

Naturally, this philosophy is not limited exclusively to the aforementioned creations, but it also applies to any item that detracts from his enjoyment of the thrill of the chase. In addition to the preceding proclivities, Haiel seizes devices that destroy large swaths of plants or non-sentient inhabitants as well as metallic armor and shields. In his own way, Haiel still abides by the druidic principles that guided him during his previous existence as the Defender of Nature.

Haiel replaces forfeited items with creations that allow the seed to harmoniously coexist with the pervasive forces of nature. Devices that improve speed and allow creatures to move through underbrush with less difficulty supplant articles bequeathing total concealment or flight capabilities. Sturdy armor and shields constructed from organic material serve as an alternative to protective equipment forged from inorganic components. Haiel substitutes items that destroy nature for those that summon natural allies to the user's aid.

Obviously the preceding categories are not all encompassing as Haiel prohibits potent artifacts capable of threatening his stature as the master of Wildwood from entering into his domain. In these instances, the blade of the green sifts the item from its owner and places the individual into a virtually hopeless hunt and chase scenario against a host of wicked predators or in the most extreme cases, he takes the matter into his own hands and personally partakes in the slaughter. The aforementioned precautions generally apply to sentient beings pulled into Wildwood as the majority of vicious predators drawn into the feral domain arrive bereft of magic items.

General Observations of Wildwood

For any creature surviving its initial foray into the primitive domain, one adage best summarizes Haiel's overall philosophy, "survival of the fittest". Wildwood is evolution's ultimate testing ground, where the soundest and strongest predators vie against one another in a bitter struggle to simply endure. While the bloodlords of Penance and the warlords of Arena concoct endless machinations to better their political and military fortunes, the overwhelming majority of the native population seek nothing more than to live another day without falling prey to a superior competitor. Danger lurks behind every tree and patch of scrub whether it manifests itself in the form of a mindless but fearsome beast hiding in the underbrush or as a carnivorous, sentient plant masquerading as an innocuous shrub. The search for food is a perpetual quest, and the death of one creature provides sustenance and life to another.

Despite the apparent savagery and inherent risks posed by the domain's denizens and its terrain, Wildwood is also a land of unsurpassed beauty unspoiled by humanoid intervention. An immense forest of proud and mighty trees soars high above the ground, shielding much of its floor from the intense glare of the Forge's two suns. Transparent rivers and streams of pure, fresh water gently weave a meandering course through the lush, green landscape, providing essential nutrients to the bountiful flora and an abundant drinking supply for its fauna. Exotic creatures rarely encountered elsewhere in the universe seem practically commonplace in the primordial domain's vibrant ecosystems. Valuable natural resources frequently scarce in neighboring domains abound throughout the immense expanses of forests, swamps and jungles that comprise the greatest percentage of the green domain's landscape. Inevitably, the presence of these precious commodities attracts the interest of merchants and treasure seekers searching for instant wealth at the expense of the virgin wilderness.

Characters in Wildwood

Consistent with the flavor and texture of the Oathbound setting, players can opt to use characters imported from another campaign world or create characters indigenous to Wildwood. As discussed in the preceding sections, Haiel typically refrains from pulling individual sentient humanoids into his feral fiefdom except to punish transgressors or reward noteworthy druids, rangers and other beings with a natural inclination for the wilderness; however that does not preclude preexisting characters from adventuring in Wildwood. An intact party can appear in Wildwood as a small part of an entire civilization transported into one of Haiel's duplicate cities, providing the GM with a plausible plot device to transplant an entire adventuring group into Wildwood. Alternatively, native residents of the Forge can journey into the untamed wilderness from a neighboring domain such as Penance or Arena. Regardless of the methodology used, adventures in Wildwood offer a fantastic insight into an exhilarating, primeval kingdom teeming with a spectacular array of ferocious beasts and clandestine treasures awaiting their discovery.

General Features

Wildwood ranks second to Arena in terms of its actual size, although many debate the veracity of the preceding assertion. By conservative estimates, Wildwood's landmass alone including the adjacent chain of islands in the Northern Ocean encompasses an area measuring just over five million square miles. With the exception of its bodies of water and the rocky, rugged terrain bordering Eclipse, an assortment of mighty trees and prolific green plants dominate practically the entire landscape. Although the domain boasts an astounding number of plants and wild animals, its meager population of sentient humanoids in comparison to its enormity makes it the Forge's most sparsely populated domain. Humanoid visitors to the remote, primeval wilderness can travel upwards of several hundred miles before encountering another sentient being. In most areas, permanent settlements with as little as 1,000 inhabitants are few and far between, while the domain boasts only a small handful of communities that can even approach the designation of city.

Wildwood

Area: 5,100,000 square miles
Population: 3,575,000
Racial Makeup: Dovers: 30%, Elves: 18%, Humans: 14%, Wild frey: 7%, Thorns: 6%, Gnolls: 5%, Frey: 4%, Halflings: 2%, Vogels: 2%, Fey: 2%, Faust: 2%, Asherake: 1%, Gnomes 1%, Urgoda: 1%, Other: 5%.
Countless other sentient races originally hailing from neighboring domains and alien worlds inhabit many of Wildwood's remotest regions. Many indigenous races native to the Forge find life within the harsh and inhospitable wilderness completely unbearable; therefore chromithians, lunars, nightlings, pickers, silvers and valco are rarely encountered in the rough and tumble forests of Wildwood. Dovers, elves and thorns dwell predominately in the deciduous forests of central Wildwood, whereas the wild frey and human populations remain largely confined to the coniferous forests to the north. The remaining races inhabit a wide variety of terrain, but they typically remain clustered in a relatively small and usually isolated region. In addition to its humanoid residents, monsters such as dragons, giants, trolls and virtually all known varieties of animal, plant, vermin and magical beast reside within the vast woodland.

Geography of Wildwood

In the eyes and minds of most newly arrived seeds, Wildwood seems little more than a sprawling, unpopulated deciduous forest teeming with mindless, bloodthirsty predators. Although the notion certainly bears some truthful aspects, the simplistic generalization underscores the feral domain's ecological and geographical diversity. It is undeniably true that wild beasts freely roam through the immense deciduous forest that dominates virtually all of central Wildwood; however the perception fails to take into account the presence of a sweltering jungle in the south, a slightly cooler coniferous forest to the north, a remote patch of swamp adjacent to the Central Ocean's western shore, the treacherous caverns and crevasses near the border with Eclipse and the small collection of waterways dotting its predominately green terrain. These varying habitats support their own unique brands of fauna and flora, transforming each of them into its own distinct realm.

Deciduous Forest

Situated at the heart of the domain, the lush, verdant deciduous forest spans the domain's entire border with its western neighbor Penance as well as the vast majority of its boundaries with Anvil and Arena. The vibrant greenery also extends onto the chain of islands in the Northern Ocean that ultimately culminates with the volcanic island that houses Haiel's foreboding citadel, spawning a biological mystery that persists to the present day. Some druids speculate that migratory birds transported seeds from the mainland onto the archipelago while an opposing school of thought believes that some powerful seismic or geological force separated the now solitary land masses from Wildwood proper. Irrespective of the explanation for the preceding phenomenon, this vibrant variety of woodland covers more of the untamed domain's area than any other type of terrain.

Central Wildwood supports the largest population of sentient beings in Wildwood, accounting for roughly half of the domain's total inhabitants; however the same features that compel residents to settle down in this environment also attract the interest of avaricious treasure hunters and merchants from alien worlds and neighboring domains, particularly Penance. Loggers sponsored and financed by the bloodlords governing the great city to the west feverishly harvest trees from the fertile basin between the upper and lower branches of the River Tanais at an alarming rate. The locale proves popular to these foreign merchants because of the abundance and diversity of wood found in the area as well as the nearby presence of the two waterways that greatly facilitate the transportation of timber back to Penance and its outlying cities. Similar incursions also occur in other areas adjacent to its two western neighbors, but the scale of these operations pales in comparison to the aforementioned industrial output.

This region also boasts some of the Forge's most spectacular scenery. Pindara, the religious and spiritual hub of dover culture rests on an isthmus between Wildwood's two great lakes. Visitors to the remote and sacred site consider the isolated settlement flanked by the sparkling waters of two magnificent lakes as the most beautiful locale in the Forge. Similarly, the elven realm of Vertumnus located a few hundred miles northwest of Pindara near the edge of the deciduous forest proudly displays the artistic achievements of the elven craftsmen responsible for its creation as well as its natural allure. In addition to the accomplishments of these renowned cultures, the River Malamba in the northeastern corner of the deciduous forest is universally regarded as the most breathtaking waterway in the entire Forge, containing wondrous waterfalls, rapids, rock formations and unusual configurations of trees and other vegetation. The resort town of Canopus on the southern shores of the Northern Ocean near the domain's border with Penance possesses one of the finest and most tranquil beaches, making it a popular destination for wealthy tourists hailing from the Pedestal.

Wildwood's astounding locales maintain their pristine charm because of their inaccessibility to the general public. Despite its seemingly docile appearance, the forest bristles with an assortment of dangerous denizens ranging from packs of voracious, marauding predators to vicious man-eating plants. In addition to the hazards posed by living creatures, the abundant shrubbery and undergrowth make for extremely slow going as roads and trails blazed only a short time earlier quickly disappear amidst a mass of rampant greenery. While the tangled morass of vegetation rapidly envelops highways and trails, it also engulfs the crumbling ruins of lost civilizations



with equal verve. Thousands of deteriorating buildings lie scattered throughout the forest, overrun by hordes of encroaching vines and trees largely obscuring them from view. Within the dark recesses of these abandoned structures are the accumulated treasures of forgotten races, patiently awaiting their revelation by brave explorers. On a daily basis, stalwart adventurers venture into the treacherous forest in search of wealth and fame; however just like the inanimate objects they seek, the overgrown wilderness frequently swallows them up forever.

Coniferous Forest

Wildwood's coniferous forest stands just north of its deciduous counterpart while stretching all the way to its border with Eclipse. The statuesque pine trees and their myriad of relatives dwelling within northern Wildwood never shed their green, needle-like leaves, the essential difference distinguishing conifers from deciduous trees. The evolutionary adaptation is a natural reaction to the region's cooler temperatures and less abundant rainfall. Deprived of these essential nutrients, the coniferous forest lacks the dense thickets and plentiful shrubbery commonplace in other portions of the wild domain, although a thin coating of moss and numerous, sharp cones shed by the majestic trees mandates the usage of sturdy footwear impervious to the oversized seeds' rough edges. Without the benefits of camouflage and cover, the predators inhabiting this region must also adapt to the prevailing environment, prompting many of its beasts to utilize a pack mentality and hunt in unison. As a result, social animals working in concert such as wolves and lions enjoy much greater success than solitary creatures relying upon individual speed and strength to subdue their prey. Consistent with this collective philosophy, humanoid settlements are typically comprised of a large group of extended family members living together as a clan. Hunting success in the forests of central Wildwood depends upon the combatants' speed and strength, whereas cohesive tactics and sheer numbers spell the difference between life and death in the coniferous forests.

Races with a greater degree of natural affinity such as the dovers, elves and thorns make the lush, green woodlands of central Wildwood their homes; however humans and wild frey prefer to live in the more temperate and sparsely populated northern portion of Wildwood. Although devoid of the omnipresence of impenetrable layers of undergrowth and tropical diseases spawned by plentiful moisture and year-round warmth, the coniferous forest does not suffer from any lack of biological and ecological hazards. Contagions transmitted by vermin and lesser animals occur with less frequency than to the south; however the curse of lycanthropy runs rampant through large sectors of the humanoid population. According to the most conservative figures, roughly 3% of all humanoids found within the region suffer from some form of the terrible condition. While their numbers are equally

Map of Northern Wildwood by Jeff Visgaitis and Jason Rosenstark

divided between the natural and afflicted variety, werewolves easily outnumber the combined total of all other types of lycanthropes. On clear nights when both of the Forge's moons are plainly visible in the night sky, all havoc breaks loose throughout the coniferous forest as the bloodthirsty man-beasts, spurred to kill by an insatiable, primeval lust, madly rampage through the unruly wilderness in a futile quest to palliate their unquenchable appetite for carnage.

In addition to the coniferous forest's unique ecosystem, the region's topography also features several distinguishing features. Northern Wildwood serves as a natural and logical geographical bridge between the overgrown woodlands to the south and the dark, jagged crevasses to the north. Astute travelers heading north notice a gradual but detectable slope and the creeping presence of a fierce chill in the air as they approach the foreboding edge of the world delineating the boundary between Wildwood and Eclipse. Along this ominous ridge of shattered rock and perilous chasms lie a number of settlements engaged in commerce with Colopitiron's sunless realm. The bustling and dangerous town of Penumbra is clearly the most significant of these trading posts. Avaricious merchants from Penance and ruthless criminals from Eclipse comprise the overwhelming majority of the frontier community's population, accounting for Penumbra's reputation as an anarchic den of thieves.

Along the route to this barren wasteland, the land slowly rises above sea level, causing the tree line of the majestic pines that soar high above the earth to disappear into the misty embrace of clouds floating overhead. Fortunately, the wispy vapors burn off as the day progresses allowing sunlight to penetrate through the relatively sparse canopy and bask the surface with tendrils of warm, nourishing light. The impressive display of illumination ranks as the coniferous forest's most astonishing spectacle primarily because of its lack of natural landmarks and the shattered remnants of failed civilizations endemic throughout the central portion of the untamed domain.

Jungle

In stark contrast to the cooler and drier climactic conditions experienced in northern Wildwood, intense heat and stifling humidity caused by practically continuous sunlight and copious rainfall dominate Wildwood's southern region. The constant warmth and abundant moisture produces a sweltering environment of large, shallow-rooted trees that is also highly conducive for the unrestricted development of the smaller green plants that comprise the jungle's impassable undergrowth and its seemingly infinite diversity of voracious insects. Surprisingly, this immense incubator of life shares a substantial border with the arid desert and the dying, frozen wasteland of neighboring Arena and the Vault respectively. The boundary between the vastly divergent realms is obviously of artificial creation as evidenced by the abrupt halt of tangled vegetation at the very edge of Haiel's dominion. The presence of the arbitrary barrier is utterly inconsequential as virtually no intelligent creatures wander into any of the adjacent domains.

The jungle is an inviting habitat for diminutive creatures and plants that do not draw nutrients from the infertile soil; however larger beings do not exact the same welcome from the impenetrable thickets and swarms of fierce bugs laying claim to the locale. Massive predators find the twisting and treacherous maze of closely packed vegetation impossible to negotiate, while simultaneously providing the hunters' potential prey with plentiful hiding spots and foolproof escape routes. Despite the noticeable absence of many of Wildwood's most fearsome denizens, peril lurks behind almost every tree trunk and beneath its moss strewn rocks. Malevolent carnivorous plants as well as their poisonous counterparts stoically lie in wait, surreptitiously anticipating the fortuitous arrival of unsuspecting victims trampling into their carefully devised traps. In addition to the hazards posed by the native flora, hordes of marauding insects attack intruders en masse, plunging their venomous or infectious mandibles and stingers into the exposed flesh of jungle explorers before pumping their virulent toxins and contagions into the bloodstream of their quarry. Insects and animals are not the only culprits responsible for spreading disease. The damp, sultry atmosphere provides an ideal breeding ground for a dizzying array of airborne bacteria and viruses that ceaselessly plague the region's inhabitants.

As a result of these factors, sentient humanoid communities are typically small and scattered with the average settlement consisting of only a few hundred individuals. Dovers, wild elves and gnolls constitute a significant sector of the area's population supplemented by the fragmented remnants of formerly civilized races pulled into the wild domain as one of Haiel's social experiments. The advanced and sophisticated cultures that quickly regress to their instinctual nature usually survive, while those unwilling or unable to adapt to the situation soon succumb to the pervasive forces of nature. The jungle's inaccessibility affords these shattered peoples anonymity and some measure of protection from the domain's deadliest predators, although isolation also instills a strong xenophobic sentiment within many of these communities. Despite these precautions, the fabulous riches and valuable pharmaceutical plants concealed within the dying vestiges of their once magnificent cities and the bountiful undergrowth attract a fair share of fortune hunters and on rare occasions, the imagination of a warlord from neighboring Arena. The few individuals that return from such a foolish endeavor usually do so empty-handed except for numerous tales of unspeakable barbarism and butchery perpetrated against their slain colleagues by the degenerative tribes of forsaken races inhabiting the savage, green realm.



Swamp

Along the northwestern shores of the Northern Ocean, the deciduous trees of central Wildwood and the rampant undergrowth of southern Wildwood cede dominance to a malodorous wetland stretching from the border with Anvil to the intersection between the aforementioned regions and the Northern Ocean. Although the swamp spans more than 400 miles of coastline, in most locales the soggy bogs only penetrate 25 miles inland before blending into the surrounding landscape. The morass accounts for a meager one-half of one percent of Wildwood's total landmass; however its limited size does not diminish its ecological importance. While the massive delta only spawns one significant river, the marsh gives birth to countless streams and tributaries that feed Wildwood's extensive network of ponds and small lakes. These meandering waterways spread nutrients and minerals from the ocean floor throughout the expansive domain.

Despite the wealth of sediment and food resources found within its murky depths, land-based predators and humanoids consider the swamp the least hospitable of Wildwood's four "green" terrains. The lukewarm, stagnant waters serve as an incubator for the eggs and larvae of countless disease-bearing insects, and the temperate but moist atmosphere sustains immeasurable quantities of infectious microorganisms. Water breathing and amphibious predators enjoy a decided advantaged against their exclusively air breathing opponents because the shallow, cloudy waters provide ample cover to almost always approach their land-based prey undetected. As a result, few humanoids with the exception of a couple of isolated pockets of aquatic humanoid races from the neighboring Central Ocean inhabit the region. In the absence of any significant humanoid populations, the trusks, a race of walrus-like beings dwelling in the depths of the Central Ocean, and a few scattered pockets of armamen represent the only sentient beings exerting any measurable influence in the region. (The trusk appear in Oathbound: *Arena,* while statistics for the armamen appear later in this sourcebook.) For the most part, even these formidable marine creatures afford the area's ferocious monstrous denizens, such as the native black dragons and dire crocodiles an extremely wide berth.

Irrespective of the difficulties presented by the treacherous terrain and its wicked residents, some land-based adventurers pay no heed to the ominous warnings and venture into the watery realm in the pursuit of fabled lost cities buried beneath thick layers of moss and viscid, black mud. Walking through the morass of soggy earth and brackish liquid is a long, hard slog; therefore a small waterborne vessel is the best option for explorers searching the bleak landscape for an elusive glimpse of hidden ruins. Dense thickets of weeds and islands of mangrove trees coupled with other types of vegetation transform the waterways into an elaborate labyrinth necessitating the experience

Map of Central Wildwood by Jeff Visgaitis and Jason Rosenstark



and intuition of a skilled navigator; otherwise novice mariners run the risk of becoming hopelessly lost. After several days of negotiating the endless gauntlet of obstacles, the mere sighting of a patch of relatively dry land feels more satisfying than discovering a pirate's cache of booty. Unfortunately for most intrepid adventurers, the only fate awaiting them in the dank bogs of Wildwood is a watery death.

Caverns

Irregardless of the drastic difference between the lush greenery constant throughout the remainder of the domain and the barren wasteland of holes, pits and caverns north of the coniferous forest, the region actually belongs to Haiel even though he openly ignores the area's existence. The scarred terrain of bottomless chasms, jagged crevasses and fractured gorges eventually culminates in a steep precipice overlooking an expansive crater encapsulating the neighboring domain of Eclipse. Devoid of the bountiful plant and animal life prevalent in the overwhelming majority of Wildwood, most indigenous humanoids deliberately avoid the area while its mindless, carnivorous beasts find nothing appealing in the craggy, rocky badlands abutting the very edge of the prison planet. Foreign merchants and rashers from Penance comprise a substantial percentage of the region's population complemented by a significant number of indigenous urgodas that serve as guides to adventurers and entrepreneurs seeking safe passage through the underground complex of corridors and galleries leading to Eclipse.

The town of Penumbra, situated at the northernmost reaches of the coniferous forest, is the traditional jumping off point for expeditions into the maze of rough hewn twisting corridors and enormous chambers. Although a wide variety of subterranean aberrations inhabit the dark underbelly of the world, the quantity and diversity of the underground creatures pales in comparison to the plethora of species encountered on the surface. Bandits and thieves from Eclipse endeavoring to waylay a passing caravan represent the most visible danger, but they rank far from being the most perilous hazard encountered by spelunkers delving far below the surface. Magically potent and equally mysterious humanoid and monstrous races such as the drow make their abode in vast networks of tunnels and rooms stretching for miles in every direction. Bent on subjugating other sentient beings to their will, they perpetually scan the outskirts of their lairs searching for potential slaves or in the worst case scenario, living sacrifices for their vicious and bloodthirsty deities. The gory myths and legends attributable to such abductions provide added incentive for the average resident to

Map of Southern Wildwood by Jeff Visgaitis and Jason Rosenstark



stay far away from the bizarre landscape shrouded in the pall of perpetual darkness.

Bodies of Water

Just like its land masses, oceans, rivers, lakes and other waterways falling under Haiel's control teem with a diverse variety of marine life. Wildwood's oceanic realm includes virtually the entire western half of the Central Ocean and the majority of the Northern Ocean. Inland, the feral domain contains the two largest lakes in the Forge and four major rivers as well as a seemingly infinite number of streams, brooks and ponds. Beneath the water's surface, immense fields of kelp, coral, anemones and other species of aquatic plant life grow unabated, tempered only by the ravenous appetites of the underwater predators sharing the murky depths with them. Enormous schools of voracious, carnivorous fish sometimes numbering as many as 10,000 individuals troll the vibrant waters in search of sickly or injured prey. In addition to these menaces, gigantic predators such as dire sharks and dragon turtles hunt within the oceanic domain. Beneath the waves, the Ceptu Nation and the trusks represent the dominant forces within the Northern and Central Oceans respectively.

Although Wildwood possesses the largest coastline highlighted by pristine, tropical beaches, oceanic traffic to the wild domain remains extremely limited with the exception of pleasure boats transporting wealthy vacationers from the Pedestal and its outlying suburbs to the renowned resort town of Canopus a few hundred miles east of the border between the two neighboring domains. While Wildwood's beaches are accessible by vessels equipped for such journeys, the sandy beaches comprising its enormous coastline typically extend upwards of 25 miles inland, requiring adventurers to make an arduous trek across vast tracts of hot, barren desert before reaching the forests' edge. Rivers offer a more direct route to Wildwood's interior section; however they also present a number of hazards. Monstrous denizens lurk just beneath the muddy surface, waiting for the ideal moment to strike. Steep waterfalls and roaring rapids dash many boats aground, tossing their sundered planks and displaced passengers into the churning waters and at the mercy of opportunistic predators. Without the cunning and guile of an accomplished sailor familiar with the swift currents and physical features of Wildwood's waterways, any expedition through its raging rivers is certain to end in disaster.

Wildwood's bodies of water are significant to adventurers for two primary reasons, their access to interior destinations and the remnants of failed civilizations resting on the bottom of the ocean floor. Despite the dangers and logistical difficulties presented by both propositions, the allure of fantastic riches and the exhilaration of exploring the great unknown override all practical concerns. Rumors

and myths about legendary cities buried beneath the silt of the ocean floor and the muck of adjacent river banks continue to swirl in virtually every coastal settlement, even though there are very few documented discoveries of any significance.

Inhabitants of Wildwood

Wildwood differs from every other domain in the respect that wild beasts and awesome predators are its dominant residents, easily outnumbering the substantially smaller and dispersed humanoid population. Strange aberrations of nature and wicked creatures freely roam the unspoiled wilderness in the absence of civilized societies concerned with constraining their spread and development. The sentient beings that make Wildwood their home realize that any concerted effort to domesticate the savage, green lands is a fruitless and futile endeavor solely resulting in the squandering of valuable time, energy and resources. As a result, its successful communities learn to live harmoniously with the untamed forces surrounding them rather than wage a hopeless struggle to master them. In many regards, these settlements simply become part of Wildwood's natural ecosystem, assuming a prominent position in its complex and constantly shifting food chain.

Beasts and Monsters

In most worlds, foul beasts and terrible monsters assume a subordinate role to civilized societies, utilizing the cover of darkness and hidden lairs to withstand humanity's continuous efforts to eradicate them from its cities, towns and villages. Wildwood presents a stark contrast to this paradigm as marauding predators and vicious creatures openly stalk the wilds as clusters of sentient beings cower in their wake. Most are sly, cagey creatures specifically adapted to utilize the terrain's abundant greenery to their best advantage, whereas the minority predominately consists of incredibly strong, brutal hunters possessing an arsenal of terrifying natural defenses and weaponry along with a simplistic, bestial mentality. Although the former variety constitutes the overwhelming larger percentage of Wildwood's monstrous population, creatures belonging to the latter category occupy the highest echelons of the unruly domain's complicated and constantly shifting food chain.

Green dragons and their black counterparts dwelling within the marshlands along the coastal regions bordering the northwestern portion of the Central Ocean undisputedly sit atop this complicated and constantly shifting hierarchy. Although estimates vary wildly, the most respected druids and rangers place the size of the ancient reptiles' population somewhere in the neighborhood of 10,000 individuals with a roughly equal distribution among the various age categories up until they reach old age when their numbers drop off dramatically. Next to Haiel, no creature inspires more abject terror than Mastuu Dargus, a green, great wyrm inhabiting central Wildwood's deciduous forest. By all accounts, she is more than 1,750 years old, making her the most venerable dragon in the entire domain by more than 200 years. In contrast, Diamestress, her black cohort in the adjacent swamp is nearly 500 years younger than she is, although she is still an impressive and terrifying foe in her own right. On average, the typical dragon hunts in a 500 square mile area around its lair, but on most occasions it strays no more than a few miles from its unattended hoard of treasure.

In addition to the monstrous denizens described in this sourcebook, a wide assortment of familiar adversaries also dwells within Wildwood's vast and largely uncharted wilderness. Dinosaurs, dire animals, fey creatures and trolls are common throughout all of its diverse terrains except for the cavernous region north of the coniferous forest. Unintelligent plants such as the assassin vine and tendriculus along with their sentient cousin, the treant and all of its variations appear throughout both types of forest and the jungle. Magical beasts derived from normal animals including the girallon, oliphant, owlbear, pegasus and unicorn inhabit the deciduous forest and jungle, while hill and stone giants dwell within the low-lying hills of the coniferous forest. Chuuls, hags, medusas, nagas and shambling mounds occupy the bogs and fens along the coast bordering the northwestern portion of the Central Ocean. The preceding list is hardly all-inclusive as virtually any creature normally found in one of the aforementioned terrains exists somewhere in Wildwood, although they are typically not as numerous as the previous examples.

Although the majority of the aforementioned creatures occupy the highest rungs of Wildwood's food chains, they are vastly outnumbered by animals and creatures typically viewed as little more than prey by these ferocious predators. Wildwood lacks the lush grasslands needed to support sprawling herds of grazing animals, but it certainly does not lack for diversity amongst its plentiful herbivore population. Successful species dwelling within the feral domain must adapt one or more biological strategies if they hope to elude the omnipresent gauntlet of predators and survive. The most important evolutionary development is undoubtedly the ability to reproduce exponentially. Insects clearly rank at the top of this list, but other animal families such as birds, rodents and small primates also produce offspring at an astounding clip. As a further improvement, the gestation periods for their offspring are considerably shorter than those of their ancestors and close relatives found on other worlds. Rapid reproduction ensures the species survival as a whole; however individual survival depends upon other factors. Unlike their more placid kin, Wildwood's herbivores are better armed and equipped to fend off potential predators. In addition, speed and stealth also enhance their ability to escape perilous situations. In a further effort to avoid detection and elude pursuers, most herbivores establish intricate lairs beneath the surface or dwell high in the treetops far beyond the reach of most land-based hunters.

Humanoids

Unlike the other members of the Black Flock, the blade of the green rarely pulls individual humanoids into his domain; therefore the overwhelming majority of Wildwood's humanoid population arrived here by other means. A small but noteworthy minority migrated into the primordial realm from a neighboring domain such as Penance or Arena. Many others attribute their sudden appearance in Wildwood to one of Haiel's grand experiments as the virtually omnipotent overlord instantaneously pulled thousands of citizens from a distant settlement on another world into a precise replica of their city encircled by marauding predators and encroaching vegetation. Natives account for a sizeable majority of Wildwood's humanoid population. Countless generations of dovers, elves, wild frey, thorns, gnolls and other races acclimated to the untamed forests, jungles and swamps thrived within Haiel's primeval realm of lush greenery and ferocious predators by learning to harmoniously coexist with the land and its bestial inhabitants. Although the aforementioned races benefit from a wealth of knowledge and experience in dealing with the hazards posed by their challenging environment, life within this savage kingdom remains extremely perilous. Hordes of fearsome monsters constantly plague humanoids, killing off substantial numbers of the population with alarming regularity. Less dramatic, but equally deadly dangers such as disease and severe weather also claim their fair share of victims in addition to the curse of lycanthropy that courses through the veins of many beings especially in the coniferous forest of northern Wildwood. Regardless of the adaptations and innovations employed by Wildwood's humanoid population, life remains a tenuous, daily struggle for survival.

Despite the rigors of this harsh and unforgiving environment, many races establish a permanent and enduring foothold in this primitive world with dovers and elves providing an outstanding blueprint for success. Dovers and elves inhabit every region with the exception of the craterous pits and chasms north of the coniferous forest. Although they are well represented throughout the domain, the bulk of their numbers live in close proximity to the renowned settlements of Pindara and Vertumnos, both located in the deciduous forest of central Wildwood. Elves congregated within and around Vertumnus are generally high elves; however their subraces are also prevalent in other areas of Wildwood. Small populations of aquatic elves inhabit the Northern and Central Oceans as well as the coastal regions adjacent to these bodies of water. Wild and wood elves are scattered throughout the domain with their highest concentrations in southern and northern Wildwood respectively. Small, isolated pockets of drow elves inhabit the cavernous holes and subterranean tunnels overlooking Eclipse.

In contrast to the dovers and elves, most other humanoid races remain confined to specific sections and terrains. Wild frey and thorns predominately dwell in the deciduous forest bordering Penance in furtherance of their unusual symbiotic relationship. The impetuous and aggressive wild frey provide military protection to their spellcasting counterparts, while the thorns maintain their mutual habitat through the use of druidic magic. Humans and the indigenous population of tallfellow halflings prefer the more temperate coniferous forests, while gnolls typically construct elaborate strongholds using the abundant supplies of wood found in the jungles. Frey and fausts typically hunt in the forests of central Wildwood, whereas the significant vogel population dwells exclusively on the islands in the Northern Ocean off the northeastern coast. Other races indigenous to the Forge, such as asherakes and hazes typically occupy relatively small areas scattered throughout a particular region as compared to races recently pulled into Wildwood that generally remain within close proximity to the shattered remnants of their failed cities for at least a couple of generations before branching out into the surrounding area.

Religion in Wildwood

The foremost principle guiding the life of virtually every indigenous intelligent being is a devout respect and reverence for nature and its awesome power. Even the most arrogant and loathsome races realize that conquest of the omnipresent, universal force governing all aspects of existence remains a distant impossibility especially in a world where nature runs utterly amuck. Taken in this light, the domain's residents usually worship nature as a deity with some envisioning Haiel as a divine intermediary bridging the gap between humankind and omnipotence. Although gods still exist amongst most races, they typically take a secondary role to druids in the spiritual life of its inhabitants. This gradual transfer of religious power occurred over the course of numerous generations as practicality eventually superceded faith. Survival in the rough and tumble wilds requires a deep understanding of the natural world and an ability to communicate and live in unison with its denizens rather than unanswered prayers to a distant deity presiding over matters of little concern to Wildwood's sentient population.

Nonetheless, some members of the various races still cling to the memories of the distant past, indulging in the adoration of their ancient, racial gods. Dovers seek solace and comfort in the adoration of their chief goddess, Kerala, a simultaneously nurturing and aloof being personifying nature's life-giving properties and capriciousness. Wild frey and their more civilized cousins pay homage to their unique pantheon of gods lead by Ath, the master of the hunt, and his consort, Bikk, the mistress of nature. Elves and humans exalt an expansive pantheon of deities imported into the feral domain from countless other worlds, and gnolls revere a potent demon. Deities assume a role of lesser importance in the daily lives of the Forge's native races; however recent arrivals to Wildwood are typically an exception to this rule. Suddenly immersed into a hostile, alien world, religion often serves as a rallying cry and focal point for the shattered remains of a society transplanted against their will. Over the course of time, most races abandon these foreign gods and adopt the domain's pervasive outlook towards

religion, yet a few isolated humanoid tribes refuse to let go of their past and continue to worship their unique pantheon of divine beings.

Native Perspectives

Irrespective of its diverse and diffuse populace, the uncivilized domain's inhabitants share many of the same time-honored values; they extol the virtues of self-sufficiency while decrying the vice of excess. According to the prevailing mindset, every individual must demonstrate the ability to live off the land by hunting and gathering his own food and building adequate shelter from available materials. While city dwellers think nothing of purchasing supplies from a purveyor of such products, the concept of buying foodstuffs and general goods from a merchant or retailer is completely alien to most residents. Few people possess any recognizable form of currency; therefore the feral domain's meager economy is fueled solely by barter. One obtains anything that he lacks by exchanging his goods for another product of roughly equal value. Because this system is based exclusively upon a limited supply and controlled demand, practically nothing goes to waste as each individual procures only as much as he and his dependents need to survive. Naturally, everyone stockpiles at least some food, clothing and other necessities in the event of an emergency; however very few individuals collect enough materials and supplies to actively engage in trade and those that do are generally foreigners selling their wares within or near large settlements.

Conversely, the exploitation of Wildwood's natural resources for personal gain and profit incites the wrath of nature's stalwart defenders. Natives consider the accumulation of personal wealth at nature's expense one of the gravest transgressions imaginable, prompting them to take whatever action is necessary to punish the offender and restore the natural order. As a result of this ideology, an undeclared war pitting the forest's denizens against loggers and merchants from Penance exists along the boundary between the neighboring domains. Unfortunately, the unwanted presence of a common enemy still proves insufficient to overcome their stubborn individualism and unite them against their shared foe. Loyalty rarely crosses familial and racial boundaries, a sad fact of life undoubtedly spawned by generations of isolationism and xenophobic attitudes imported into the realm by recent arrivals from distant worlds.

Venturing through Wildwood

Predominately devoid of a recognizable infrastructure of roads, rivers and other avenues of safe passage, journeying through the tangled mass of overgrown foliage and uncharted wilds presents a number of substantial obstacles. Dense webs of fibrous vines and covert natural hazards make for extremely slow going as adventurers must often tread slowly and lightly while hacking through the seemingly omnipresent labyrinth of thorny thickets and fallen trees. Waterborne travel also experiences similar difficulties as Wildwood's shallow and frequently treacherous rivers prove incapable of supporting vessels larger than a small rowboat. In addition to the logistical barriers imposed by its inhospitable terrain, the feral domain is largely bereft of any easily distinguishable landmarks, making it incredibly easy for novice explorers to quickly become hopelessly lost in the repetitive maze of towering trees and flourishing underbrush. As a result of these hazards, most visitors unfamiliar with the lay of the land generally stick to the narrow, circuitous paths carved out by the indigenous animals and predators or hire a native guide to assist them on their journey into uncharted territory. However, neither method is foolproof, providing further testimony that exploration in Wildwood is an endeavor best left to the foremost experts in the field rather than unprepared fortune hunters and lifelong city dwellers.

Guides

Within every border town and interior settlement, ambitious natives hawk their services to passing adventurers intending to journey into the surrounding woodland. Intimately familiar with the lay of the land and the habits and lairs of its monstrous denizens, a skilled guide is a virtual necessity for any expedition into the wilds. Dovers and elves comprise the majority of the profession's practitioners, especially within the deciduous forests of central Wildwood; however they do not enjoy an exclusive monopoly of the industry. Humans, wild frey and even some thorns offer their expertise to explorers delving into the feral domain's other green terrains, while urgodas inhabiting the cavernous regions to the extreme north offer their assistance to traders and merchants making the journey to neighboring Eclipse.

The guide's precise role in the expedition depends upon his personal capabilities and his client's intentions. For those setting out into the wilderness searching for a natural commodity, such as an exotic animal or a valuable pharmaceutical product, the guide functions largely as a naturalist providing insight on the specific item's probable location as well as the most expeditious and least hazardous way of reaching that destination. On the other hand, adventurers seeking monetary riches and magical treasures buried within a deserted city engulfed by dense layers of foliage require someone with a great deal of archaeological experience as well as familiarity with the intervening terrain and its potential dangers. Guides working for a group or individual falling into the former category typically provide their expertise but do little more than accompany their customer. Conversely, a significant number of guides servicing the latter category generally take a more proactive role in the expedition, bequeathing not only their knowledge to their patron but also lending their sword to the endeavor.

Naturally, prices and availability fluctuate wildly throughout Wildwood. The best bargains are found in places with significant merchant or adventurer traffic such as the northern settlement of Penumbra or the port towns and villages along the two branches of the River Tanais. Because of the high demand for the profession in these areas, the vast majority of guides operating in these locales belong to a guild or similar trade organization responsible for the regulation of the industry. These associations publish set fees for their members' services and enjoy an impeccable reputation for reliability and competence amongst the general populace. Guides negotiating the well-traveled subterranean passageways leading to Eclipse charge a meager seven gold pieces per mile; whereas those trekking through the untamed wilderness surrounding the banks of the River Tanais or any other large, interior settlement receive ten gold pieces per mile or twenty gold pieces per mile for trips to ancient ruins. The rate triples if the individual also sells his fighting skills as part of the package. Renowned for their dependability and affordability, they are the best representatives of their risky but lucrative profession. Unfortunately, the quantity and in many cases the quality, decreases precipitously once a prospective employer leaves Wildwood's few notable settlements and heads into the remote interior of this feral domain.



Finding a guide in the heartlands of Wildwood often proves nearly as difficult as finding the way to the intended destination without assistance, especially in the jungle and swamp. Guides are sometimes available in the small hamlets and villages interspersed throughout the wilderness, but their competence and courage often prove questionable at best. Occasionally, adventurers can acquire the services of a nomadic druid or ranger dwelling within the region; however this is an extremely expensive and somewhat risky proposition. Although typically better equipped and more adept with weapons or spells than their urban counterparts, they also charge three to five times more than guides found in large humanoid settlements. In addition, they usually demand payment in the monetary equivalent of magic items instead of coins, gems or other valuables. Fortunately, the overwhelming majority of them are upstanding and trustworthy; however there are a few evil individuals that work in concert with the indigenous monstrous denizens to perpetrate a lethal scam. These swindlers charge less than their legitimate rivals, making their offer very attractive to cash strapped explorers looking for a bargain. After negotiating a suitable price for their services, they lead their clients into a previously arranged ambush, splitting the victims' possessions with their monstrous associates. These rare instances represent the worst case scenario for explorers hiring guides under these exigent circumstances.

Movement

The most pressing barriers to groups traveling through Wildwood via an overland route are its practically impenetrable layers of vegetation and its utter lack of passable roads. Plagued by these virtually omnipresent impediments, walking or even flying beneath the forest's canopy resembles a slow crawl rather than a brisk jog. The subsequent paragraphs describe the exact effects that each terrain imposes on overland movement. The *DMG* provides additional details on the effects of terrain in the Wilderness Adventures section. The following sections refer to the *DMG* for additional details concerning the dangers of getting lost and the exact effects of specific features encountered in these environments.

Deciduous forest: A contiguous deciduous forest covers nearly all of central Wildwood, making it the most prevalent variety of terrain encountered in the untamed domain. Because of the abundance of wildlife, there is a 25% chance of finding a navigable path through the undergrowth, allowing the character to move at his full speed. In the absence of a negotiable trail, he moves at only half his normal speed. The

Illustrated by Jeff Ward

deciduous forest is considered a medium forest when consulting the *DMG* for further guidance on adjudicating the impact of this type of terrain on adventurers.

Coniferous forest: The coniferous forest dominates the northern portion of Wildwood, serving as a buffer between the deciduous forest and the cavernous areas adjacent to Eclipse. Generally lacking the abundance of undergrowth encountered in the deciduous forest, a character's overland movement is only reduced to three-quarters his normal speed in the absence of a viable path through the trees. A negotiable path is typically present roughly half of the time. The coniferous forest is considered a sparse forest when consulting the *DMG* for further guidance on adjudicating the impact of this type of terrain on adventurers.

Jungle: Because of abundant rainfall and a sweltering climate in the general locale, the southern portion of Wildwood supports a jungle habitat. Choked by mounds of rampant, unchecked vegetation, there is only a 5% chance of locating a negotiable road through the dense maze of underbrush, and even in these instances, the character's overland movement rate is reduced to three-quarters his normal speed. Traveling through a trackless area is a tedious and laborious procedure, preventing the character from moving more than one-quarter his normal speed. The jungle is considered a dense forest when consulting the *DMG* for further guidance on adjudicating the impact of this type of terrain on adventurers.

Swamp: The southeastern edge of central Wildwood contains a constantly expanding swamp fed by the adjacent waters of the Central Ocean and nourished by the brackish waters of the River Gawalagos. Damp soil and clusters of mangrove trees make it extremely difficult to spot a trail, giving travelers only a 10% chance of discerning its presence. Creatures moving along a trail move at three-quarters their normal speed, while those making their way through the soggy bayou move at only one-half their typical speed. The *DMG* provides additional guidance on adjudicating the impact of swampy terrain on adventurers.

Caverns: Beyond the northern boundary of the coniferous forest lies a forsaken realm of holes, pits and caverns sometimes descending miles below the surface. Explorers venturing through this dark, subterranean dominion always move at three-quarters their normal speed. The caverns are considered rugged mountains when consulting the *DMG* for further guidance on adjudicating the impact of this type of terrain on adventurers.

Hazards

While the widespread proliferation of vegetation substantially impedes movement through Wildwood, it acts more as an inconvenience rather than a danger, especially in light of the other hazards faced by explorers trampling through the virgin woodlands. Undoubtedly, the vicious and generally carnivorous denizens stalking the unruly domain pose the greatest risk to adventurers. The malevolent and brutish race of green dragons occupies the highest rung of the ecosystem's food chain, devouring virtually any organic matter in their path, although they exhibit a marked preference for the taste of humanoid flesh. They inhabit every environment in Wildwood with the exception of the northern region bordering Eclipse and small sections of its swampland where they cede dominance to a small but growing population of black dragons. Below these mighty beasts, an eclectic assortment of sentient beings and ferocious predators vie for supremacy, vigorously defending their hunting grounds against intrusive rivals in a perpetual search for prey. While these powerful and renowned hunters deservedly garner much of the pioneer's attention, countless other creatures stalk the dark woods and dense underbrush in a quest for sustenance. Ranging from a vicious pack of dire wolves to a swarm of enraged insects, they present a formidable menace to adventurers irrespective of their size or species.

In addition to the proactive members of this cat and mouse game, other subtle hazards patiently lie in wait, eager to entrap unwary travelers when an ideal opportunity arises. Debilitating microorganisms waft through the damp, sweltering air, looking to infect an unwilling host. Deceptive patches of unstable earth, commonly known as quicksand appear with alarming frequency throughout much of the domain, although they are most prevalent in the jungle and swamp environments. Thickets bearing razor sharp thorns and needles block passage through many sections of the pristine wilderness, necessitating the time consuming destruction of the green barrier or its circumvention. Turbulent and fickle weather also wreaks havoc, as torrential rains and violent thunderstorms frequently roll across the verdant landscape. Flash floods present a major problem in many portions of Wildwood, especially in the southern jungle and its swamp. Again, the section Wilderness Adventures in the *DMG* as well as other ecological sourcebooks such as *Into the Green* and *Into the Black* (both from Bastion Press) amply assist in ascertaining the effects of disease, quicksand, weather and hedgerows on characters encountering these obstacles during play.

Awwengatta (The Path of Faith)

At least once during their lifetimes, dovers residing in the cosmopolitan city of Penance or one of its outlying suburbs or forests, typically make a pilgrimage to the mythical settlement of Pindara, situated in a pristine isthmus in central Wildwood between two magnificent, placid lakes. Undeniably, the spiritual and cultural hub of dover society, devout worshippers from the neighboring domain brave the long and arduous trek through the unspoiled wilderness on their sacred journey towards enlightenment and piety. While some dovers opt to lessen their burden by traveling

along the River Tanais, strict adherents to the race's religious tenets insist on following the vastly longer and more difficult overland route to fully experience the marvels of nature and achieve communion with the feral world around them. In the eyes of many devotees, the journey often proves more rewarding than the ultimate destination.

The road from Penance to Pindara begins east of the coastal settlement of Harmony, near the intersection between Penance, Wildwood and the Northern Ocean. In the dover tongue, the highway is known as Awwengatta which literally translates as "the path of faith". Strategically positioned in the northeastern corner of Penance, Awwengatta heads slightly southeast, barely skirting the southwestern banks of Wildwood's larger northern lake before abruptly ending in Pindara. Along the way, the trail passes many notable natural marvels including a series of spectacular waterfalls created by a number of smaller tributaries of Wildwood's four major rivers as well as the legendary Oak Colonnade, a unique section of the deciduous forest where long rows of entwined oak trees form a makeshift tunnel. In addition to the indigenous wonders, four marvelous shrines honoring each of the four seasons also lines the roadway. Constructed tens of thousands of years earlier by four dover druids blessed with incredible artistic ability, the temples are equidistant from one another, dually serving as landmarks and sacred places of worship for pilgrims. Because of the mystique and significance attached to the road, dover law forbids other races from venturing onto Awwengatta, although druids of all races and elves are typically afforded some latitude. Because of the volume of traffic and dovers' deliberate efforts to maintain the highway's integrity, Awwengatta is the only major road traversing through Wildwood's feral landscape.

Alternative Routes

While Awwengatta stands alone as the only significant overland thoroughfare, other methods of travel are available to adventurers seeking entry into and passage through the overgrown domain. In some circumstances, rivers offer a viable alternative to overland routes; however they often prove extremely difficult to negotiate, especially for novice sailors and provide only limited access to most interior locales. Only four waterways, Rivers Gawalagos, Hebrus, Malamba and Tanais are capable of supporting waterborne vessels. (Chapter 8 The Bounty of the Sea describes them in much greater detail.) Wildwood's two lakes present few navigational challenges, although in most cases reaching them is an arduous trek onto itself.

Aerial travel is another option, but it too presents a number of logistical and economic drawbacks. Wildwood's abundant vegetation poses the greatest obstacle to adventurers employing this mode of travel. Explorers flying above the forest's canopy can move unrestricted by physical barriers, but they can not see any features below the uppermost layer of dense leaves. In contrast, individuals flying below the canopy suffer no visual impairment, yet obstacles such as trees still impede their movement just like land-based travelers. Furthermore, methodology also plays an important role. Flight capability bestowed by spells, spell-like effects and magic items are narrowly focused in scope (affecting only one individual with each usage) and rather short-lived, making them only temporarily solutions. Airships, on the other hand, can transport substantially greater numbers, but they are extremely costly and completely unable to navigate the dense forest beneath the canopy, restricting their usefulness exclusively to long-range journeys. Unfortunately, flying objects and creatures also garner the attention of aerial predators, especially its large population of dragons.

In the absence of either of the preceding alternatives, well-traveled animal paths provide an adequate means of circumventing dense patches of undergrowth and thickets. Characters employing the Survival skill can typically locate these tracks without tremendous difficulty as long as there are enough creatures in a particular area to warrant the creation of such trails. Of course, none of the aforementioned options allows a character to avoid Wildwood's other hazards, and in some cases, travel along a commonly used animal path can lead an explorer right into the clutches of a waiting predator.

Crossing the Border

Largely bereft of any political entities or organized military force, the overwhelming majority of Wildwood's borders remain completely unguarded save for the native creatures residing within the incursion's immediate area. Wildwood's boundaries extend as far as its wildlife and vegetation can reach, halting only when impeded by the surrounding topography or neighboring civilizations. In the regions adjacent to Anvil, Arena, Eclipse and the Vault, the former situation applies as the rugged mountains, fiery deserts, dank caverns and lifeless terrain of each respective domain prevents the rampant vegetation and bestial inhabitants from annexing the neighboring territory. In contrast, Penance's rolling grasslands and numerous settlements keep the forces of nature consistently at bay, ensuring the integrity of their borders.

For the most part, the indigenous denizens generally treat individuals and small groups venturing into the domain no differently than any other type of prey. However, the appearance of large numbers of trespassers, primarily originating from Arena and Penance does not go unnoticed. Whenever ambitious merchants and warlords bent on exploiting Wildwood's natural resources despoil the land, the entire region rapidly mobilizes, typically lead by the area's resident druids and rangers. Aided by an impressive army of vicious plants and savage beasts, the defenders of the forest commence a violent and bloody guerilla campaign against the interlopers, sabotaging their efforts at every opportunity. Whatever they lack in technology or organization skills, they more than compensate for in sheer numbers, diversity of tactics, stealth and knowledge of the terrain. Nevertheless,

with the exception of the preceding scenario, most creatures cross into Wildwood with little or no fanfare.

Politics of Wildwood

Despite the absence of sprawling empires and expansive kingdoms, a surprisingly significant number of individuals and races wield tremendous influence albeit on a localized level. The numerous settlements scattered throughout the far reaches of the wild domain are the most prevalent and important sources of political power within the various regions. Although most consist of only several hundred permanent residents dwelling within an area encompassing no more than one hundred acres, a select few rival the size and scope of small cities found elsewhere on the Forge. Pindara and Vertumnos, the homes of substantial populations of dovers and elves respectively rank as the foremost examples of the exceptions to the general rule. Each city-state exerts its dominance over approximately 2,500-3,000 square miles of territory while housing roughly 25,000 members of their race. While these figures are relatively insignificant when compared to the city of Penance or the dominions of the warlords from neighboring Arena, they are as close as Wildwood gets to civilization.

Consistent with the makeup of Pindara and Vertumnos, Wildwood's settlements witness virtually no racial integration. Visitors usually blame this sociological anomaly on the residents' inherent prejudice; however rampant bigotry is only responsible for this phenomenon in some instances, primarily among races recently imported into Wildwood from distant worlds. Although Pindara and Vertumnos rigidly practice and enforce a policy excluding outsiders from entering either settlement, the sites' religious importance accounts for this doctrine rather than the residents' outlook toward other races. Nonetheless, hatred exists in some corners, especially among belligerent and aggressive races detailed later in this sourcebook such as the bern and the musai.

In contrast to the aforementioned settlements, hunting grounds controlled by a single individual or a small group are much more eclectic in their population makeup than their more sedentary counterparts. The residents consist primarily of a cast of constantly changing, nomadic followers attracted to the area by the supreme hunter's personal magnetism or the locale's physical features, such as its ample supply of fresh game or water. Although the territory claimed by these entities frequently exceeds even the largest settlements, the individual's sphere of influence remains confined to an extremely limited area, leaving most of the dominion practically unprotected and in a near permanent state of anarchy.

Irrespective of the type of political entity encountered, the entire domain including its largest settlements lacks an inherent governmental infrastructure. While some of the various city-states can field and rapidly deploy some type of military force, other institutions such as a judicial system, diplomatic corps, revenue production and law enforcement are simply non-existent. Commensurate with Haiel's simplistic ideology, only one law governs all conduct in Wildwood, "survival of the fittest".

Druids

In the void created by the lack of cohesive civil authority, spiritual guidance fulfills a necessary role in the lives of the average resident. While clerics and large-scale religious institutions attend to the needs of an urban populace, their cosmopolitan messages and requests for donations typically fall on deaf ears in the rough and tumble heartlands of Wildwood. In Haiel's savage, primitive world, the simplistic dogmas of the domain's indigenous druids resonates with the overwhelming majority of Wildwood's sentient residents. Survival in the harsh and unforgiving environment requires an attunement and affinity to nature, and druids provide their adherents with the best map to lead them through life in the primordial domain.

Druids in Wildwood believe in the same basic principles and doctrines as their counterparts in Penance, yet they are considerably more lax when it comes to enforcing their tenets. (The sourcebook ***Oathbound:*** *Plains of Penance* provides additional details regarding druids encountered in the Forge.) They also lack any formally recognized leader, prompting the circle's elder druids to assume an advisory role within the community, providing insight and wisdom to its members without exercising any real worldly authority. Despite their unwillingness to officially act in a leadership capacity, their constituents look upon them to take on this position during an extreme crisis. After much deliberation and with tremendous reluctance, one of the more experienced druids usually acquiesces to the people's demands and temporarily accepts the honor until the difficulties subside.

Druids are fairly prevalent within most humanoid societies in Wildwood, particularly among dovers, elves, humans and surprisingly, gnolls. Although generally self-sufficient, like-minded members of the class often join together and form a druidic circle, a semi-political, loosely organized confederation responsible for defending a designated territory from exploitation and harm at the hands of trespassers. Known druidic circles number as many as 1,000 individuals charged with the protection of areas measuring as large as 10,000 square miles and as small as a pair of druids maintaining only a handful of acres, but on average, the typical druidic circle numbers approximately twenty-five members responsible for the care of a 500-square mile expanse of wilderness. The circle functions primarily as a liaison between Wildwood's sentient population and its bestial residents. In many cases, a gathering of a druidic circle serves as the only recognizable forum for raising political and sociological issues crucial to the continued survival of the land and its indigenous inhabitants.

Haiel

While the other members of the Black Flock take a proactive role in shaping the political and social landscape of their respective domains, Wildwood's aloof overlord rarely interferes in the internal affairs of his subjects. As the other Feathered Fowl carefully groom promising seeds potentially capable of supplanting them from their position as one of the Forge's eternal guardians, Haiel remains perfectly content with his lot in life. Completely disinterested in fueling the boundless ambitions or encouraging the wicked machinations and schemes of his favored subordinates, he indulges his primitive urges by callously orchestrating and then observing the ultimate battle for survival as predator and prey engage in a savage game of death. Yet, there are some circumstances where the apathetic master of the untamed wilderness finds it necessary to intercede on the behalf of his domain. When such instances arise, the blade of the green immediately marshals his bestial forces and enlists the aid of indigenous druids and rangers in defense of his primeval realm.

Haiel typically rallies his troops whenever his virgin woodlands face wholesale destruction at the hands of trespassers from neighboring domains, particularly those hailing from Penance and Arena. He experiences no difficulty compelling the wild and mindless predators to ferociously attack interlopers; however he is unable to exert the same influence over the sentient population. As a result, Haiel reluctantly forges at least minimal diplomatic ties with the leaders of the most significant humanoid settlements and some of the domain's most powerful predators, although in many cases he expends as little effort as necessary in this endeavor. Lacking the subtlety of Israfel or the bombast of Barbello Haiel's efforts in the political arena seem awkward and contrived, nonetheless the novice statesman enjoys a genuinely warm relationship with a small circle of the domain's most potent powerbrokers. Sadranial, the ageless elf queen lording over the ancient settlement of Vertumnos, ranks as his staunchest ally and perhaps closest friend outside of the company of his divine counterparts. He is also on good terms with Pythia, the dover high priestess of Pindara, the Hexed, a triad of werewolves that claim large portions of the coniferous forest as their hunting grounds and Tressen Gonaway, a human hunter that stalks the domain's jungle. He remains on speaking terms with the other sentient populations although his relationships with these beings range from cordial but cool, as in the case of the domain's dragon population, to outright scorn as evidenced by Haiel's hatred for the berns (a new race described later in this sourcebook).

Foreign Relations

In many respects, external forces wield more political influence within the untamed domain than its sentient residents. While the interests of Wildwood's indigenous powerbrokers remains squarely focused on the preservation of hunting grounds and natural resources, ambitious rulers from neighboring domains view their lawless and disorganized neighbor as a treasure trove of precious commodities ripe for the picking. Aspiring generals, politicians and merchants desirous to make their mark in their own lands set their sights on Wildwood's abundant raw materials in furtherance of their dreams of military conquest, temporal authority and astronomical wealth. Regardless of their motivations, outsiders look upon the wild domain as a neglected bazaar of wondrous goods easily available for the taking.

Penance

The bloodlords of Wildwood's western neighbor easily expend more energy exploiting the domain's pristine wilderness than all of the other domains combined. Although technically not a bloodlord and no longer a resident of Penance, King Odreck Viminth, the ruler of the city of Sevenil and several nearby villages exercises more political power in Wildwood than any other single individual. (The sourcebook ***Oathbound:*** *Plains of Penance* provides additional details regarding Odreck Viminth and the city of Sevenil.) Sevenil originated in Penance; however over the course of thousands of years, construction and development slowly migrated into Wildwood as loggers moved eastward to fell more trees to meet the increasing demand. In similar fashion, other cities sprung up along the border with Wildwood, harvesting enormous quantities of timber, game, medicinal plants and other exotic goods for exportation back to Penance or one of its outlying cities. Inevitably, the working capital for this burgeoning industry emanates from the overflowing coffers of Penance's power hungry and competitive bloodlords. Utilizing proxies acting in their interests, funds continually pour into the region, as the bitter rivals endlessly vie for supremacy in the area. Despite the expenditure of tremendous financial resources and manpower, Viminth unquestionably remains the strongest force in the general vicinity.

The economic power derived from the control and exploitation of Wildwood's timber and pharmaceutical industries affords the despoiler a tremendous advantage over his adversaries. In the clandestine struggle for power between the city's elite, incredible wealth often proves more vital than military might. In a shadowy world overflowing with intrigue and avarice, money purchases classified information and at least temporary loyalty from a traitorous underling. According to an ancient adage popular amongst Penance long-time bloodlords, "a well-placed spy is far more valuable than a division of soldiers". Wildwood's natural resources afford the ambitious politician with the raw materials necessary to achieve such a feat.

Arena

In a similar vein, Arena's warlords also plunder the untended wilderness; however their efforts are typically transitory and ill conceived in contrast to the deliberate actions of Penance's bloodlords. An excursion into Wildwood usually occurs as a matter of happenstance rather than as part of a deliberate plan. Nonetheless, the battle hardened soldiers of the crimson sands despoil the virgin woodlands with

reckless glee, raping the lush greenery with ruthless efficiency and a pervasive sense of urgency. Unlike their counterparts from Penance, Arena's warlords do not endeavor to establish a permanent foothold along the edge of the savage, untamed wilderness, and instead partake in a mad scramble to fell as many trees and steal as many resources as possible before resuming their martial activities on the bloody dunes of their own violent domain.

Eclipse

A twisting maze of caverns and passageways delving deep into the craterous earth inexorably links the sister cities of Penumbra and Erebus. This vital trade corridor functions as one of the only links to Colopitiron's remote and virtually inaccessible domain. Whereas Wildwood's relationship with Penance and Arena consists exclusively of one-sided exploitation, its association with Eclipse provides for the mutual betterment of both domains. Caravans and wagon trains bearing timber, livestock, vegetables and other organic materials make the long, perilous journey through the well-traveled but still dangerous trade route connecting Wildwood and Eclipse. In exchange for its natural products, the merchants of Eclipse export gold, gems, precious metals and in some rare instances, their most valuable commodity, goddust. Mined from the deep crevasses riddling the forsaken terrain, goddust (described in the sourcebook ***Oathbound:*** *Mysteries of Arena*) is perhaps the most highly sought after commodity in the Forge. A contingent of experienced guards and a host of magical defenses always accompany a shipment of the extremely valuable product as its makes its way through the sunless depths of the Forge.

Anvil

Although Anvil's westernmost mountain range lies in close proximity to two of Wildwood's most important population centers, Pindara and Vertumnos, the residents of both domains rarely interact with one another. A modest amount of trade trickles across their mutual borders; however the volume is exponentially lower than the amount of commerce flowing to and from Eclipse. The disparity occurs not because of a lack of necessity on the part of Anvil's residents but rather as a result of the presence of merchants from Penance in Penumbra that account for the greatest percentage of commercial activity within the city. Because Wildwood lacks any recognizable economy, Anvil's residents must seek out and locate natives willing to barter fruits, vegetables and meat in exchange for inorganic products chiefly comprised of gems and metal. Unfortunately, Anvil's prospective entrepreneurs find very few creatures displaying even a passing interest in obtaining their wares.

The Vault

The savage, mindless beasts stalking Wildwood's lively jungles and forests take great pains to avoid the boundary with the Leper's lifeless realm. Sentient creatures attuned to the natural cycles of life perceive Nemamiah's domain of death and desolation as an anathema to their core beliefs. With the exception of a core handful of disreputable purveyors providing the carcasses of dead beasts and humanoids to the Warlocks inhabiting the Vault, there is practically no contact between the two diametrically opposed neighbors.

The Kiln

As the only domain that does not share a common border with Wildwood, the Kiln remains a distant and isolated world shrouded in mystery. Few residents are even aware of its existence, and most of those cognizant of its presence know practically nothing about Bathkol's enigmatic, volatile realm. The most prevalent assumption about the Kiln is that the autonomous kingdom is simply an extension of Arena or Anvil.



Illustrated by Jason Engle

Chapter 3: Ecology of Wildwood

"One could spend a lifetime cataloging every plant, insect and animal dwelling around his home and not even begin to scratch the surface of nature's endless variations."
-- Seldanne Windspry, an elf druid

Wildwood is a domain of trees and lush, beautiful landscapes. The terrain includes deciduous forests, coniferous forests, jungles, swamps, rivers and lakes. As the second largest domain of the Forge, the temperature ranges from extremely cold to swelteringly hot. Fearsome predators, sly herbivores and carnivorous plants lurk throughout its hostile environs.

Wildwood is an unnatural ecosystem. Aside from the cultures that he populates the domain with, Haiel primarily pulls predatory creatures into Wildwood. This proclivity frequently leads to the misconception amongst new arrivals that Wildwood is thoroughly bereft of non-predatory creatures. However, this notion is spawned not by their lack of numbers, but by these creatures' ability to remain innocuous, thus avoiding the gazes of would-be predators and humanoids alike. It is true that Haiel did not play an active part in their appearance; therefore most arrived in Wildwood from neighboring domains on their own accord, or they were imported into the feral domain by migrating humanoid populations, particularly along the border regions with Penance. In actuality, rodents, birds, primates and other small, sleek animals greatly outnumber their carnivorous rivals, although the dangers posed by these creatures to the humanoid population are much less than those presented by their larger and vastly more aggressive rivals.

Nonetheless, predators also face a constant struggle to survive, let alone breed. Haiel is constantly searching other worlds for new creatures to introduce into his domain, but more often than not, new creatures that are introduced fail to carve out a niche before being consumed by the other predators that live here. Successful predatory species have existed in Wildwood for hundreds or even thousands of generations. They establish their niche and then they defend it against the new creatures that would try to establish themselves within that same ecosystem.

Each type of creature that has proven successful here has adapted to the domain. In some cases these creatures are solitary hunters that overpower the smaller or slower predators. In other cases the latter creatures negate their physical disadvantages by hunting in organized groups or packs. Still others have neither strength nor speed on their side but possess some special ability that helps to ensure their survival and slay other predators. Many creatures over countless generations have adapted to Wildwood by developing camouflaged coats. Many smaller, more docile animals lead a subterranean or arboreal existence in addition to reproducing with staggering regularity.

The most successful creatures have adapted to use the trees for both hunting and survival. Some creatures hunt the wildlife on the ground and then hide from their enemies high above, near the forest's canopy. Others carve out dens within the root systems of the trees.

The plant life in Wildwood runs the gamut from standard plants found in forests throughout virtually every world, such as grasses, bushes, and green leafy plants to exotic and often alien plants. In between these two ends of the spectrum, Haiel has introduced other plants that are thorny, poisonous, or emit noxious gasses. Occasionally these plants are edible, but more often than not ingesting them provides either no nutritional value or is actually harmful. There are some plants that disguise themselves as less harmful plants, tricking creatures into eating them, something immediately detrimental to the plant, but there are often other benefits. Other plants actually lure animals into their spikey maws and then collapse, usually dealing killing blows to any creatures caught within them.

The plants here are often weeds on the worlds they were pulled from. Like the predators that live in Wildwood, the weeds also must combat other plants in order to survive. When a new weed is introduced to an area it spreads out, competing for the sunlight and nutrients from the surrounding soil. Successful weeds have managed to adapt in one of three ways: destroy other aggressive plants in the area, learn to coexist with them, or actually absorb them, incorporating them into themselves so that they may draw from their strengths.

All plants must manage to survive in an environment full of some of the most opportunistic weeds from throughout the multiverse. They must be equipped to resist the incursion of weeds, live on few nutrients, or grow in places where weeds generally do not dwell. Despite the competition, leafy plants, vegetables, grasses, and other edible plants thrive in Wildwood.

Forests

The majority of Wildwood consists of a massive deciduous forest. The soil is rich and the plant life here grows at a staggering rate. Because of this, trails and roads are a losing proposition since they tend to be overgrown with plants before they are even completed. The lush vegetation along with the unfriendly and opportunistic weeds make travel through the forests extremely difficult. In addition to the material here, it is also helpful to read chapter 1 of *Into the Green* as well as the section in the *DMG* that describes the forest terrain.

Climate

The climate throughout much of Wildwood is temperate. Because of the rapidly changing seasons in the Forge, the seasons have unusual effects upon the plants in this domain. Trees shed their leaves on an annual basis, but rather than following the same pattern

throughout the domain, they tend to do so in clusters. In some cases these clusters are as small as half a mile in diameter while in other cases they are hundreds of miles across. Many travelers find it disconcerting to be walking through an area of lush green trees and then a few minutes later find themselves passing through an area where all of the leaves have turned brown and are falling to the ground. Because the winter season happens on a monthly basis, green leaves re-grow within a month.

Temperatures in Wildwood rarely stray from a range that is comfortable to most creatures. The average daytime temperature reaches highs of approximately 55 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and cools to about 45 degrees in the evening. Varying weather patterns are normal in Wildwood, causing the temperatures to stray from the average by 20 degrees in either direction. Extreme weather is normal only three to four times a year, and during these periods the average temperature can vary as much as 50 degrees above or below the average temperature. Fog is common throughout the forests in the morning and evening hours.

Rainfall in Wildwood is greater than in any other domain of the Forge. The average rainfall in the forests is 45 inches per year, though this varies about 25 inches above or below from one year to the next. During extremely wet periods, small ponds and streams often form, though these dry up and are replaced by the usual vegetation of the area when rainfall returns to normal.

During extremely dry periods streams and lakes dry out, or at least see their water levels drop significantly. Vegetation doesn't grow as rapidly during these periods. Despite the reduced amounts of rainfall, there is never a time when the creatures and plants of Wildwood cannot find enough water to survive.

Flora and Fauna

As with all regions of Wildwood, predators sit atop the ecosystem's food chain, although their numbers pale in comparison to those of the more prolific smaller animals. Most of the commonly encountered creatures here are animals, although there are magical beasts, fey, and even occasional aberrations. The most frequently seen animals include the various types of large cats, dogs and crafty herbivorous mammals, such as rats, skunks, monkeys and even wild boar, in addition to some unusual animals, such as scavenging birds and giant insects. To supplement the monsters found in appendix C (Monsters) of this book, the creatures from *Into the Green* may be found within the forest as well as the following animals: constrictor snakes, badgers, black bears, boars, eagles, hawks, leopards, monkeys, owls, rats, ravens, and tigers.

Monsters found here include the following: araneas, assassin vines, behir, bugbears, dire animals (see above), doppelgangers, green dragons, dryads*, giant eagles, girrallon, gnolls, goblins, griffons, hobgoblins, krenshar, wereboars, wererats, weretigers, werewolfs, nymphs*, ogres, giant owls, owlbears, spider eaters, sprites*, tendriculos, treants*, trolls, and worgs (note: all monsters marked with asterisks (*) are evil versions of these creatures. Their behavior is very similar to that normally found, though their purposes and interactions tend to be of a nefarious nature).

Five different vertical zones are found in the forests of Wildwood. The first zone is the Tree Stratum zone. The Tree Stratum zone contains such trees as oak, beech, maple, chestnut hickory, elm, basswood, linden, walnut, and sweet gum trees. This zone has height ranges between 60 feet and 100 feet. The small tree and sapling zone is the second zone. This zone has young and short trees. The third zone is called the shrub zone. Some of the shrubs in this zone are rhododendrons, azaleas, mountain laurel, and huckleberries. The Herb zone is the fourth zone. It contains short plants such as herbal plants. The final zone is the Ground zone, which contains lichen, club mosses, and true mosses.

The following are some original plants that can be found in the forests of Wildwood:

Bladeleaf: These plants are green, a foot and a half tall, with wide broad razor sharp leaves, though they are edible and actually considered tasty by many creatures of the Forge when boiled. Creatures must move carefully through these plants (1/4 their base movement rate) or suffer 1 point of damage per round unless they make a successful Reflex save (DC 14).

Trippervines: These plants have a central trunk from which sprouts numerous vines. Any time a creature moves overtop one of these; they constrict and emit a noxious odor. Creatures moving over a patch of them suffer a trip attack (as though from a creature with a base attack bonus of +5) and they must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) or be stunned for 1 round from the fumes.

Poison Thorns: These plants appear to be little more than common green plants, though both their stems and their leaves are covered in thorns that deliver a deadly contact poison to struck creatures. Creatures must move carefully through these plants (1/4 their base movement rate) or suffer 1 point of damage per round and they must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) or be affected by the poison. This poison initially causes 2d4 points of Constitution damage and 1d6 points of secondary Constitution damage. Creatures affected by this multiple times do gain a resistance to it, suffering –1 to the initial damage and the secondary damage after every exposure to a minimum of 1 point of primary and secondary damage.

Adventuring

Adventuring in the forests of Wildwood is challenging on virtually every level. The thick undergrowth constitutes difficult terrain when simply traveling. It takes twice as long to move through the forests of Wildwood than it does through most terrain types in the Forge. Travelers in Wildwood are forced to blaze

their own paths through the underbrush since there are virtually no established roads or trails.

The other major hazards of traveling through the forests are the predators that stalk virtually everything that moves. Random encounters occur frequently rate, and occasionally more than one competing group of predators are encountered at the same time, creating chaotic frays where the creatures fight the adventurers and each other.

Foggy conditions reduce visibility, helping conceal predators and hiding the dangerous plants that are harmful to travelers. Rain is also fairly common, causing the ground to become wet and slick, slowing movement even further. Edible vegetation is easy to find, but the only meat is that from the predators here, which is often tough and gamy.

Jungles

The southern portion of Wildwood is warmer and receives a great deal of precipitation, causing the forest to gradually change to jungle. Like the jungles of most worlds the variety of life is greater in this region than any other environment of the Forge, save other jungles. The trees rise to dizzying heights here and have a dense canopy of leaves that actually houses an entire layer of life. In addition to the material here, it is also helpful to read chapter 2 of *Into the Green*.

Climate

The jungle climate can easily be summarized as hot and wet. Regardless of the rapidly changing seasons of the Forge, the temperature remains constant in jungle areas, causing life to thrive. Plants get the same amount of sunlight at all times, the amount of rainfall remains mostly constant, and the variation in heat isn't as great as it is in other regions of Wildwood. The jungles of Wildwood produce approximately 30% of the Forge's oxygen supply.

Temperatures in the jungle regions are an average of 80 degrees Fahrenheit, but they rarely go above 95 degrees during the day or below 68 degrees at night. Extreme temperatures may be an additional plus or minus 15 degrees, but these conditions usually only occur three to four times per year. Fog is common in mornings, evenings, and often occurs in patches throughout the daytime in many regions.

Rainfall in the jungles is a nearly constant condition. Over 100 inches of rain fall in the jungles of Wildwood every year. Because of the relatively high temperatures, the water soaks into the ground and evaporates into the air, though the amount of actual standing water is normally the same as what is found in a standard forest. During extremely wet periods, it is common for small ponds and streams to form though when rainfall returns to normal these waterways dry up and are replaced by the usual vegetation of the area.

During the rare periods that are extremely dry, the streams and lakes dry out, or at least see their water levels drop significantly. Vegetation doesn't grow as rapidly during these periods. Despite the reduced amounts of rainfall, there is never a time when the creatures and plants of wildwood cannot find enough water to survive.

Flora and Fauna

The jungle's fauna tends to be smaller and better suited for an arboreal existence than that found in other parts of Wildwood. Of course, some exceptions do exist. Most of the frequently encountered creatures here are animals, although there are magical beasts, fey, and even occasional aberrations. The most commonly encountered animals include snakes, cats, monkeys, rats and countless species of arboreal rodents. In addition to the monsters found in the appendix C (Monsters) of this book, the creatures from *Into the Green* may be found within the forest as well as the following animals from the *MM*: apes, bats, crocodiles, eagles, hawks, leopards, lizards, monitor lizards, monkeys, rats, constrictor snakes, medium vipers, tigers, and toads.

The following monsters are also found in the jungles of Wildwood: assassin vines, behir, chuul, digesters, dinosaurs (deinonychus, megaraptor, tyrannosaurus), dire animals (see above), black dragons, ettercaps, girrallon, gnolls, goblins, hobgoblins, kobolds, lizardfolk, wererats, weretigers, manticore, orcs, giant owls, owlbears, phase spiders, shambling mounds, shocker lizards, stirges, treants (evil only), trolls, worgs, and wyverns.

The humidity and the intense heat caused by the constant sunlight create conditions where the plant life consists of small green plants, which makeup the undergrowth and the massive hardwood trees that give rise to the leafy canopy over a hundred feet above. Trees and other plants that require deep roots do not exist within the jungle.

Many of the trees have straight trunks that don't branch out for 100 feet or more since it is inefficient to grow branches below the canopy where there is little light. The majority of the trees have smooth, thin bark because there is no need to protect them from water loss and freezing temperatures. It also makes it difficult for epiphytes and plant parasites to get a hold on the trunks. The bark of different species is so similar that it is difficult to identify a tree by its bark. Many trees can only be identified by their flowers.

Despite these differences, each region of the jungle has a different group of animal and plant species. Each rain forest has many species of monkeys, all of which differ from the species found a few dozen miles away. Many kinds of trees that grow in one area are nowhere to be found just a hundred miles or less away.

The following are some plants unique to the jungles of Wildwood:

Dwelling Tree: These massive trees are some of the largest trees found in any world within the multiverse. These stand an average of 300 feet tall, but it is their average diameter of 45 feet that is most impressive. These enormous trees are so large that some creatures actually built their houses thirty or forty feet above the ground by tunneling out portions of these trees. Surprisingly, despite the damage to the trees, the

tree doesn't die as long as two or three sections connecting the trunk to the portion of the tree above the dwelling remain intact. Abandoned dwellings become a permanent fixture for the life of the tree and may become the home of numerous inhabitants during the tree's lifetime.

Mantrap: These massive plants look like little more than small leafy shelters, with crosshatched branches covered with heavy leaves. This is especially inviting at night and during severe rainstorms. The plant can hold up to four medium size creatures within and it can sense the number of creatures approaching it. If a single individual of a group enters the shelter, the plant will wait for the others to enter. Once all of the party members have entered it or it is at full occupancy, massive thorn-like teeth extend from the crosshatched branches and the plant collapses upon its occupants. Creatures within must make a Reflex save (DC 20) to escape or suffer a coup de gras attack as though from a creature with an attack bonus of +15. This attack deals 3d10 points of damage and the creatures caught inside must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) or die.

Adventuring

Adventuring in the jungles is similar to that of the forests, except that in addition to the foliage, the predators, and the often harmful plant life, the traveler must also deal with the heat and humidity. Encounters with predators are even more frequent here than it is in other portions of Wildwood because of the abundance of life that exists here.

In addition to this, diseases are rampant here and their rate of contagion is higher because of the increased temperature and humidity. Creatures in the jungles of Wildwood die from disease just as often as they die from the deadly predators found here. In addition to the diseases found in the *MM*, the same diseases listed on page 29 of *Oathbound: Arena* run rampant in the jungles of Wildwood.

Coniferous Forests

The northern region of Wildwood is colder than the remainder of the domain. The deciduous forest, which covers the majority of Wildwood slowly transforms into a coniferous forest. Here most of the trees are tall and narrow, with deep roots, pine needles rather than leaves, and the seeds are contained within cones. The bark is thicker, designed to withstand the changing climate with trees standing close together to resist the icy and gusting winds. The tree and plant life here is some of the most resilient plant life in the Forge because of the extreme temperatures that these regions must often endure.

Climate

The climate through the coniferous forests of Wildwood is cold. The rapidly changing seasons in the Forge have fewer unusual effects upon the plants in this domain than in other regions. The trees and plants are able to easily weather the change in temperature, though the most noticeable effect is that during the hot portion of the month, plants dry out and turn slightly yellow while during the remaining months, their color returns to lush green and they rapidly re-hydrate.

Coniferous forests are the coldest forests of the Forge. The temperature averages 50 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and 35 degrees in the evenings, though they often vary fifteen degrees in either direction. Extreme temperatures can vary as much as fifty degrees. It isn't unheard of for these regions to go into a cold snap that brings the temperatures below zero during the evenings. Likewise, warming trends can bring the temperatures all the way into the 90s.

There is less rainfall here than in other regions of Wildwood. The colder temperatures cause less evaporation, which in turn leads to an annual rainfall of 22.5 inches of rain per year, but this may vary as much as 10 inches in either direction. Unlike the other regions of Wildwood, the rainfall almost never falls outside of the averages.

Flora and Fauna

Plants here are hardy. They can survive both extremely warm and extremely cold conditions. Because of this, many plants that are considered ordinary here are treated like weeds elsewhere. They do not die when exposed to below freezing temperatures, nor do they die in extreme heat. They quickly replenish their water supply when temperatures and rainfall normalize. The trees are made up of evergreens, firs, and smaller leafy trees that live near streams and rivers.

In ordinary coniferous trees, the seeds develop in pine cones and then are released periodically. A few species of trees depend on forest fires as a catalyst for seed release. Unlike the other trees, the seeds develop but are not released until they're exposed to the extreme heat caused by forest fires. When this occurs, the pine cones burst, releasing the seeds into the surrounding area.

Stretches of land in the areas that border the deciduous forests contain the largest trees of the Forge. Although the *dwelling trees* of the jungle are slightly larger, the "giants of Wildwood" are far more numerous. They stand in excess of 300 feet tall, towering over the mundane trees found elsewhere, and they can live between 3,000 and 4,000 years. The bark on these trees is extremely thick, thicker than most other types of trees. Outer layers of black colored bark are a testament to the fact that many of these have survived several forest fires while lesser trees succumbed to the blazes.

Large furry animals generally survive best in these forests, although subterranean dwellers also do well in this demanding climate. In addition to the new creatures found in appendix D (Monsters), the following animals can be found in the coniferous forests: brown bears, cougars (use statistics for

leopards), eagles, hawks, owls, rats, ravens, white tigers (use statistics for tigers), weasels, and wolves.

The following monsters are also found in the coniferous forests of Wildwood: blink dogs, bugbears, bulettes, chimera, dire bears, dire rats, dire wolves, green dragons, white dragons, giant eagles, ettins, frost giants, goblins, gorgons, griffons, hobgoblins, kobolds, krenshaws, werebears, wererats, werewolves, ogres, orcs, giant owls, owlbears, tendriculos, treants, and winter wolves.

The following are some plants unique to the coniferous forests of Wildwood:

Hallinus Plant: This leafy plant produces an enticing looking, but deceptive, fruit that appears similar to a peach. Biting into the fruit causes wild hallucinations for 4d6 hours and the creature must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 17) or suffer 2 points of Constitution damage. Some cultures that have existed within the jungles of the Wildwood have endured the side effects in order to indulge their senses for various purposes.

Black Snakeweed: This menacing looking plant has black tendrils that spread in all directions, ensnaring and choking the surrounding vegetation. Despite the harmful effects this plant has on other plant species, consuming it actually benefits most creatures that eat the tendrils. Eating this root heals 1d4+1 hit points per point of the creature's Constitution bonus. This effect may only occur once per day, but with a successful Knowledge (nature) check (DC 20), a character can clip the tendrils, dry them, and benefit from their consumption for 1d4 days after encountering the plant.

Adventuring

Adventuring in coniferous forests is easier in some respects than in the rest of Wildwood. Trails and roads are more easily created and because of the lower average temperature, plants usually do not re-grow as quickly here. Unlike the rest of Wildwood, movement is not impeded. In fact, the major dangers come primarily from hostile predators and dangerous plant life. The cold weather can also prove dangerous for creatures not prepared to deal with the frigid temperatures and frozen precipitation.

Swamps

The southeast portion of Wildwood is dominated by swamplands. The temperature here is warm, though not as warm as the jungle due to its close proximity to the ocean. Standing water occurs because of the region's low elevation and the high rainfall. Most of the region can be traversed by boat, though as one moves further towards the mainland, the ground becomes marshy and dangerous because of hidden sinkholes.

Rivers and streams mingle with the stagnant, undrinkable water, creating a haven for leeches, mosquitoes, and other obnoxious insects that harass many creatures that travel through these regions. This is a place rife with disease, naturally occurring poisons, and other dangers, but in this bleak environment exotic life forms that thrive on the bountiful insects are also immune to the numerous diseases, surviving under some of the most hostile conditions.

Climate

The swamplands are warm and wet. The humidity is high, often surpassing that found in the humid jungle areas. Copious rainfall is part of the reason that the waters are high, but there are a number of factors that contribute to the damp ground. Because of all the rainfall in the area and the gentle slope of the land as it runs towards the sea, rivers and streams crisscross each other, intersecting so often that it soon becomes impossible to tell which waterflow is the main channel of water downstream. Add to this lakes, ponds, and other standing pools of water that lie in the paths of these rivers and streams, and the fact that the ocean water itself seeps inland for several miles as the coastal regions maintain a level not far above sea level and what emerges is a morass of brackish water.

The average temperature in the swamps is 68 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and 58 degrees in the evening, though temperatures vary by an average of fifteen degrees in either direction. Extreme temperatures may rise by thirty degrees above the average, but no more than twenty degrees below.

The annual rainfall in the swamps is similar to the jungle areas at over 80 inches per year. The major difference between the swamps and the jungles is that without the scorching temperatures found in the jungle, the water collects on the ground rather than evaporating.

Flora and Fauna

Wildlife in the swamps consists primarily of insects, amphibians and aquatic creatures. Mammals are less common here than in other forested environments. Instead there are a large numbers of birds, lizards, and amphibians. In addition to the monsters found in the appendix C (Monsters) of this book, the creatures from *Into the Green* may be found within the swamps as well as the following animals: bats, crocodiles, giant crocodiles, wild dogs, hawks, leopards, lizards, monitor lizards, manta rays, octopus, owls, porpoises, rats, sharks, constrictor snakes, vipers, squid, and toads.

The following monsters can also be found within the swamps, aboleths, assassin vines, chuul, digesters, alasmosaurus, megaraptors, dire boars, dire rats, dire tigers, black dragons, ettercaps, girallon, goblins, gray renders, hags (most types), hell hounds, hobgoblins, hydra (all types), kobolds, lizardfolk, locathah, wererats, weretigers, manticore, medusa, spirit naga, ogres, orcs, phase spiders, rakshasas, sahuagin, seacats, shambling mounds, shocker lizards, stirges, treants (evil), will-o-wisps, and wyverns.

Plants in the swamps include a wide variety of semi-aquatic vegetation including trees with shallow root systems, grasses, reeds, and all manner of leafy vegetation. Most types of flora that survive in the

swamps must be able to survive both on land and when completely submerged in water. Many types can exist freely in both, while others normally grow on land or in water but can survive a few weeks in the opposite state.

Insects are a constant nuisance in the swamps. It is assumed that without any form of protection, a traveler will get bitten or stung on a daily basis. Every day a creature traveling without some form of protection must make a Fortitude save (DC 14) or suffer 1d4 hit points of non-lethal damage. If a creature reaches zero hit points in this way, all additional damage from insect stings and bites counts as lethal damage.

Leeches are another pest in the swamps. These creatures linger in still, brackish water and attach themselves to any creature that they are able to suck blood from. For every minute a creature spends in stagnant water, that creature accumulates 1d4 leeches. For every four leeches on a creature's body, it must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer 1 point of Constitution damage because of blood loss.

The following creatures are unique to the marshes of Wildwood:

Beaversnake: These odd creatures have the body of a beaver with the head and neck of a snake. Like beavers, they construct dams with branches and fallen trees, yet they eat live vermin like snakes. TThese creatures are not considered a worthy opponent for any skilled creatures, but they are highly poisonous and are sought after by the merchants of Penance, who harvest the venom. This venom causes an initial 1d4 points of Constitution damage and stays in the affected creature's system for 1d6 days. Each day that the creature suffers from this poison, he appears to be violently ill, as though he has influenza, and suffers 1d4 points of Constitution damage per day.

Albino worms: These worms are a pale white color and almost have the appearance of dead flesh. They live at the bottom of streams and standing pools of water, but they are useful for medicinal purposes. When captured they are bled. The liquids from the creature's body make a non-magical unguent with the same effects as a potion of *slow poison*. The bodies are dried and then reduced to powder, which has a pain killing effect that induces a temporary state of euphoria. A character that breathes in a small handful of this powder changes 2d6 points of lethal damage into non-lethal damage for 2d4 hours and gets a +4 on any saves against *fear* effects. Non-lethal damage not healed during this time period reverts back to lethal damage when the powder's effects expire.

Carrion Flyers: These diminutive birds fly in small flocks in search of carrion. They do not eat insects or other small creatures, instead feasting only upon the bodies of dead animals. These creatures are black and white with small but sharp beaks. Upon landing on a dead creature, an average flock of these birds can strip the flesh from a medium size or smaller creature in 5d12 minutes. Many cultures from Wildwood place their dead in sacred but open areas so that these birds can consume the flesh of their recently departed loved one and then inter the bones elsewhere.



Illustrated by Jeff Ward

Peat Bogs: These are not so much a single species, but are instead a substance that is vegetable in origin and contains roots, fibers, and moss in various stages of decomposition. This substance has a peculiar odor, causes fire to burn better, and mummifies most creatures that are interred into the peat bog following death. Peat bogs are found throughout the swamps of Wildwood and their combustible properties are used by many travelers who are familiar with the swampy environment.

Adventuring

The most common form of transportation through swampy regions is by boat. Rowboats, canoes, and

flat-bottomed boats are the most common vehicles used in the swamps. In addition to this, there are larger oar powered boats simply called *swamp boats* that often ply the rivers and waterways of the swamps. Swamp boats vary in size, but carry anywhere from 20 to 50 passengers. They must be small and maneuverable enough to negotiate the sometimes tight corners of the waterways.

Like the jungles, the swamps are the home of numerous diseases. Creatures in the swamps of Wildwood die from disease just as often as they die from the deadly predators here. In addition to the diseases found in the *MM*, the diseases listed on page 29 of *Oathbound: Arena* run rampant in the jungles of Wildwood.

Caverns and Pits

As northern Wildwood slowly begins to transform into the domain of Eclipse, the ground becomes much more uneven than the rest of the domain. In this region are numerous pits, which often lead to tunnels that delve deep beneath the ground. This region is still forested, though it is often broken by rocky scars in the earth. Many believe that this was caused by the stresses on the ground when the moon was ripped from Eclipse. The major inhabited areas of this region are divided between the massive pits in the ground and the subterranean tunnels.

Caverns

The majority of the cavern entrances are found within the rocky pits in the surface. Many of them are simply subterranean extensions of the pits as they go deeper and deeper into the ground. Often these subterranean passages wander for some distance at roughly the same level, making travel fairly easy, and then drop off into unseen depths. In many cases, water trickles down from the surface and accumulates in massive underground reservoirs.

The climate within is chilly because of the cold deciduous forest outside. Creatures may escape the cold and the storms outside only to find themselves freezing to death within these underground sanctuaries. The air warms as the tunnels lead deep underground, but only in very few places does it actually become comfortable, let alone warm.

The caverns are inhabited by numerous underground creatures, which feed upon the diverse types of fungus that grow on the tunnel walls, as well as each other. These creatures are extremely territorial and defend their lairs with a ferocious determination. These lairs are often the main hunting grounds of these creatures. The masters of these places are in a constant state of flux as one creature becomes the meal of another and the space becomes inhabited by its killer until another larger, creature comes through to claim it. If a predator moves in that is too powerful, it often eats the majority of the other creatures moving through the tunnels, causing the remaining inhabitants to abandon its lair in order to escape to a different tunnel system. Such exoduses cause the main predator to move to a different tunnel system, and the process of population and eradication begins anew.

Adventurers traveling through the tunnels face a non-stop struggle against the predators that reside here, and they must also navigate through the numerous naturally occurring hazards. Drop-offs, underground water reservoirs, numbing cold and fouled air are frequent adversaries of those who would travel through these regions. One feature of the tunnels that appeals to many travelers is the fact that a few of the tunnels go deep into the mountains and pass into the domain of Eclipse. Creatures who travel by stealth prefer the tunnels despite the dangers.

Pits

Massive rocky gouges in the earth itself, pits are depressions that are tens, if not hundreds of feet deep. Within are rock formations that rise up from the floor of the depression, as well as uneven ground that changes from section to section, forming maze-like walls throughout. Numerous predators live in these areas, using the difficult to navigate terrain to their advantage when hunting. Most of the inhabitants have memorized the immediate area surrounding their lairs, and they also know the routes to the edges of the pits and to the sloped walls so they can leave when need-be.

Little plant life grows within the pits and the creatures within are almost exclusively carnivores. There is little nourishment to gain from the ground and the soil is nearly non-existent. The few plants that do exist are a few sparse clumps of grass here and there, an odd shrub, or a small tree. Moss and fungus are somewhat more common than plants, and flourish since virtually none of the creatures that live here eat it.

Characters venturing through these regions face a difficult time keeping their bearings while facing the creatures that use these areas as their hunting grounds and lairs. Regardless, many must pass through these pits in order to find the entrances to the caverns. Another major danger creatures entering and exiting these areas face is the task of climbing in and out. Without the ability to fly, a creature must make a Climb check (DC 15), (DC 10 with a rope). Characters may not take 10 on this check.

Rivers and Lakes

Thousands of rivers and lakes are found throughout Wildwood. When creating Wildwood, Haiel chose not to create any mountains, so the domain has no highlands. The altitude gradually increases the farther inward one travels until they hit the center, at which time it gradually decreases until the opposite ocean is finally reached. This land structure causes streams to form near the middle of the domain, which eventually merge together into much larger rivers. These then meander throughout the domain until they finally reach the ocean. Dips and pits in the landscape often intersect with rivers, creating thousands of lakes throughout the domain. Fish, freshwater shellfish, and

other aquatic creatures are plentiful in the bodies of water throughout Wildwood.

Rivers

Rivers are formed when areas that receive rainfall must drain the excess water. Streams eventually turn to rivers as described above and these merge with other rivers, lakes, and other bodies of water on their way to the oceans. Rivers also form when water freezes in colder areas, accumulates, then warms and runs off. While no areas of Wildwood are covered with glaciers, Wildwood does serve as a drainage area for the domains of Vault, Anvil, and Eclipse.

Rivers vary from five or ten feet in width to nearly a mile from one shore to another. The velocity of the water also varies depending on the volume of water moving through the area and the slope. A higher volume of water causes a more rapid flow, while a lower volume of water causes the flow to slow considerably. Gravity is the force that powers rivers, so they tend to cover a larger area and move slower in areas with a more gentle slope while they pick up a great deal of speed and narrow in areas with a greater slope.

Because the domain of Wildwood encompasses a variety of different biomes, rivers flow through areas with wide ranging temperatures. The water temperature warms and cools dramatically as it moves through the different regions. In general, the water is fifteen degrees cooler than the daytime temperature of a given region. Even this can vary depending on the type of terrain it had covered before flowing into a biome. A river where the water has just passed through over a hundred miles of jungle and then passes into forest will be considerably warmer than a river that started in the mid-domain.

Because of the domain's topography and the course of several winding rivers, half of the rivers of Wildwood drain through the southeast section. The high volume of water runoff, combined with the land that stretches for miles just inches above sea level is the cause of the enormous swamps in that region. The remainder of the rivers are found in the central and northern portion of Wildwood and the runoff areas are well distributed, making the swamps of the southeast a unique occurrence.

Creatures journeying through the domain via the rivers may take boats, though roughly a third of them have falls at one point or another. Those who use rivers as a means of transportation have mapped out many of the rivers that are safe to travel. Known falls are reported to the few cartographers of Wildwood, and those are well marked on the maps. Not every river is mapped however, and occasionally travelers are forced to try rivers not on the map. When this occurs, they have roughly a one in three chance of encountering a waterfall somewhere down the line. Creatures caught in a waterfall suffer 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet of the fall. In addition to this, they must make a Fortitude check (DC 15 +1 per 10 feet of the fall) or be pulled far underwater upon landing at the base of the waterfall, causing them to lose all but one quarter of the usual number of rounds they can be underwater before beginning to drown. In addition to this, the DM may rule that the base of the waterfall is shallow, causing an additional 1d4 points of damage per 10 feet fallen.

Lakes

Lakes are little more than standing bodies of water. These are formed when rivers encounter depressions in the land, and in areas where natural springs are plentiful. By and large lakes have fewer inherent hazards, but instead tend to be watering holes for the predators of Wildwood, and common points where the native civilizations have chosen to build or expand into. While they lack the waterfall dangers, adventurers must always be cautious of the inhabitants of these areas.

Chapter 4: The Taming of the Wilderness

"Looking for the city marketplace or a bus? You must be from Penance young man. We residents of Wildwood live a simpler and more self-sufficient lifestyle. But maybe if you try hard enough, you might find what you're looking for."

-- William Brongard, lifelong resident of Wildwood to a newly arrived merchant from Penance.

Like every other facet of life within Haiel's primordial world of rampant vegetation and prolific wild beasts, sentient beings endeavoring to carve out lasting settlements within this feral domain realize that nature's complete subjugation remains an unattainable goal. As soon as roads are laid and buildings raised the native plants immediately attack, quickly consuming both types of structures in a mass of tangled greenery. Arable land cleared of trees and thickets awaits a similar fate as the banished foliage soon reclaims its lost territory. Hordes of hungry predators make swift work of domesticated livestock, decimating an entire herd of grazing animals in a matter of days. Agriculture, the innovation historically responsible for the birth and development of civilization, is noticeably absent throughout Wildwood; however its omission does not preclude the establishment of numerous, permanent settlements scattered throughout the boundaries of the massive domain.

Despite the aforementioned obstacles and limitations, towns and villages survive in Wildwood because the social dynamics spurring their creation differ tremendously from traditional models in many respects. Commerce is the driving force behind the development and growth of conventional cities. Civil planners intentionally construct these metropolises along vital arteries of trade, deliberately situating them in strategic locales such as the intersection of several rivers or in close proximity to a natural harbor on a well-traveled body of water. Attracted by the abundant economic opportunities, rural inhabitants abandon the countryside and move into the urban environment to ply their respective trades. In contrast, business activity is virtually nonexistent in Wildwood. Certainly there are some settlements such as Penumbra and Sevenil that abide by these rules, but these noteworthy exceptions are largely inhabited by foreigners rather than indigenous residents. Bereft of any commercial incentives, towns and villages typically evolve around a particularly important religious site, near a scenic locale or in close proximity to the ruins of a deserted city.

Other considerations also go into the planning and construction of any settlement. The locale must provide an ample supply of food, water and building materials; otherwise the city must obtain these vital commodities through trade. Once again, these requirements distinguish Wildwood's settlements from their counterparts. Normally, city dwellers depend upon massive farms along the outskirts of the city for their sustenance, whereas nearby rivers and lakes provide ample quantities of water for all residents. Nearby forests and quarries furnish architects and laborers with timber and stone to construct a diverse variety of edifices ranging from meager homes and palatial estates to simple shops and grandiose temples. On the other hand, the residents of Wildwood's communities generally do not engage in agricultural activities. They gather fruits, vegetables and other plant products from the surrounding wilderness, while hunting serves as the primary means of procuring meat. The conventional urban planner always razes forests and other natural features of the terrain to make way for development; however Wildwood's architects incorporate these elements into their design. Trees and rocks serve as the buildings' foundations rather than concrete and cement. Of course, these general restrictions apply only to settlements constructed by the indigenous population and not to the replicas that Haiel constructs.

While it is important to note the distinguishing physical characteristics between traditional cities and Wildwood's settlements, the most telling dissimilarities are the racial composition and outlook of the respective residents. Civilization's large metropolises frequently possess a heterogeneous population with a decidedly cosmopolitan mindset. People migrate to the city in an effort to better their lot in life, and the prevailing attitude reflects this conscious decision. Economic and political competition is fierce, prompting those excelling in either discipline to proudly flaunt their success. Conversely, these same values also give rise to a myriad of unwanted vices including crime, corruption and decadence.

Wildwood's natives rarely reap the bitter fruits sown by poverty and other social ills plaguing sprawling cities, yet the wild domain's settlements are not without their shortcomings. In general, the overwhelming majority of communities are rigidly homogeneous, and in many cases, extremely xenophobic. Hospitality, even among the most enlightened peoples of the forests and jungles, is not a quality synonymous with Wildwood's inhabitants. In addition to the preceding perceptions regarding visitors and other races, residents receive new ideas with the same scrutiny as unfamiliar faces. In many regards, concepts challenging archaic superstitions and traditions are more frightening than guests.

Many travelers presume that the prevailing mindset is an affirmation of the residents' primitive nature and lack of intelligence, but this conclusion belies the truth. Living in a world teeming with hostile predators and potentially destructive natural forces, Wildwood's sentient denizens face a daily struggle just to survive. Even in times of relative prosperity, resources such as food, water and shelter remain desperately scarce, allowing very few communities to share these precious commodities with someone not earning their keep. In time, an individual demonstrating his potential value to the community can thaw the typically chilly reception and become an indispensable addition to the settlement.

Pindara

Population: 19,340
Racial Makeup: Dovers 90%, humans 5%, other 5%
Major Industries: Magic items, crafted plants, guides

Overview: Pindara is the center of dover culture in the Forge. A massive city crafted from plants built on the isthmus between two lakes, Pindara stands taller than it is wide; a massive green testament to the power of nature that often elicits gasps of awe from those who see it for the first time. Pindara uses the lakes as moats, and carefully controls the access individuals have onto the strip of land where the city is built.

Dovers, nature loving canines, are drawn to the Forge from numerous worlds. Once here they often seek out homes in the wilderness, but they just as often make their homes in civilized areas. Those who choose civilization usually flock to one of two locations: Penance and Pindara. While there are actually more dovers in the city of Penance, Pindara is considered the center of their culture since they make up most of the population and it is the home of Pythia, their spiritual leader. From this location the dover culture for the entire world is established by setting fashion trends, organizing relief efforts for less fortunate dovers throughout the world, and by canonizing the deeds of their most notable members. Individuals with news from Pindara are dispatched to all of the other domains, particularly Penance, to spread the word of what transpires here. It is also well known that dover refugees that find themselves expelled from any domain's society may seek asylum here, provided that their crimes were not violent.

Pindara is built on a narrow strip of land that lies between two massive lakes. Massive plants unique to this location have been crafted to form the outlying structures and the enormous spire at the center of the city. The plants have the strength of trees, but are much more malleable, able to be molded and shaped by those who possess the knowledge and skill to craft them. From a distance the central spire appears as an impossibly tall emerald colored tower. A quarter of a mile in diameter and half a mile tall, the massive spire in the center is filled with chambers that serve all manner of purposes, from living spaces to shops, gardens, and religious shrines. Smaller spires, like branches, split off from the central structure and culminate in small peaks. Both the main column and the smaller satellite spires open up into balconies that overlook the lakes and the surrounding area. Near the tower are numerous smaller structures, some of which are spires, like much smaller versions of the central column while others take more traditional shapes, such as roughly square shaped houses, shops, and storage facilities.

Life is relatively easy for the dovers and other creatures that make their homes here. Their primary occupations include the production of magic items and horticulturists who manipulate plants to serve specific functions. Both of these industries



Illustrated by Terry Pavlet

export their goods throughout the Forge. Rangers find work here as guides, escorting travelers through the untamed wilderness. Others specialize in the growing of food to feed the inhabitants of this city, while others are hunters who brave the savage forests to bring back meat.

Pindara is ruled jointly by a council of officials elected to their positions and Pythia, who represents the religious interests of the dovers. Disputes frequently erupt between these two groups, as they struggle to deal with the problems the city faces. Problems range from maintaining an active defense versus preserving the peaceful nature of the species, the excessive taxation rate (which currently stands at an overall rate of 12%), and questions of tolerance towards the small non-dover minority.

Assets: Pindara is one of the wealthiest cities in Wildwood, benefiting from the trade of magic as well as unique plants. The vast majority of the magic items produced here have peaceful applications. It is far more common to find dover created *rings of feather falling*, *amulets of invisibility*, and other items that are not directly harmful than it is to find enchanted weapons coming from this city. That is not to say that dovers do not create magic weapons, but the vast majority of them are items that are usable to druids or clerics.

Dovers have unlocked the secret to magically changing the nature, shape, and function of plants to make them do as they wish. Some items are powered by magic while other items are more utilitarian, where shape, strength, or output (sap, berries, etc.) serve a variety of purposes. Along these lines, dovers have also been known to change the natures of noxious, invasive, or predatory plants and introduce them alongside the less desirable ones in the forest to control the many locations that are difficult to pass through because of the hostile plants that plague those areas. These plants are sold to the various groups throughout the Forge.

Pindara's wealth is split between that of the citizens, the civilian government, and the church. Individual workers tend to live comfortably while the higher government officials and the merchants are the wealthiest individuals. The church is in possession of a great deal of wealth under the control of a few very powerful individuals. Pythia may allocate church funds as she sees fit, but seldom preempts the control of her subordinates. The church holds the majority of its wealth in gold, which is secured inside their coffers in the top levels of the city's central column.

Forces: Pindara's forces number 2,000, roughly 10% of the city's total population. These are split between druids and its capable fighters. As a primarily non-violent race, the ruling council established a relationship with a human ex-warlord from Penance named Vargos Ottolan to build and train the city's fighting forces over a hundred years ago. The warlord has long since died, but the knowledge he imparted to those under his command has been passed down from generation to generation, allowing them to train an effective force of warriors, wizards, and druids, who staunchly defend their city against the hostile forces from the forest that would encroach into their peaceful civilization if given the chance.

The lakes on either side of the city act like great defensive moats. Between the great bodies of water is an isthmus that is protected by a massive iron portcullis on either side. More than half of the city's standing army is stationed at or near these points at all times, anticipating the arrival of hostile forces.

Pythia

Pythia is a female dover who serves as the head of the dover church and spiritual leader to all dovers who worship their deity Vaaldaru, Goddess of the Green. Many suggest that the great plants that collectively comprise the city's central column are an extension of the goddess herself. Pythia holds a great deal of power within the city and with the dovers that worship Vaaldaru throughout the Forge. She recognizes the power that she holds, and she uses it in a firm but kind way to guide the goddess' followers according to her vision.

Pythia asserts that it is Vaaldaru's will that the dovers act against oppression and intolerance within the Forge in an aggressive but peaceful manner. She does not condone violence and she abhors the standing army that protects the city. It is her belief that if the army were dismantled and the soldiers re-educated to make a living from non-violence, the goddess herself would protect them. While a number of the city's population questions her sanity, a growing number are beginning to take her brand of religious fundamentalism to heart and are calling for the army to be disbanded – something the council of elected officials vocally opposes.

Pythia is old for a dover at 55 years of age. Her fur has long since turned to silver and her yellow eyes look out with astonishing clarity from the age-born folds of skin on her face. Her posture is stooped and she is normally clad in simple white robes.

Pythia: Female dover Cleric of Vaaldaru 23 CR 23; Medium Humanoid; HD 23d8+69; hp 161; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+1 Dex +8 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +17 (+2 epic); Grapple +15; Atk +7 *flaming burst heavy mace* +22 melee (1d8+11 plus 1d6 fire,) or +17 natural (1d6/bite); Full Atk +7 *flaming burst heavy mace* +22/+17/+12 melee (1d8+11 plus 1d6 fire); SA Turn Undead; SQ Scent; Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; AL NG; SV Fort +16 Ref +8, Will +19; Str 7, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 20, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +23, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (nature) +22, Knowledge (religion) +28, Listen +12, Spellcraft +17, Spot +17; Brew Potion, Craft Rod, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Craft Staff, Dodge, Leadership, Scribe Scroll, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Scent: This special quality allows Pythia to detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. She can identify familiar odors just as humans do familiar sights. Pythia can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 60 feet; if downwind, it drops to 15 feet. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents, such as

skunk musk or troglodyte stench, can be detected at triple normal range.

When Pythia detects a scent, the exact location of the source is not revealed—only its presence somewhere within range. The creature can take a move action to note the direction of the scent.

Whenever Pythia comes within 5 feet of the source, the creature pinpoints the source's location.

Possessions: Boots of speed, *bowl of commanding water elementals*, *+8 bracers of armor*, *crystal ball with telepathy*, *+7flaming burst heavy mace*, 5 scrolls--*heal* (15), *helm of underwater action*, *strand of prayer bead*.

SpellsPrepared:(6/7+1/6+1/6+1/6+1/6+1/4+1/4 +1/4+1/4+1; base DC = 15 [10 + 5] (+ spell level): 0 – *create water, detect magic, detect poison, light, purify food and drink, read magic*; 1st – *bless, cause fear, comprehend languages, cure light wounds, endure elements, entangle, hide from undead, protection from evil;*, 2nd – *align weapon, barkskin, cure moderate wounds, enthrall, shatter, silence, undetectable alignment*, 3rd – *blindness/ deafness, continual flame, create food and water, dispel magic, magic vestment, plant growth, water breathing;* 4th – *air walk, control water, discern lies, freedom of movement, holy smite, neutralize poison, sending;* 5th – *break enchantment, commune, dispel evil, hallow, scrying, true seeing, wall of thorns;* 6th – *banishment, blade barrier*, *dispel magic (greater)*, *repel wood*, *word of recall*; 7th – animate plants, *control weather, cure serious wounds (mass), destruction, repulsion*, 8th – *antimagic field, cure critical wounds (mass), discern location, holy aura, spell immunity (greater);* 9th – *astral projection, etherealness, heal (mass), miracle, shambler*.

Domains: Good (good spells are cast at +1 caster level); Plant (Rebuke or command plants as an undead cleric commands undead).

(Deity) Vaaldaru: Alignment: N Good; Domains: Air, good plant; Typical Worshipers: dovers, druids, paladins.

Vertumnos

Population: 16,097

Racial makeup: High elf 65%, wood elf 26%, wild elf 9%

Major Industries: Fishing

Overview: Less than one hundred miles from the western shore of Lake Amuwatu in a remote and isolated portion of central Wildwood sits the renowned elven settlement of Vertumnos. Founded more than 20,000 years earlier by its ageless queen, Sadranial, the wondrous village serves as a testament to the race's architectural genius and affinity for the natural world. Meticulously crafted wooden, spiral staircases bearing countless bas relief carvings encircle the broad trunks of ancient trees, providing access to the multilayered complex of interconnected structures spread out over twenty-five square miles of tranquil forest. In a masterful demonstration of designing ingenuity, the elves utilized the existing trees for a variety of engineering purposes. Some trees serve as a foundation for small, circular buildings wrapping around their trunks, while others act as support columns for larger structures. An intricate network of flexible bridges links the separate units together, enabling residents to walk from one end of the village to the other without setting foot on the ground. The dizzying maze of catwalks converges at the midway point of an immense oak towering 400 feet above the ground and measuring more than 60 feet in diameter. Vertumnos' reclusive monarch, Sadranial, resides within the hollowed trunk of the massive, gnarled tree that contains fourteen rooms connected by twisting, vertical corridors. Safely nestled within the confines of her wooden fortress, the settlement's queen attends to the community's needs while secretly continuing her magical research.

Occupying a position of central importance, Sadranial's arboreal abode is the settlement's hub of activity. The impressive structures just beyond its outermost branches house Vertumnos' most illustrious citizens including its most influential druids and best warriors. In many circles, the proximity of an individual's residence to the lair of the village's timeless ruler acts as an important status symbol. Most elves acquire their typically humble residences through inheritance; however Sadranial reserves a circle of prestigious dwellings around her home as a reward for elves performing remarkable services in her name or for the betterment of the community. Beyond this ring of opulent treetop estates lies the balance of Vertumnos' comfortable and cozy living quarters. Not surprisingly, extended family members tend to cluster in one particular locale, subdividing much of the arboreal settlement along familial boundaries. As a result of this peculiar arrangement, wood and wild elves remain confined to a few areas giving visiting elves the impression that Vertumnos actually consists of three separate communities delineated purely by race.

As soon as one ventures down from the trees and onto the surface, the strict regimentation miraculously disappears. The bountiful harvest of luscious fruits, berries and exotic vegetables gathered from the verdant shrubbery and smaller trees is fair game to all residents. Gentle streams of sparkling, clear water emanating from Lake Akyranna, a small, placid body of water situated on the outskirts of the settlement, nourish the flourishing greenery with vital nutrients and copious moisture. In addition to feeding these crucial arteries of water, the lake is also well stocked with a diverse variety of marine life that comprises a substantial portion of the residents' diet. Plump fish and tasty crustaceans trolled from its glistening depths are legendary, culinary treasures prized by chefs and connoisseurs throughout the Forge. Although these mythical delicacies are enough to satisfy the discriminating palettes of its high elves, wood and wild elves prefer wild berries and fresh game procured from the surrounding wilderness. While the hunt plays an integral role in the lives of all elves, the latter subraces occasionally accuse their more sophisticated brethren of abandoning their feral heritage and adopting a domesticated lifestyle. Despite this infrequent undercurrent of resentment, most inhabitants harmoniously coexist with their fellow elves. Unfortunately, this generally peaceful

relationship does not extend to some of the monstrous denizens sharing the land with the elves.

With a penchant for elf flesh and a primordial lust for magical creations, green dragons pose the greatest threat to Vertumnos. In actuality, Sadranial established the elven enclave to act as a fortified stronghold against the voracious and avaricious predators. Although the formidable beasts claimed their share of victims over the ensuing millenniums, the elves kept their foes at bay and eventually began to make some inroads against them. Sadly, their slow but steady progress came to a screeching halt more than six centuries ago with the terrifying appearance of Wildwood's most potent resident, the hideous great wyrm, Mastuu Dargus. The ensuing struggle rapidly escalated before culminating in an epic battle between the envious green monster and the immortal queen of Vertumnos aided by a contingent of her most renowned soldiers. Sadranial's awesome display of mystical might illuminated the sky for miles around, while the wicked dragon's searing cones of corrosive fumes and brute strength decimated the pristine forest. When the smoke cleared, the battered elf queen and the gravely wounded dragon stood alone in a razed field of smoldering trees and lifeless, mangled bodies. The surviving combatants limped back to their respective lairs, leaving an unofficial and uneasy truce in their wake. The tense situation persists to the present day, but Sadranial fears that a sudden and noticeable intensification of her draconic foe's activities signals that another confrontation looms in the imminent future.

Assets: Seafood culled from the bountiful depths of nearby Lake Akyranna easily ranks as Vertumnos' most sought after commodity followed by its diverse harvest of exotic fruits, vegetables and berries. In addition to its bevy of natural products, the settlement and its surroundings are universally considered as one of the Forge's most beautiful and breathtaking sights, second only to Pindara. Unfortunately, it is impossible to verify the preceding claim because elves are the only race ever to set eyes upon this spectacular scenery. Sentries manning the perimeter prohibit all non-elves from entering the settlement. As a result, an exclusive guild of elven merchants from Penance are the only variable source of these tales and provide the only means of importing Vertumnos' marvelous treasures to the expectant tables and banquet halls of the Pedestal's bloodlords and wealthiest residents.

Forces: Vertumnos is one of the domain's few settlements that can muster a professionally trained and equipped army in relatively short notice. A disciplined and skilled force of 750 rangers under the command of Aralon Rolontus (High elf male, Rgr 16) constantly patrols the woodlands surrounding the settlement. Their furthest outposts extend more than fifty miles from Sadranial's home, but they are most heavily concentrated within the five mile radius surrounding the outskirts of the settlement. In addition to the soldiers, an eclectic array of animal companions and mounts also stands at the ready to join any fray.

Sadranial

Although Haiel rarely pulls individuals into his feral domain, some characteristic about this extraordinary female elf inspired him to draw her into Wildwood some 20,000 years ago. After surviving her initial ordeal in the primeval realm, the resourceful elf discovered an astounding secret that changed her life and forever altered the destiny of Wildwood. While venturing through the woods, she came upon a magnificent and seemingly timeless oak tree soaring high above the forest. Intrigued by the anomaly, she employed her divination magic and knowledge to discern the meaning of this strange phenomenon. She soon learned that the tree stood on the exact site where Haiel slew an immortal being several thousand years earlier. After several unsuccessful experiments, the crafty sorcerer concocted a powerful potion from the dried leaves and powdered bark that bestowed eternal life and youth to the relatively youthful woman.

Although initially disturbed by this unforeseen chain of events, the blade of the green struck a bargain with the precocious seed. Haiel allowed her to continue brewing the potion as long as she maintained the elixir's secrecy and did everything in her power to control the dragon population. Sadranial accepted the great hunter's proposal and immediately began the critical task of constructing the elven stronghold of Vertumnos.

Haiel and Sadranial speak on a fairly regular basis, especially about their growing concerns about Mastuu Dargus and the growing power of the domain's dragons. As a result, Sadranial occupies much of her time gathering intelligence about the locations of the reptiles' lair, their strength and their current plans. Despite the lack of concrete evidence supporting her theories regarding an imminent assault, she conclusively believes that some complex machination is afoot.

Sadranial, Female High Elf, Sorcerer 22/Loremaster 8/FoMnd 3: CR 33, Medium humanoid (elf); HD 22d4+66 plus 8d4+24 plus 3d4+9; hp 179; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 30 (+11 armor, +4 Dex, +5 deflection) touch 19, flatfooted 26; BAB +17 (+7 epic); Grapple +13; Atk +*6 dragon bane dagger* +26 melee (1d4+8/19-20 x2); Full Atk +*6 dragon bane dagger* +26/+21 melee (1d4+8/19-20 x2); Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.; SA spells SQ Low-light vision, elf traits, loremaster secrets (secrets of inner strength, the lore of true stamina, secret knowledge of avoidance, weapon trick), lore, greater lore, summon familiar; AL NG; SV Fort +17, Ref +18, Will +28; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 20, Wis 26, Cha 27.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +12, Bluff +10, Concentration +32, Craft (alchemy) +24, Decipher Script +15, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +14, Handle Animal +15, Heal +16, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +29, Knowledge (architecture & engineering) +23, Knowledge (geography, Wildwood) +24, Knowledge (local, Wildwood) +20, Knowledge (nature) +22, Knowledge (religion) +8, Knowledge (the planes) +20, Listen +12, Move Silently +6, Search +10, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +30, Spot +11, Use Magic Device +12; Brew Potion, Craft Rod, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Empower Spell, Greater Spell



Penetration, Maximize Spell, Skill Focus (Knowledge (nature), Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration, Widen Spell.

Languages: Avian, Canine, Common, Dover, Draconic, Elven, Feline, Gnoll, Green, Sylvan.

Possessions: *+11 bracers of epic armor*, *+5 ring of protection*, *ring of evasion*, *+6 dragon bane dagger*, *cloak of the manta ray*, *gem of seeing*, *medallion of thoughts*, *robe of stars*, *wand of fog cloud (11, 22 charges)*, *wand of hold person (12, 33 charges)*, *wand of scorching ray (14, 38 charges)*, scroll: *greater scrying (16)*, *legend lore (16)*, *protection from spells (16)*, *sunburst (16)*, *time stop (16)*.

Sorcerer Spells Known (*Sorcerer spells per day* 6/8/8/8/8/7/7/7/7/6; base save DC 18 + spell level, evocation base save DC 19 + spell level; 0-level—*acid splash, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, mending, message, ray of frost, read magic, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*detect undead, identify, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd—*detect thoughts, gust of wind, mirror image, scorching ray, web* ; 3rd—*arcane sight, dispel magic, rage, suggestion*; 4th—*fire shield, greater invisibility, locate creature, scrying*; 5th—*blight, prying eyes, teleport, wall of stone*; 6th—*legend lore, shadow walk, transformation*; 7th—*greater arcane sight, greater scrying, waves of exhaustion*; 8th—*moment of prescience, power word stun, protection from spells*; 9th—*foresight, meteor swarm, wish*.

Gifts: Intuitive, Scent, Trailblazer, Undetectable (earned).

Boritarra

Population: 2,382
Racial makeup: Human 65%, Elf 18%, Dover 10%, Frey 4%, Gnomes 3%
Major Industries: Airship construction and transportation, coal

Overview: Nestled less than twenty miles from the border of Penance within the untamed land of Wildwood lies one of the Forge's most modernistic settlements, the burgeoning airship hub of Boritarra. Although merely in its infancy, the steadily expanding transportation center has rapidly evolved from nothing more than a ramshackle hangar along the edge of a deserted clearing into a sprawling complex of six massive hangars, a large terminal building and a swiftly developing residential district. The bold, innovative construction project began as the single-minded vision of Narbrith Jall, a fabulously wealthy human merchant whose vast fortune is only rivaled by the cryptic aura of mystery surrounding him. The reclusive genius is rarely seen, and information about his enigmatic past remains utterly elusive; however there is no denying that the ingenious builder and his amazing business venture stand on the brink of altering the landscape of Wildwood forever.

Boritarra is located approximately one-half mile north of the eastern branch of the River Hebrus, seventeen miles past the border settlement of Ward. Despite competition from the easily accessible nearby waterway, the fledgling development enjoys several distinct advantages over its traditional rival. Ten miles after passing the dock leading to the airship

Illustrated by Terry Pavlet

hub, the river divides into a host of treacherous and circuitous tributaries. None of these smaller rivers are navigable by a vessel larger than a longboat; therefore their commercial significance is minimal at best. On the other hand, Boritarra rests atop a broad, rocky hill incapable of supporting any variety of plant life other than grasses and hardy shrubbery. From its slightly elevated vantage point, it is possible to see almost ten miles in every direction on a clear, sunny day. Although it would seem that Boritarra and the River Hebrus are at odds, the renowned body of water provides the isolated settlement with a steady supply of passengers and cargo from the adjacent domain of Penance along with substantial quantities of food, clothing and other manufactured goods for its markets.

An immense wharf manned by scores of freighters utilizing the most sophisticated equipment provides access to the transportation hub for its living and inanimate payloads. The large pier and its employees are capable of simultaneously servicing six ocean-faring galleys should the need arise; however in its brief history there has never been more than three ships docked at the same time. A conveyor belt powered by the river's current shuttles passengers and cargo alike from this location to the terminal building sitting atop the apex of the hill. Within the spacious confines of this hexagonal, stone structure, valets, porters and laborers collect fares and then escort travelers and their baggage to one of six gates that provide direct access to an airship moored outside of the building. Although Boritarra provides regular passenger service to a few specific destinations scattered throughout Wildwood, chartered flights comprise the much greater percentage of its airborne traffic. Affluent merchants from Penance usually rent the vessels to ship goods to a number of cities and ports throughout the Forge with a smaller percentage utilizing the revolutionary mode of transportation for leisure purposes. Costs vary wildly depending upon the cargo's weight and the distance between destinations. Generally, passengers pay a fare of 5 sp per mile traveled while commercial operators are charged a rate of 2 gp per mile for every ton of cargo. Additional surcharges are typically tacked on for carrying delicate or perishable merchandise requiring special handling or increased expediency.

Naturally, this sophisticated operation requires the expertise of skilled craftsmen and laborers. To meet these demands, Narbrith Jall provides his highly valued workforce with handsome salaries and free housing in one of the eighty three-story apartment buildings encircling the central terminal. Pilots, engineers and other critical personnel reside within extravagant two bedroom suites boasting an array of amenities whereas the majority of Boritarra's permanent residents dwell within functional studio apartments. Numerous shops, restaurants and inns service the insular community as well as Boritarra's tourists and visitors. Beyond the perimeter of this residential and commercial ring lay eight gigantic hangars where the settlement's fleet of airships are stored and constructed. Measuring roughly 300 feet in length and 100 feet in width, the sixty foot high structures with an arched roof hold a spectacular collection of sophisticated machinery, equipment, fuel and spare parts as well as two twenty ton airships. In addition to its practical usages, the hangars also support elaborate testing facilities where gnomish inventors originally hailing from Eclipse constantly tinker with the vessels' aerodynamic design and propulsion systems under Narbrith Jall's guidance and direction.

Assets: After six years of virtually nonstop labor, Boritarra now boasts a fleet of six airships ranging in size from diminutive four ton passenger vessels to twenty-five ton cargo vessels with another four ships at varying stages of development. In addition to constructing ships for its transportation operation, Narbrith Jall and his gnomish engineers are currently designing combat airships capable of assaulting aerial opponents or ground-based forces. Almost all of Penance's bloodlords are displaying a keen interest in Boritarra's proposed venture, although the steep monetary costs and unproven track record of such a weapon seems to be tempering their enthusiasm about the project. Nonetheless, Narbrith remains supremely confident that he can sell at least five of these mighty fifty-ton ironclad dreadnaughts for no less than 150,000 gp each. Fearful of arousing Haiel's ire by mining for the vital metal within the confines of Wildwood, Narbrith's agents are currently negotiating the purchase of 250 tons of iron from Hateni, a warlord from neighboring Arena. In fact, nearly all of Boritarra's raw materials except for the coal used to fuel its impressive flotilla are imported from Penance and Arena, a business practice designed to keep the bustling hub from attracting Haiel's unwanted attention. Coal is obtained from a mine beneath the central terminal building accessible via a network of tunnels and shafts far below the surface. (*Airships*, a supplement also available from Bastion Press provides much greater details on these vessels. Coal burning engines function in a manner identical to wood burning engines except catastrophic failure results follow the rules for oil burning engines.)

Forces: Boritarra boasts a security force of 100 lightly armed soldiers that predominantly serve as a police force, keeping the peace within the community and preventing theft. In addition to this unit, the settlement also benefits from the protection of the bloodlords of Penance, any of whom would construe an organized attack against the airship hub as a potential act of war. In addition to the threat presented by ground based assaults, aerial pirates and dragon pose a significant danger to Boritarra's fleet of airships while in flight. As a result, the entire armada is equipped with an array of armaments ranging from ballistas and dart launchers on its smaller ships to fire throwers, ram spikes and razor launchers on its larger vessels. As a result of these precautionary measures, Boritarra has only lost two ships to attack over the last six years.

Narbrith Jall

It is difficult to imagine that any one man could accumulate enough wealth over the course of a single lifetime to finance a construction project on the grand scale of Boritarra; however Narbrith Jall is not bound

by the constraints of mortality. Now entering his ninth century, the brilliant, eccentric inventor's masterful scheme is slowly advancing toward its intended conclusion, to destroy Haiel's citadel and exact revenge on the callous entity that shattered his world.

Born into a life of astounding privilege in the culturally and technologically advanced city of Izymar, Narbrith Jall spent his formative years under the tutelage of his esteemed father, universally considered by his peers as the greatest engineer of his age. Aided by his family's incredible wealth and his father's doting supervision, the amazing prodigy exceeded his noteworthy parent's accomplishments by the tender age of fifteen. Narbrith enjoyed an idyllic life, basking in the enormous riches and adulation showered upon him by his colleagues and an adoring public, yet the young man's charmed existence proved short-lived. Izymar's sophisticated culture and its urban citizenry finally captured the attention of Wildwood's manipulative caretaker who unilaterally decided to test the mettle of the city's cosmopolitan populace. After spending three weeks fabricating an exacting facsimile of the resplendent metropolis, the blade of the green pulled 2,400 of its startled and disoriented residents, including Narbrith and his family, into the precise replica. Without warning, savage packs of wild beasts and carnivorous plants poured through the congested streets and alleyways, mercilessly slaying their hapless victims in a sickening display of mindless carnage. From his secure perch within an isolated tower in the city's research facility, the distraught youth watched helplessly as his friends and family succumbed to the monstrous denizens indiscriminately killing everyone in their wake. He remained barricaded within the cramped room for nearly two weeks until the tumult finally died down. When he finally emerged from his tight cell, the gravity and magnitude of the situation became readily apparent. Rivers of dried blood snaked a meandering course between the fissures of the cobblestone streets, while mounds of half-eaten, horribly mutilated corpses sometimes three or four deep littered practically every thoroughfare and alleyway. The gory, heartbreaking images left an indelible mark on the impressionable youth, transforming the vibrant, jovial child into a bitter and broken young man. The despondent Narbrith aimlessly waded through the unspeakable carnage, seemingly resigned to his destiny to join the ranks of the dead until a compassionate druid that had witnessed the devastation came to his rescue. The aging human provided the emaciated Narbrith with his first real food and drink in nearly two weeks. Without a home to return to, the old man named Arax Woll took him into his residence and treated him like the son he never had.

Narbrith settled into his new existence fairly quickly, but the horrible scenes of Izymar's annihilation and the loss of his entire family haunted his thoughts and dreams. Although he came to appreciate the wonders of the natural world under his surrogate father's guidance, he could not bring himself to forgive the cruel being that devastated his world for the sole purpose of satisfying his curiosity. When Arax died twelve years later, he solemnly vowed that nothing, not even death, would prevent him from exacting retribution from Wildwood's callous jailor. Within less than a year after Arax's mortal demise, Narbrith underwent the metamorphosis from life to undeath as a vampire.

No longer impeded by any time constraints, he methodically formulated a grandiose scheme to topple Haiel from his lofty position. To accomplish his goal, the singularly minded Narbrith utilized his newfound powers and abilities and amassed an immense personal fortune, stealing treasures from the domain's monstrous denizens while scavenging Wildwood's countless ruins for magical and archaeological artifacts. In an effort to make better use of many of the arcane wonders that he discovered, the intellectual student embraced the study of the mystical arts, quickly accumulating and creating a formidable arsenal of incantations and devices. After more than eight centuries of pilfering riches from the feral wilderness' most frightening predators, Narbrith finally had enough coinage and influence to make Boritarra a reality. Ultimately, the vengeful vampire wants to build a fleet of warships, unwittingly financed by the bloodlords of Penance, with the intention of attacking Haiel's citadel and physically destroying the gargantuan edifice with a massive volley of artillery fire aimed at the structure's base. From his secluded and magically warded lair far below the surface of Boritarra's central terminal, the obsessive vampire broods over every exacting facet of his carefully devised plan, patiently waiting for the day when he administers his bitter medicine to the Feathered Fowl responsible for ruining his life. Even by his most conservative estimates, Narbrith is less than a decade away from fulfilling his eternal ambition.

Narbrith Jall, Male Human Vampire, Expert 10/ Wizard 9: CR 20, Medium undead; HD 19d12 plus 3; hp 140; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25 (+4 armor, +5 Dex, +3 deflection, +3 natural) touch 18, flatfooted 20; BAB +11/+6/+1; Grapple +15; Atk +15 melee slam (1d6+4); Full Atk +15/+10/+5 melee slam (1d6+4); SA blood drain, children of the night, dominate, create spawn, energy drain, spells SQ alternate form, DR 10/silver and magic, fast healing 5, gaseous form, cold and electricity resistance/10, SR 15, spider climb, turn resistance; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +15, Will +23; Str 18, Dex 20, Con --, Int 24, Wis 22, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14, Concentration +12, Craft (airship) +25, Craft (airship engine) +25, Decipher Script +20, Diplomacy +15, Hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +30, Knowledge (architecture & engineering) +34, Knowledge (nature) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +19, Listen +17, Move Silently +13, Profession (engineer) +33, Search +15, Sense Motive +26, Spellcraft +22, Spot +17, Survival +11, Use Magic Device +11; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative,

Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Skill Focus (Knowledge-architecture & engineering) & Profession (engineering), Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

Languages: Canine, Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Infernal, Sylvan.

Possessions: *+4 bracers of armor*, *+3 ring of protection*, *rod of metamagic- maximize lesser, staff of necromancy (30 charges), cloak of resistance +2, pipes of haunting, horn of blasting, crystal ball, drums of panic*, *wand of ray of exhaustion (7, 26 charges)*, *wand of sleet storm (5, 13 charges)*, scroll: *cloudkill (9)*, *contagion (9)*, *enervation (9)*, *symbol of pain (9)*.

Typically prepared wizard spells (*Wizard spells per day* 4/6/6/4/3/2; base save DC 17 + spell level; 0-level—*detect magic, flare, read magic, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*cause fear, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, sleep, true strike*; 2nd—*command undead, false life, ghoul touch, touch of idiocy, web, whispering wind* ; 3rd—*blind, lightning bolt, secret page, vampiric touch*; 4th—*bestow curse, contagion, shout* ; 5th—*cone of cold, wall of force*.

Gifts: Focused (necromancy)

Penumbra

Population: 15,250
Racial Makeup: dovers 27%, elves 33%, humans 15%, lunars 10%, nightlings 15%
Major Industries: Exploration, Textile, Trade

Overview: The settlement of Penumbra lies near the boundary between the coniferous forest and the caverns and pits marring northern Wildwood. This city serves as a vital trade stop along the well-traveled route between Wildwood and Eclipse. This city has no government, leaving the leadership to the heads of the various organizations that exist here (the most notable of which is the local thieves' guild), which creates an anything goes, rough and tumble free-for-all within the city. Numerous commodities can be purchased from street vendors and many merchants meet with others to offload their wears. Also prevalent is the trade of goddust. Organizations that exist here include the thieves' guild, the rafters, the Free Trade Association, and the Textile Worker's Guild.

Lacking a central authority, Penumbra is little more than a sprawling collection of squat houses, enormous storage structures, lavish headquarters for the organizations that exist here, and textile houses. There are three taverns and five stables located here, as well as a brothel. The southernmost portion of the city is devoted to docks. Near them are warehouses, and then as one moves inland, shops start to appear, followed by private residences and organization headquarters and chapterhouses.

The people of this city are forced to live in some semblance of harmony without any sort of governing body enforcing the peace. Those who possess an ounce of wisdom are careful of who they exchange words with, especially if those words are heated. Any individuals backed by powerful factions within the city tend to roam around causing trouble with members of opposing groups, though at the same time these conflicts rarely erupt in armed conflict. The one thing that the people here realize is that in order for this settlement to function and allow them to continue living the lifestyle they are accustomed to, they must avoid faction wars. The large dover population here actively discourages violence by breaking up fights whenever they occur. Regardless of the factions' attempts to coexist, there are still newcomers to the city who do not obey the unwritten laws and agreements known to residents. Penumbra's murder rate is higher than that found in most comparably sized cities, but 90% of those murders are committed by outsiders against outsiders.

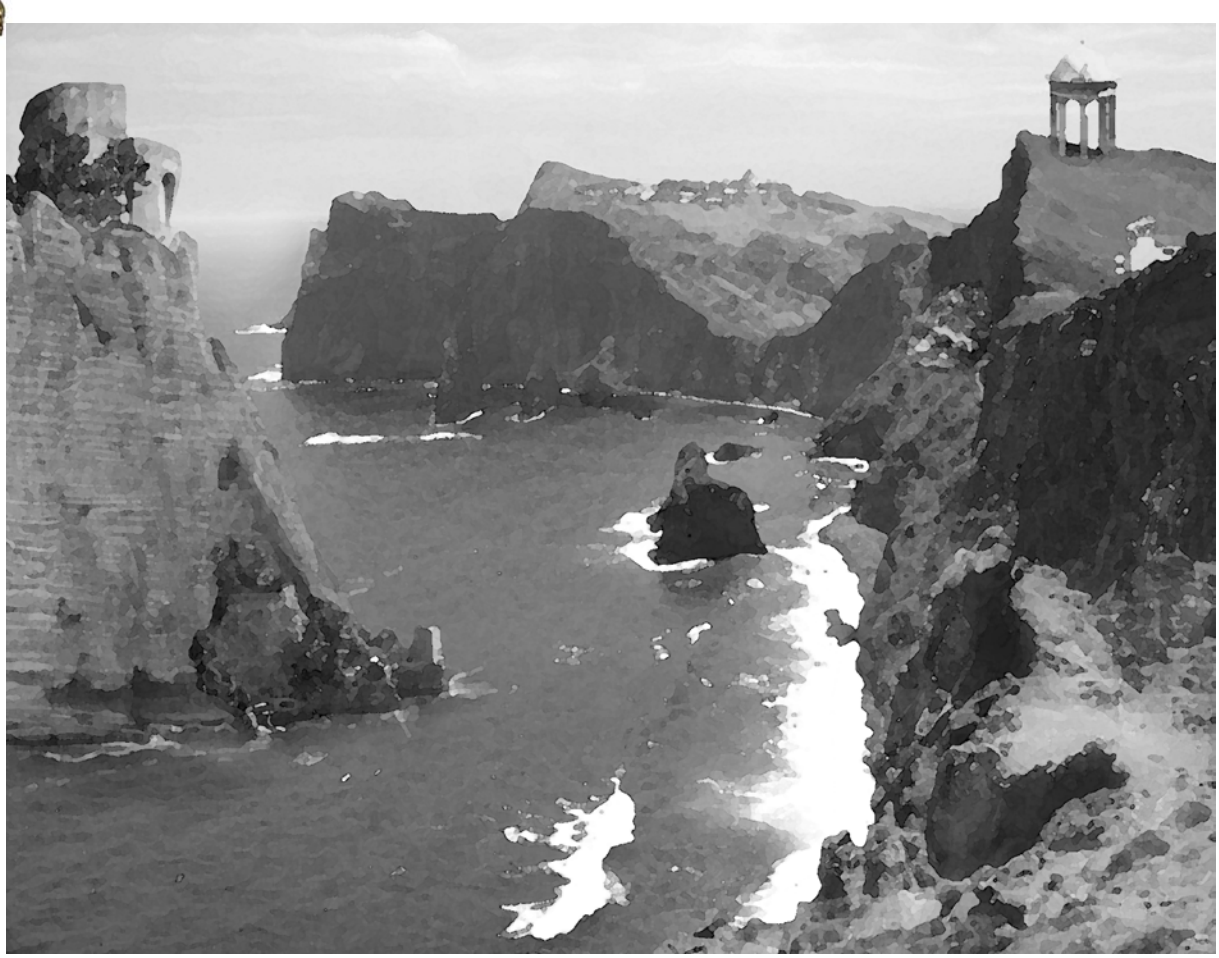
The peace is often fleeting here. The single most important industry is trade, though merchants are both encouraged and preyed upon since the most powerful group is the thieves guild. The guild operates openly, demanding protection money from the businesses that do not wish to lose as much as 10% of their goods to theft. Merchants passing through are used to losing up to 10% of their goods to theft. Those who wish to avoid the pestilence of thievery offer an equivalent amount of gold directly to the guild in exchange for their protection.

The power of the thieves' guild is not accidental and they actively discourage the development of any form of law here. Aside from the items that they acquire, they are also the main traffickers of goddust (see *Mysteries of Arena*); something that would likely come to an abrupt end if a local constabulary were to be established. Most of the residents here turn a blind eye to the trade of this intoxicant, though there are a large number of citizens pushing for the establishment of some form of law enforcement so that the often destructive trade of this substance can be stopped, or at least slowed and driven underground.

Another major group that is active here is the rafters, which lead frequent expeditions into the caves in the mountains to the north. Numerous explorers come to Penumbra in hopes of finding wealth and glory in the caves, but in order to get there they usually seek out guides. They also serve as an annoyance to the thieves' guild, occasionally conducting raids on the guild's storehouses. Though their numbers are not great enough to ever establish order here or drive the guild underground, they are powerful enough to protect themselves and occasionally cause disruptions to the thieves' guild's operations.

Despite rampant thievery, trade is the major industry here. A constant exchange of goods is conducted between the domains of Eclipse and Wildwood. Commonly traded commodities include produce, numerous types of metal, harvested plants, clothing, and magic.

The textile mills, which employ the majority of the non-merchant residents in the city, sell all manner of clothing to the merchants that pass through here. Their products include virtually every type of clothing made from woven fabric, including pants, hose, shirts, socks, hats, and gloves. As the one major product of this city, the thieves' guild largely consists of members from Penumbra, whose families work at these mills. Because of this, the thieves' guild secretly offers their protection services to these businesses free of charge. That does not mean that textile mill employees



Illustrated by Terry Pavlet

themselves are immune to theft, but the guild does not rob the houses themselves.

Assets: The assets of Penumbra are difficult to judge because of the constantly changing nature of its inhabitants. The thieves' guild possesses a wealth of gold, gems, magic items and trade goods, which are housed in numerous secret locations throughout the city. As expected, the largest cache of goods containing their most valuable treasures exists in the heavily fortified guild headquarters.

Forces: Penumbra has no forces to speak of. Approximately 25% of the dover population are rangers, and they have an agreement with the various guilds within the city to hunt or push away the predatory creatures from the forest that wander too close to the city. Few residents fear an invasion by another city's forces. Since the inhabitants of Penumbra are so factional, there is little here that appeals to a conqueror. If the city were to face an invading force, they would likely band together to defend themselves in short order, but to date there has been no cause to do so.

Canopus

Population: 2,495
Racial Makeup: Humans: 45%, Elves: 19%, Dovers: 12%, Frey: 10%, Nightlings: 6%, Pickers: 4%, Other: 4%
Major Industries: Tourism, shipbuilding

Overview: Roughly two hundred miles northeast of the border between Penance and Wildwood lies the luxurious vacation destination of Canopus. Renowned for its spectacular beaches, wondrous scenery and opulent accommodations, the exclusive resort is a popular stomping ground for the Pedestal's wealthiest citizens and most important political figures. Local businesses spare no expense pampering their illustrious clientele, indulging their every whim albeit at a steep cost. Canopus boasts twelve hotels, nearly 100 restaurants, six full service spas and an assortment of other industries catering to the needs of its guests. While the overwhelming majority of vacationers remain within the secure confines of the resort village, more adventurous souls brave a harrowing trek into the nearby wilderness accompanied by a team of guides and hunters supplied by all of the major hotels. In addition to its land-based attractions, countless pleasure craft and fishing vessels captained by accomplished seamen roam the open waters of the adjacent Northern Ocean. Whether one comes to Canopus to simply relax or actively explore the natural world, the resort offers some activity to captivate the interest of every visitor.

Canopus sits at the mouth of a natural harbor along the southern shores of the Northern Ocean. A pair of rough hewn cliffs soaring more than 100 feet above sea level provides the inlet a measure of protection against the pounding waves and relentless surf of the Northern Ocean. Atop these steep cliffs stand a number of magnificent marble

and granite villas that overlook the village and inlet below. Reputedly owned by Penance's bloodlords and their closest associates, the mysterious mansions inspire wild rumors and innuendo about their elusive occupants and their seemingly clandestine activities. Beneath these bastions of intrigue lies the village and resort of Canopus proper. Built roughly 100 feet from the ocean's waters, the settlement resembles a narrow semicircle as its structures form a perimeter corresponding to the contours of the adjacent beach. Unlike most portions of Wildwood's coast, the sandy terrain only extends a few miles inland; therefore towering trees and lush, green foliage from the domain's interior are plainly visible from the shoreline. Every structure facing the harbor offers its guests an unobstructed oceanfront view, enabling visitors to watch their fellow guests frolic in the gentle surf or observe the distant horizon as the Forge's celestial bodies rise and set. Naturally, rooms and dining tables providing such a desirable amenity command a hefty price; however most vacationers seem very eager to pay the costly tab for the prized luxury. As initiates to the swanky resort swiftly learn, Canopus' entrepreneurs rarely let an opportunity to make a few extra gold pieces slip through their fingers.

Despite its well-founded reputation for providing lavish suites and attentive service to its guests, the permanent residents employed by the various tourist industries lead a much more humble existence. In lieu of cash payments, the overwhelming majority of businesses provide room and board as part of their compensation package, although the accommodations and food that they grant their staff members pale in comparison to even the most economical rooms and meals. Workers typically rely upon tips from generous patrons to supplement their income, giving them added incentive to attend to every whim of their affluent customers. In many cases, diligent and charismatic employees strike up lasting friendships and business relationships with frequent visitors to their particular establishment. A small handful actually leaves their positions at the resort and return to Penance in the employ of a departing guest. Although seemingly motivated by the greed of Canopus' various proprietors, the economic arrangement actually works to the betterment of all parties.

Assets: Tourism is undeniably the lifeblood of Canopus, and every aspect of life within the bustling resort supports this contention. In addition to the first-rate hotels, restaurants and spas, Canopus offers its clientele a diverse array of other services. Trendy shops specializing in the sale of luxury goods crafted from indigenous materials such as accessories sewn from the sloughed skin of massive serpents and potent liquors distilled from exotic plants are a popular spot for conspicuous shoppers. Business travelers frequently indulge in many of the resort's shadier activities as most of the hotels discreetly offer some form of gambling and high-priced prostitutes to customers seeking these vices. In addition to its various service industries, Canopus also boasts one of the most reputable shipyards in the Forge, Yachts by Zavamere. A scandalous playboy during his youth in Penance, Zavamere (Human male, Aristocrat 13) settled down in Canopus after inheriting his father's vast fortune. The reformed spendthrift now constructs pleasure craft for Penance's elite including some of its most powerful bloodlords.

Forces: With the noteworthy exception of the border settlements under the jurisdiction of King Odreck Viminth, no other part of Wildwood is more directly influenced by Penance than Canopus. Devoid of any formalized government or military, the distant bloodlords and their agents inconspicuously maintain order within the resort with the cooperation of its most influential business owners. Unbeknownst to the residents and guests of Canopus, Haiel, at the request of Israfel, regulates the wilderness, transplanting particular dangerous predators to other regions of his domain. As a result of his direct intervention, vegetation and wild beasts are kept largely at bay with only a few minor exceptions.

Notables: Although many individuals come to the sprawling resort for pleasure, Canopus is also a hotbed of dastardly plots and machinations conjured up by Penance's scheming rulers. Operatives working under the guise of cooks, waiters and concierges populate practically every large establishment, plying their nefarious trade in a covert war to improve their employers' position or status within Penance. The most noteworthy of these spies is Narith Rominth (Female lunar, Rog 9/Asn 6), an agent of Utopia's Lord Abbydon posing as the proprietor of a beauty salon. The conniving hairdresser gathers vital intelligence from her unsuspecting clients through the usage of various delusional drugs derived from the hallinus plant described in Chapter 3.

Oppulammel

Population: 8,230
Racial makeup: Berns: 100%
Major industries: Bern honey (see below)

Overview: Deep within the remotest part of the southern jungle, near the intersection of Arena, the Vault and Wildwood stands the fabled city of Oppulammel, the stronghold of the belligerent race of upright, sentient insects known as the berns. At the insistence of Queen Israfel of Penance, Haiel transplanted these aggressive beings from the neighboring domain of Arena more than 200 years ago, granting them virtual autonomy over an extensive hunting ground encompassing roughly 6,000 square miles of territory. Despite the immense size of their dominion, the metropolis itself is relatively small and simplistic when compared to typical humanoid settlements with an identical population. Oppulammel consists entirely of one structure, a massive hive resembling an overturned funnel situated in the center of a large clearing seemingly decimated by hordes of hungry locusts. Fabricated from dried wood pulp, the apex of the enormous building looms 250 feet above the ground while its base reaches a staggering diameter of 500 feet. The only visible entrance is on the northern side of the edifice roughly twenty feet above the surface. Constantly guarded by an elite group of ten armed spellcasters, the opening provides access to

a convoluted honeycomb of divergent passages and chambers that eventually leads to the grandiose chamber of the reigning monarchs of the city. (The entry for the berns in Chapter 10 describes their mechanism for selecting a king and queen and the process of determining successors.) Accompanied by a retinue of attendants and bodyguards, the queen spends most of her day laying eggs while her consort assumes most of the administrative and political duties commensurate with their lofty titles. Although their power is often transitory, their authority remains unquestioned. On the other hand, their subjects occupy most of their time gathering pollen and other plant material for the hive's consumption. Workers transform the pollen into honey to serve as food for the colony's developing eggs, larvae and pupas before distributing the leaves, stalks and other plant material for the adult population. Irrespective of their fearsome appearance and innate combativeness, berns are strict vegetarians with a penchant for the taste of sentient plants, particularly thorns. Even though they are not carnivorous, berns prove their mettle within their complex and competitive society by demonstrating their hunting prowess. They stalk and kill virtually anything, but they prefer slaughtering sentient beings such as thorns and humanoids rather than mindless beasts. Fortunately for these creatures, berns rarely wander far from the security of their isolated fortress in search of prey.

A diverse variety of nearly impassable terrain completely surrounding Oppulammel helps shield the metropolis from the prying eyes of curiosity hounds and treasure seekers, adding to its already legendary mystique. The boiling red sands of Arena and the desolate, frozen wasteland of the Vault comprise the berns' western and southern boundaries respectively, whereas the impenetrable foliage of the overgrown jungle forms its northern and eastern borders. Traffic between the neighboring domains is fairly negligible, but some creatures manage to traverse through the inhospitable jungle to the north and east bringing them into contact with the pugnacious race of intelligent insects. Thorns, elves and dovers are the most common sentient interlopers, often venturing into the berns' domain in search of missing friends or to exact revenge against the marauding predators for some past transgression. Regardless of the reasons, conflict between the opposing forces invariably ensues. As a result of the widespread animosity between the berns and other sentient races, Haiel populates much of the wilderness abutting the berns' territory with some of his domain's fiercest and most terrifying predators in a deliberate effort to minimize hostilities between the rival factions. Although hardly foolproof, his actions significantly limit the scope of these violent frays.

Assets: Berns boast an impressive arsenal of magical equipment and items, but none of their mystical accomplishments are as coveted as bern honey. Created as a food source for the hive's fledgling members, this vastly more potent version of normal honey remains in very high demand within the humanoid community.

New Material: Bern Honey

Irrespective of its beneficial properties, the deliciously sweet taste and pleasant aroma of this gooey, amber-colored substance make it a valuable culinary additive to virtually any food. In addition to its usage as a seasoning, adventurers especially prize bern honey for its ability to heal wounds and enhance an individual's abilities. Humanoids consuming a one ounce serving immediately recover 1d8 points of damage and for the next 3d6 rounds, they receive a +4 bonus to their Dexterity and Intelligence scores and act as if they were under the influence of the spell *haste*. Furthermore, a mere dab placed on the tongue of a sleeping individual immediately awakens him, even negating the power of any sleep related spells and spell-like effects.

All berns typically carry at least one jar of bern honey on their person at all times. Bern honey is incredibly rich and difficult to digest on a regular basis. Consuming more than one ounce over a twenty-four hour period induces a terrible bout of nausea lasting 3d6 rounds unless the creature makes a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20 + 1 for every previous check during the last twenty-four hours). If available on the open market, merchants typically fetch 2,250 gp for a single one ounce serving.

Forces: Consistent with the berns' hive mentality, each member of the colony is charged with a specific duty such as attending to the monarchs' needs, producing food for the young, gathering food or defending the hive. Although the entire populace is capable of fighting, their military force generally consists of four units of 500 fighter/wizards each commonly referred to as swarms. The swarms are further subdivided into smaller groups of 100 and 20 berns respectively known as stings and jaws. The highest ranked individual in each unit serves as its commander. (The entry for berns in Chapter 10 provides additional details regarding the ranking process.) All swarms answer to the king and queen.

Tanastadt

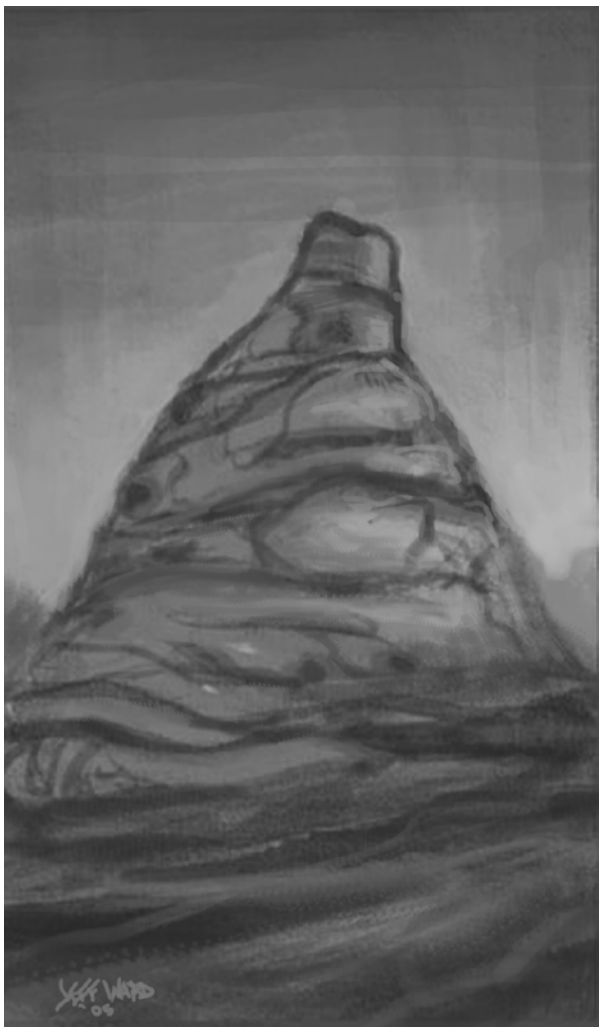
Population: 9,348
Racial Makeup: 2% asherake, 5% armamen, 5% ceptu, 10% chromithians, 15% dovers, 15% elf, 3% faust, 30% human, 5% valco, 10% wild frey,
Major Industries: Trade, lumber

Overview: Tanastadt is a culturally diverse trading town located on the southern banks of the Lower River Tanais. The city is ruled by Kaldor Rihila, a retired human bard, and his henchmen who wrested control from a tyrannical asherake twenty five years ago. Since those dark days, the city has become an enlightened mecca for culture and tolerance. The major industries here are logging, trade between Penance and Wildwood, and guide services. This city serves as an essential conduit between the domains of

Penance and Wildwood, providing the perfect jumping off spot for those venturing away from Penance for the first time.

Tanastadt is a clean, vibrant city where the public buildings are vigorously maintained. Residential houses range from humble dwellings that can only comfortably house two people to opulent manors that house entire families and their servants. Businesses are required by law to maintain a neat appearance, and as a result most are constructed from brick, stone, or mortar with attractive storefronts. Taverns are illegal within the city, though the inns have common rooms that serve these purposes quite nicely. Since trade is one of the major sources of income, travelers are greeted with warmth in Tanastadt and well taken care of in hopes that they will return and bring their gold with them next time they travel through this region.

The northern portion of the city lies along the river banks and consists of docks and warehouses. A large lumber yard also lies on the outskirts of the city along the river, and logging groups upstream usually mark and float the harvested logs directly down the river to the lumberyard, where workers with pike-like instruments catch them and bring them in. Boats traveling down the river must steer clear of the free-floating logs as they pose a potential hazard, but the boatmen who travel these waters for a living are aware of the situation and have become adept at avoiding them.



Law enforcement is in the hands of the local watch, which are seasoned warriors, all of which were brought on with previous combat experience (level 3 or better fighters). They patrol the streets in groups of five and they have a reputation for being fair but firm in their enforcement of the law. Brawlers and other troublemakers are escorted from town, as are any thieves that are caught plying their nefarious craft. The last thing the city wants is to get a reputation like that of Penumbra. Despite the show of force, the watch's main job is to drive predators away from the city. Even this close to the domain of Penance, predatory creatures present a constant threat and the safety of the inhabitants of the city is the most important consideration.

Timber is one of the primary exports of this city. Haiel tolerates the logging of the surrounding area, provided that they refrain from clear-cutting areas and never log beyond a twenty mile radius around the city. The vast majority of the logs harvested are sent to the city of Penance to provide them with much of the raw material needed for the constant construction underway there.

As a major entry point into Wildwood from Penance, guides can be found in throngs offering their services to those who would explore Wildwood. The quality of these guides varies, some being rangers while others are simply locals who have been in these parts for a few years. Without a ranger or druid in a party, it is often difficult to screen the quality guides from swindlers. The average rate of pay for a guide to lead an expedition into Wildwood is approximately 10 gold pieces per mile. Older, more experienced guides (or at least those who can pass themselves off as such) may charge up to 30 gold pieces per mile, but at those prices only the wealthiest explorers are willing to pay that amount.

Assets: Kaldor Rihila is a wealthy individual, though he doesn't make a show of it. His manor is far from the largest in town, though it may contain the greatest concentration of wealth amassed in one single dwelling. Hidden in a secret chamber beneath his manor is a cache of gold, magic items and gems that rival those of some of the bloodlords of Penance. The majority of the merchant houses in Tanastadt are wealthy enough for their owners to live in grand estates and manors. The average citizen is either employed by the lumber yards or the merchant houses, and they make livable wages. Most own their homes.

Forces: The forces of Tanastadt are divided between the watch and the militia. The two groups are comparably trained and often supplement one-another's ranks, but their functions are much different. The watch is tasked with keeping the peace in this city while the militia provides protection against foreign invaders and marauding predators.

While the city and its inhabitants are mostly peaceful because of years of weeding out the troublemakers and sending them away, the sheer number of traders that pass through makes it inevitable that undesirable elements find their way here. The guard attempts to keep their eye out for people who might cause trouble during their stay and keep constant tabs

Illustrated by Jeff Ward

on their whereabouts and activities. While minor disturbances are met with a quick expulsion from the city, any traveler who is caught murdering or raping any other individual within the city receives a swift trial by a tribunal of three magisters, followed by a quick death.

The relatively high degree of wealth and the well maintained and borderline scenic appearance of this city make it an attractive target for would-be conquerors. Despite this, the city remains unwalled and the ports are kept open to visitors. The militia keeps bases for miles up and down the river. The captain in charge of each base wears a *ring of recall*, which he can use to immediately return to the city in the event that an armed force approaches by water. Wildshaped druids in the form of eagles perform similar duties from the air.

Eringall

Population: 2,305
Racial Makeup: Vogels: 100% (Vogels appear in **Oathbound:** *Arena*)
Major Industries: Nisankh

Overview: Although vogels are encountered on the mainland of Arena and Wildwood, the race's heartland is undoubtedly the vibrant, tropical island chain stretching across the Northern Ocean from the northwestern shore of Arena to the eastern shore of Wildwood. The largest of their settlements is the town of Eringall, a bustling hub of religious and military activity located beneath the ominous shadow of Smogbelcher, a dormant volcano on a large island less than 100 miles northeast of Haiel's citadel. Eringall consists entirely of huts and longhouses with deliberately planted rows of tightly packed saplings and shrubs intertwined with wiry vines serving as the structures' walls while thick tangles of moss act as rudimentary roofs. At first glance, the haphazard layout of homes and oddly placed longhouses conveys a feeling of randomness and disorganization; however closer scrutiny of the grand design sheds light on the architects' intentions. Shaped vaguely like a massive square, a temple dedicated to each of the deities representing the four seasons occupies each corner of the geometric pattern. Residences and military barracks developed around these sites rather than a central location thus accounting for the settlement's seemingly unplanned appearance. Unlike most vogel colonies, Eringall's population continuously ebbs and flows as residents of smaller settlements make the trek from neighboring towns, villages and islands to partake in its religious services. Eringall lacks any recognizable political establishment; yet its clerics wield tremendous spiritual authority in the daily lives of its citizens and exert their potent influence over the military. Despite their position of importance, the populace's transitory nature and the vogels' innate individualism prevent them from acquiring permanent, secular power over their constituency.

Assets: Vogels harvest a bevy of wondrous natural products from the land including a diverse assortment of delicious fruits, vegetables and berries; however nisankh is their most coveted agricultural product. When properly mixed into a tea, the dried and powdered spiky, burred silver blossoms of this bizarre shrub with thorny stems can slow down the ravages of age by as much as ten percent. Not surprisingly, the prospect of increased longevity attracts the interest of the bloodlords and warlords of Penance and Arena respectively. Merchants and sailors in the employ of these covetous powerbrokers undertake the harrowing journey to the remote locale to acquire the elusive and valuable herb from the indigenous residents. Much to the shock of these savvy entrepreneurs, the vogels willingly part with their precious commodity in exchange for exquisitely crafted shiny and sparkling objects worth only a miniscule fraction as much as nisankh on the open market. Fortuitously for the vogels, this cozy arrangement dissuades these powerful individuals from expending the economic and military resources needed to forcibly wrest the alien-looking shrub from the vogels.

Forces: Even though the vogels are eternally optimistic and pacifistic, they are not fools. In times of emergency, Eringall can muster a force of 500 fighter/clerics armed with light weapons and a full arsenal of divine magic. Harmoniously lead by four priests, each representing one of the four seasons, the vogels seemingly act with a collective mind, displaying more cohesiveness than many of the professionally trained armies of Arena. As always, the use of force is viewed as a means of last resort when all else fails.

Edanne

Population: 3,543
Racial makeup: Thorns: 92%, wild frey: 8% (Both races appear in **Oathbound:** *Plains of Penance*)
Major industries: Lantana

Overview: Less than 100 miles east of the boundary between Penance and Wildwood, roughly midway between the lower branch of the River Tanais and the easternmost tributaries of the River Hebrus is the sacred grove of Edanne, the oldest and largest thorn settlement in the Forge. Despite its relatively close proximity to the dominion of King Odreck Viminth, the isolated realm of Wildwood's most populous sentient plants remains pristine and largely undisturbed by marauding predators and trespassing humanoids thanks in part to the legendary Charred Forest separating them. (The Charred Forest is described in the Forbidden Wilderness chapter.) Edanne differs vastly from other settlements in the important fact that it completely lacks any permanent structures. Thorns simply take root in its fertile soil, while the wild frey inhabiting Edanne discover adequate shelter beneath the outstretched branches of the locale's countless shrubs and trees. Although Edanne is generally used to refer to the entire thorn village, the name technically applies to the awe inspiring copse that serves as the spiritual heart of the settlement. Consisting of three concentric rings

of ancient, meticulously groomed trees surrounding a natural spring of sparkling blue water, eleven elder druids continuously prune and nurture the venerable, woody residents of the holy grove. The magnificent site serves as the spiritual epicenter for all druidic rituals and observances, often attracting thorns from as far away as the Forests of Arnor and Winter in western Penance and the rugged mountains of eastern Anvil. Most make the arduous pilgrimage to witness the breathtaking grove firsthand, but a significant number also come seeking the counsel of Edanne's renowned elder druids, particularly its oldest resident Saffron (Thorn, Drd 19). Now entering his 919th year, many natives regard him as Edanne's unofficial leader, while a few circles consider him a divine emissary or Haiel's long-lost sibling. For his part, Saffron readily dismisses all of these claims, preferring a life of solitude and anonymity spent amidst his woody contemporaries instead of reveling in the accolades heaped upon him.

Assets: The concept of trading goods or services with the outside world is basically foreign to most thorns; however on occasion they barter for the assistance of adventurers to eradicate destructive wild beasts from their woodlands. In exchange for this expertise and aid, the thorns usually provide them with fresh clippings of lantana supplemented by small quantities of gold ore and platinum nuggets found along the banks of glistening streams passing through Edanne.

Forces: Edanne's wild frey population serves as its militia, defending the woodlands against Wildwood's malevolent denizens and ambitious prospectors from the adjacent border settlements, particularly Sevenil. At a moment's notice, Edanne can field a force of 100 wild frey barbarians complemented by at least ten thorn druids. In exigent circumstances, these numbers can easily swell to 250 wild frey barbarians matched by an equal number of potent spellcasters including a majority of its elder druids.

Nagg-tuug

Population: 4,296
Racial makeup: Gnolls: 86%, humans: 9%, elves: 3%, dovers: 2%
Major industries: Slaves

Overview: More than any other noteworthy settlement in Wildwood, the gnoll stronghold of Nagg-tuug resembles an enclosed fortress rather than a close knit community. Located in the southeastern quadrant of Wildwood's jungle roughly fifty miles from the border of Arena, Nagg-tuug is an armed encampment completely surrounded by a formidable twenty-foot high wooden wall manned by a company of skilled archers and foot soldiers ready and eager to repel any prospective invaders. Lead by their remarkably astute and fearsome leader, Krogg Gronzell (Male gnoll, Brn 7/Rgr 9), the expansionistic race of monstrous humanoids lays claim to a vast hunting ground stretching ten miles west, north and east of Nagg-tuug all the way to the border of Arena in the south. Gnoll war parties operating under his direct command constantly patrol his growing territory searching for wild beasts for consumption and sentient beings for enslavement.

Within the secure confines of the gnolls' wilderness outpost, life is harsh, particularly for its humanoid slaves. Continuously subjected to verbal abuse and vicious beatings, most slaves last less than a few months under the thumbs of their cruel overlords. Under the constant supervision of their wicked oppressors, these unpaid servants fell trees and construct the comparatively lavish wooden homes and weapons of their masters as well as performing countless other menial tasks while dwelling in conditions of utter squalor. Starvation, disease and other social ills run rampant throughout Nagg-tuug, even amongst the lower echelons of gnoll society. In addition to these problems, dense plumes of malodorous black smoke generated by massive bonfires utilized to forge metal armaments and cook the hairy carcasses of numerous foul beasts envelop the village in an eternal gray haze. Needless to say, humanoid explorers normally steer well clear of the depraved monument to the gnolls' warmongering mentality and inhuman savagery.

Assets: Despite the prevalence of poverty and stupidity within the gnolls' stronghold, Krogg is one of the wealthiest and cagiest individuals in all of Wildwood with a fortune rivaling the hordes of many of its draconic inhabitants and numerous covert alliances with the wilderness' most powerful predators. What Nagg-tuug lacks in natural resources, it makes up for in humanoid capital. While most captured humanoids live out the remainder of their miserable existence under the watchful gaze of their brutish overseers, Krogg sells a significant number of these captives to Droghin Firefriend for a king's ransom in gold and sapphires. Originally a native of Wildwood, Droghin Firefriend, a half-troll/half-dragon, migrated to Arena where he achieved the prestigious title of warlord. (Oathbound: *Arena* provides a more detailed description of Droghin Firefriend.) The rapacious gnoll commander conceals his ill-gotten fortune in a secret pit beneath his headquarters, under the constant guard of a vicious pack of hyenas and a grotesquely deformed troll.

Forces: At all times, a force of 250 gnolls mans the settlement's outer walls and inner courtyard while another 150 gnolls comprise the ten war parties scouring the settlement's territory for potential prey and captives. In addition to these units, Nagg-tuug can muster another 1,000 heavily armed and well-equipped troops within a matter of hours bringing its total fighting force to 1,400 individuals. During the course of its 600 year history, Nagg-tuug enacted this contingency plan only once when the settlement came under attack from an enraged, adult green dragon.

Sevenil & Vicinity

Population: 100,000+
Major industries: Timber, forest products
Leader: King Odreck Viminth (Male lunar Ftr 10/Hn 7)

Overview: The city of Sevenil, numbering more than 89,000 souls is by far the largest settlement in

Wildwood. Sevenil serves as the capital of a small empire of logging towns and villages dotting the westernmost regions of Wildwood along its border with Penance. Governed by the region's undisputed leader, King Odreck Viminth, the city and towns under his jurisdiction closely resemble those found in Penance rather than Wildwood's indigenous settlements. The reason for this anomaly is quite simple; Sevenil originated in Penance thousands of years earlier before eventually migrating into Wildwood proper. The ruins of the original metropolis span several miles of territory along the banks of the lower branch of the River Tanais, although they are virtually uninhabited at the present time except for a motley assortment of beggars, thieves and other squatters inhabiting its dilapidated buildings.

The present day city of Sevenil and its affiliated towns and villages exist for one exclusive purpose, to despoil the natural resources of Wildwood and transport them back to the Pedestal and its outlying suburbs. Despite Haiel's best efforts to beat back the persistent entrepreneurs, the determined captains of industry and their avaricious subordinates eventually gained a foothold in his feral domain. Irrespective of their success, the blade of the green is still unwilling to concede defeat, populating the surrounding wilderness with a diverse variety of deadly predators and encroaching vegetation pulled from alien worlds. Unsolicited aid in his unending quest to rid Wildwood of these intrusive merchants also comes from its native, sentient residents, particularly its druids and indigenous races with an affinity for the natural world. For the time being, most of Haiel's allies in this undeclared war are wholly satisfied with maintaining the *status quo*, believing that complete expulsion of the unwanted trespassers is an elusive and impossible dream.

(Sevenil and many of the border settlements are fully described in Oathbound: *Plains of Penance*.)



Live the Fantasy

Immerse yourself in the mystery and power of the ***Oathbound*** setting with our first novel, Forged, by Thomas M. Reid (author of *Insurrection: War of the Spider Queen, Book 2*).

For visitors to the Forge, arriving has always been far easier than returning home. But the moment Lyrien Ves'tiral is ripped unwillingly from his homeland—from the woman he has pledged to protect—and deposited in this strange, rich tapestry of a world, he intends to escape. The only problem is, someone in the Forge has other plans for him.

Seeking both a means of escape and the identity of those who would prevent it, Lyrien quickly finds himself a pawn in the plots of some of the Forge's most conniving schemers. As he struggles to disentangle himself from their subtle games, Ves'tiral becomes torn between a need to fulfill his duty back home and a growing bond with the mysterious, effusive world that is reshaping his very being, tempering him for a role that just might transform the land itself.

Chapter 5: The Forbidden Wilderness

"Take heed, in the dark forests of the world, the land sometimes takes on a life of its own."

-- Margon, a dover guide to a group of adventurers

Wildwood ripples with life. Crafty animals, savage beasts, clever humanoids, cunning monsters and countless varieties of greenery inhabit virtually every inch of the verdant domain. Feral wilderness dominates the topography of Haiel's wild kingdom. Yet, the triumph of the blade of the green's natural order is incomplete. Despite the pervasiveness of the woodlands and the abundance of creatures dwelling within it, a select group of remote, isolated locales defy nature's universal laws and abide by their own supernatural set of rules. Although they are technically still part of the surrounding ecosystem, even a novice explorer can tell that these areas significantly differ from the norm. Eerie phosphorescent lights, disturbing noises and a host of other inexplicable phenomenon plague these unsettling regions, enveloping them in a palpable aura of mystery and terror. Animals instinctively avoid these strange lands, refusing to set foot into them even under the urging of their master or to escape the jaws of a pursuing predator. Sentient beings generally steer a wide berth around these anomalous realms, prompting them to dub the areas as "the forbidden wilderness".

Needless to say, the development of these locales is not the result of any natural processes or Haiel's intentional design. They typically arise as the inadvertent aftermath of cataclysmic events that forever alter the terrain and its inhabitants in unnatural ways. The utter decimation of numerous lives, the discharge of terrifying arcane energies or the lingering effects of a potent curse are the most common mechanisms responsible for the creation of these dreaded haunts. These occurrences forever shatter the cycle of life, transforming every aspect of the site into an aberrant mockery of its former existence. Unintelligent creatures miraculously acquire sentience and in many cases malevolence, while living beings undergo the horrifying metamorphosis from their previous existence into the ranks of the living dead. New life fails to take hold in the scarred earth as lively seedlings transplanted into the corrupted soil quickly wither and die. Many other creatures also experience tremendous difficulties attempting to reproduce as some inexplicable energy suppresses the biological urges and physiological functions necessary to procreate. On the other hand, the drastic metamorphosis drastically alters the fortunes of a handful of fortuitous beings, imbuing them with an array of frightening new abilities while augmenting their existing strengths. Plants such as treants and shambling mounds are typically the beneficiaries of this good luck, but they are not the exclusive recipients of the transformation's evolutionary bounty. Nonetheless, in the worldly eyes of Wildwood's overlord and its indigenous druid population the forbidden wilderness is an anathema to all they hold dear, a sickening perversion of nature perpetrated by some powerful, unknown force. Despite their best efforts to restore the woodlands to their former state, the extensive damage proves irreparable on any large-scale basis.

Although locals generally shun these forsaken realms, the forbidden wilderness represents a beacon of opportunity for brave and experienced adventurers searching for fame and treasure. Irrespective of the land's well-earned reputation as a dangerous abode teeming with wicked denizens and supernatural horrors, native explorers and foreigners brave the harrowing trek through the wilderness to sate their appetite for excitement and wealth. Legends and myths describing the mystical creations and marvelous wonders concealed within these locales abound throughout all of the feral domain's settlements that provide goods and services to fortune seekers venturing through Wildwood. Undoubtedly, some of these tales are the fanciful conjurations of unscrupulous shopkeepers and merchants hoping to ply their wares, yet there is a great deal of truth to a surprisingly high percentage of these seemingly omnipresent rumors. One reason for this remarkable veracity is the fact that most of these areas are relatively close to the coastline or neighboring domains rather than Wildwood's largely unexplored interior, thus resulting in significantly more contact with the outside world than inaccessible locations further inland. In many instances, the unforeseen consequences of actions perpetrated by trespassers trigger the inception of these unnatural locales as evidenced by the Charred Forest straddling the boundary between the thorns' sacred grove of Edanne and the King Odreck Viminth's logging empire. Much to the chagrin of daring adventurers setting foot into this neglected landscape, proximity and familiarity with the environment fail to negate the sizeable tactical advantage held by the depraved beings and bloodthirsty predators that call the forbidden wilderness home.

The Witch's Marsh

Encompassing an area comprising a meager fifty square miles the foreboding Witch's Marsh more than compensates for its relatively small size with its illustrious history and the devious machinations of its renowned residents. The disgusting bog spans a five mile stretch of coastline on Wildwood's northeastern shore of the Central Ocean, beginning fifteen miles from its border with Anvil and reaching ten miles inland. Mariners navigating the turbulent waters of the adjacent Central Ocean take every precaution to avoid the perilous fen, preferring death on the high sea to the terrifying prospect of running aground in the treacherous mire of the Witch's Marsh. Even from the relative safety of the ocean, bizarre flickering lights and the faint whisper of an enthralling melody pierce the seemingly impenetrable veil of dense fog and unearthly quiet enshrouding the locale and its sinister denizens. On a clear night, some sailors claim to see the ghostly apparition of an ancient vessel and its doomed



crew helplessly sailing into the bone chilling mist enveloping the shoreline.

History: The accursed area of swamp earned its distinctive name from the resident unwittingly responsible for its unnatural transformation, the captivatingly beautiful druid, Liniella the Witch. The avid herbalist piqued Haiel's interest, prompting him to pull the alluring mistress of the wetlands into his primordial domain. After surviving her initial foray into Wildwood, Liniella and her dire crocodile companion settled down in this locale more than six millenniums ago, dwelling in a cozy hut on the banks of a cove overlooking the Central Ocean. In a few short months, the accomplished botanist transformed the stinking morass of weeds and reeds into a welcoming harbor for passing vessels traveling through the raging ocean's tumultuous surf. Over time, Liniella's astonishing allure and warm hospitality soon reached legendary status, compelling some captains to intentionally veer off course just to give them a plausible excuse for paying her a visit.

Horace Bowman, a debonair skipper with an eye for the ladies, certainly fit the aforementioned profile. Stocked with an inventory of exotic gifts and an innate talent for exaggeration, the dashing lothario quickly enraptured the heart of his fair maiden with astounding tales recounting his valorous deeds and heroic escapades. Liniella fell madly in love with the charismatic sea captain, pledging her undying affection and devotion to her handsome suitor. Horace reciprocated her solemn vow, yet shortly after departing from her humble abode the notorious womanizer disregarded his oath of fidelity and resumed his amoral ways. During his absence, Liniella unwaveringly rejected the numerous advances of other men, patiently awaiting the long-anticipated return of her true love. Days turned into weeks and weeks turned into months, but Horace never appeared. Convinced that something untoward had happened to her beloved, the inconsolable woman ran down to a nearby pond and magically observed the object of her undying love in the watery reflection. To her complete shock and dismay, the distraught druid saw Horace in the throes of passion with another woman. After recovering from the unexpected surprise, the betrayed lover began plotting her revenge.

A few days after her unsettling discovery, Horace's vessel, laden down with gold and silver, set sail from Arena to Anvil. Entirely unaware of Liniella's disturbing discovery, the gullible commander of the treasure ship steered a course directly toward Liniella's welcoming inlet. As Horace and his crew approached her sheltering cove, the scorned lover summoned the forces of nature and unleashed a terrifying storm that violently beached the boat, spilling its accumulated wealth and the broken bodies of its sailors onshore. In accordance with Liniella's intentions, only the cowardly Horace survived the initial calamity, affording her an opportunity to confront her adulterous lover. With steely resolve, she strode toward the battered wreckage searching for her contemptuous seducer. When she stumbled

Illustrated by Terry Pavlet

upon his mangled physique, the emotionally decimated Liniella peered deeply into his unrepentant eyes before stoically slaying him with a single thrust of her jewel encrusted dagger. Immediately afterward, she turned the blade on herself, eternally cursing the forsaken land before expiring next to the body of her only truelove. Just like its caretaker, Liniella's botanical oasis instantaneously perished along with many other plants and living creatures, leaving only a stinking, supernatural fen of death and decay in her spiteful wake.

Overview: Since Liniella uttered her infamous curse 6,000 years earlier, a pall of despair and evil enshrouds the accursed land. The lifeless, brackish waters give rise to a sickening, gray fog that rolls across the bog with a seemingly deliberate purpose, as if blown by an invisible malevolent force. Light from the Forge's two suns fails to penetrate the haze, enveloping the realm in the perpetual bask of twilight occasionally broken by pinpoints of bright, red light emitted by the sinister glare of a pair of feral, undying eyes. Unnatural, phosphorescent flickers of light also pierce the prevailing curtain of darkness; however neither form of luminescence yields enough energy for plants to photosynthesize. Bereft of any leaves or other signs of greenery, the only testaments to the locale's vibrant past are the gnarled, rotting remains of countless dead trees that inexplicably defy gravity by standing upright in the malodorous, black muck passing as soil. An eerie silence and deceptive calm fills the air, intermittently shattered by the bone-rattling shrieks and inhuman wails emanating from the festering swamp's few remaining residents. Most explorers heed the frightful warnings and wisely turn back; however a handful of intrepid adventurers press forward into the uninviting confines of Liniella's bewitched realm.

For those brave souls continuing onward into the Witch's Marsh, the harsh terrain and lighting conditions present a number of logistical challenges. Despite the absence of the tangled layers of undergrowth commonly found in most of Wildwood's wetlands, land-based travel across the muddy earth is still a long, arduous slog. In most areas, medium-sized and smaller creatures must expend two squares of movement to move through a single square, whereas in a few, isolated locales, characters must exhaust four squares of movement to pass through a particularly deep section of the bog. In addition to these penalties, the pervasive fog limits visibility to only 5 feet, granting creatures within visual range partial concealment, i.e. a 20% miss chance, while those outside of visual range benefit from total concealment. Low-light vision and darkvision are ineffective under these conditions.

The gravest threat imposed by the landscape is completely invisible and also largely responsible for the absence of most life forms in the region. Within moments after entering the deceased witch's domain, males experience a disturbing and constantly growing unease. One hour after setting foot in the Witch's Marsh, any male creature must make a Will save (DC 10); otherwise he suffers a -1 morale penalty to attack and weapon damage rolls as well as his saving throws while he remains within the Witch's Marsh. As long as he remains within the area, he must continue making Will saves every hour versus DC 10 + 1 for every previous saving throw. When he fails his first saving throw, the time increment between subsequent saving throws decreases to every ten minutes. Unlike most penalties, these penalties are cumulative; therefore a character failing three saving throws suffers a -3 penalty to his attack and damage rolls as well as his saving throws. The penalties immediately cease once a male character exits the Witch's Marsh provided that he stays out of the locale. If he reenters the area within one hour of leaving, all of his accumulated penalties are immediately reinstated and the Difficulty Class and time increment of his saving throws picks up where he left off. This is a supernatural, mind-influencing effect.

Example: Tordeck, a male cleric and a female paladin enter the Witch's Marsh. One hour after arriving in the forbidden wilderness, Tordeck must make a Will save (DC 10) or suffer a -1 penalty to his attack and damage rolls as well as his saving throws, but his female colleague is completely unaffected. Tordeck easily succeeds at his initial attempt to resist the land's supernatural power. Over the course of the following six hours, he succeeds six more times, but on his seventh attempt, he fails. Tordeck must now make a Will save every ten minutes. Tordeck's fortune goes from bad to worse as he fails four consecutive saving throws over a span of forty minutes, bringing his cumulative penalty totals to -5. Disturbed by the sense of foreboding overwhelming him, he deliberately exits the marsh, instantly eliminating all of his penalties. Tordeck must remain outside of the Witch's Marsh for one full hour if he wants the effect to wear off. If he returns prematurely, his -5 penalties immediately return. In addition he resumes making Will saves every ten minutes utilizing the Difficulty Class of his last saving throw plus one.

Inhabitants: Liniella's curse renders it virtually impossible for males to dwell for prolonged periods of time within the inhospitable region; therefore females, in particular monstrous humanoids, dominate the locale. Harpies are prevalent along the shoreline, employing their intoxicating song to lure passing sailors to their mortal demise, while medusas primarily inhabit the interior regions. Occupying the highest rung of this foul matriarchy is a covey of three diabolical green hags named Lualla, Rowella and Myranda. In a twist of irony, the devilish trio resides in Liniella's ramshackle dwelling, occupying much of their time concocting nefarious schemes to lure male humanoids into their horrific abode or arguing over the distribution of booty salvaged from Horace's shipwrecked vessel. Many of the odd flickering lights and bizarre noises prevalent throughout the area are the result of their magical abilities, but some are attributable to the sizeable population of will-o'-wisps also sharing the decaying habitat with the indigenous female denizens.

Lualla, Rowella & Myranda, Green hag/Ranger 7: CR 12; Medium Monstrous Humanoids; HD 9d8+9 plus 7d8+7; hp 93, 88, 86 respectively; Init +5; Spd 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 30 ft. (6 squares); AC 21 (+1 Dex,

+2 leather armor, +8 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 20; BAB +16; Grapple +20; Atk +20 melee (1d4+4, claw) or +20 ranged (1d8+2/x3, +2 *longbow*); Full Atk 2 claws +20 melee (1d4+4) or +20/+15/+10/+5 ranged (1d8+2/x3, +2 *longbow*); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Spell-like abilities, covey abilities, weakness, mimicry, favored enemy [humanoid (human), humanoid (elf)]; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., spell resistance 18, wild empathy; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +13, Will +11; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Heal +6, Hide +13, Knowledge (geography) (Wildwood) +8, Knowledge (nature) +11, Listen +16, Move Silently +11, Spot +16, Survival +9, Swim +12; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Languages: Common, Giant.

Possessions: All three hags have a +2 *longbow*, 40 arrows and leather armor. They continuously squabble over the following inventory of items. *Hag's eye*, *stone salve*, *rod of thunder and lightning*, *ring of three wishes* (2 uses left), *ring of evasion*, *mask of the skull*, *helm of telepathy*, *bowl of commanding earth elementals*, potions: *barkskin (x2)*, *neutralize poison*, *owl's wisdom*. In addition to their personal effects, Horace's treasure of 8,090 gp and 24,560 sp is scattered throughout the house.

Ranger Spells Prepared (*Ranger spells per day* 2; base save DC 12 + spell level; 1st-level—*alarm, magic fang*.

Gifts: Sharpshooter (earned), Undetectable (earned).

Secrets: Despite the lack of any concrete evidence and a couple of dubious eyewitness accounts, rumors persist that Liniella's melancholy spirit still haunts the desolate swamps searching for a new consort. Humanoids dwelling along the outskirts of the Witch's Marsh claim that the sorrowful mistress' apparition prominently displays an open wound through her heart. It is said in many quarters that her pitiful stare and incorporeal touch can bring any man to his knees, while her ghostly kiss reaps instant death to any unfortunate recipient of her supernatural affections. In a similar vein, many also claim that the restless spirit of her dire crocodile companion also accompanies the mesmerizing phantasm on jaunts through her former haunt.

Lake of Sorrow

In central Wildwood, less than fifty miles from the border with the domain of Arena is a lake known as the Lake of Sorrows. Clear-cut of trees and inhabited only by undead, the lake stands a silent testament to Haiel's power and wrath. Few who are familiar with this region choose to visit this area, let alone camp anywhere near it. Those who do approach seldom live to tell others of the horrors they encounter here.

Even the lake itself is dead, filled with salt from the bloated corpses that perpetually float in the water; preserved through Haiel's will as a warning to those who would rape his domain and a promise of the price they will pay for their disrespect. The lake has a high salt content, almost comparable to that of the oceans, making the water undrinkable.

History: Five thousand years ago the human warlord Sevyron from Arena marched a quarter of his sizable army into Wildwood, disregarding the warnings from his advisors about the predators that stalk these lands. He had also disregarded the warnings that Haiel dislikes those who would enter his domain and pillage it of the natural treasures he oversees. Sevyron was a powerful man, who had acquired his wealth and reputation by taking what he wanted by force and destroying all who opposed him. While many felt that his mission to Wildwood was folly, a number of his supporters believed that he would beat the odds and return victorious.

Sevyron's mission was to find a location suitable for his army to establish a near-permanent foothold within the region by constructing a base and building a road to this location in order to gather the lumber from the surrounding area for the construction of siege engines and smaller wooden weapons. Armed with a map of the nearest areas in Wildwood, Sevyron began his campaign into the wilderness. The soldiers he brought with him were equally divided between foot-soldiers, which he would use to perform the difficult physically intense labor, and skirmishers who were also skilled hunters. His plan was for the skirmishers to protect the infantry from predators during their march into Wildwood by sending a large group of scouts ahead with the orders to kill any creature they encountered. Though the scouts suffered heavy casualties, the strategy was effective.

Several lakes were scouted during their expedition, most of them proving unsuitable for their purposes because they were too far away from the border with Arena or the terrain made the approach excessively difficult. Nearly defeated Sevyron ordered his soldiers to move back towards Arena. They would check some of the areas that were only vaguely detailed on the map, and if they still were unable to find a suitable location, they would return to Arena without wasting any further resources on this venture. It was then that they discovered a small pristine gem of a lake not listed on the map. The water was fresh, the terrain made the approach relatively easy, though there were nearby hills that would allow him to establish ambush points in case any of his enemies decided to attack him here.

Once the decision was made that this was the area he had been searching for, barracks and a command center were quickly built. Following that, the logging operation began. Sevyron cared little for maintaining the natural beauty of the forest since he considered it nothing more than another adversary to conquer. While many of the trees near the lake were spared so that proper ambush points could be established, other large tracts of forests were totally razed. Rather than allow the indigenous animals and monsters to flee, the soldiers hunted the creatures that were displaced by the foresting, using them as food and trophies. Sevyron's quarters were soon decorated

with the heads of the most fearsome beasts from the area.

The trail back to Arena was rapidly constructed. The foot soldiers blazed a swath through the woods while their counterparts began driving predators from the surrounding area. As the steady stream of newly constructed war machines began to appear on the battlefields of Arena, many of Sevyron's detractors, who had constantly criticized his move into Wildwood, lost credibility. Many reversed their stance, while his supporters drove others from his lands.

At this point Haiel could tolerate this incursion no longer. The soldiers were not invited to his forest. Angered by the disrespect that was shown and the damage that they were doing, he decided it was time to act. An angered lord of any domain is never anything but awesome to behold, and Haiel's reaction was no less dramatic. Rather than intervene directly, Haiel summoned the predators from hundreds of miles around and caused them to descend upon the lake en masse.

The beasts struck in a well-timed attack with Haiel coordinating their movements, controlling the beasts through their most basic modes of comprehension. The guardposts on the outskirts were the first to be overtaken. Following that, the soldiers on the trail nearest Arena were attacked and herded along the trail towards the lake. When the soldiers who had been guarding the trail arrived at the lake beaten and bloody, it became apparent that their incursion was in jeopardy.

Sevyron called for his forces to shore up his defenses and prepare for an invasion. Although he was aware that his soldiers had been attacked by creatures, he believed that they were guided by a rival warlord. He had no inkling that the very forest was turning against him. A perimeter was quickly established and the soldiers prepared for the attack. Haiel paused for a week, during which time the predators besieged the army. The howls from the beasts taunted them, though no attack came. Sevyron periodically sent soldiers back out into the forest to see if there was truly an enemy lying in wait for him. Most of them didn't return. Those that did were horribly wounded.

At last Haiel called upon his army of monsters and beasts to attack the settlement at the lake. They attacked in a formation unexpected by the defending army with a speed and intensity that they weren't prepared for. The battle was over in less than an hour, resulting in Sevyron's defeat. Rather than consuming their kills, the creatures dragged the corpses into the lake, where they would rest for eternity. Their work finished, Haiel sent the predators back into the forest, allowing them to get back to their own territories before their true instincts took over once more.

The souls of the dead were not allowed to rest. Many were trapped inside their cold, slain bodies and forced into the existence of typical forms of undead. Others were allowed to flee their bodies, but were not allowed to leave the area. For his hubris, Sevyron became the original Arboreal Defender (see appendix D) and was forced into Haiel's service, acting as the elite guardians of the forest. Now bitterly tied to Wildwood, Sevyron wanders throughout the domain doing Haiel's bidding. As grim as his fate, he is the only soul from his original expedition granted leave from the area.

Overview: The Lake of Sorrows is a small oval shaped lake approximately two miles in diameter. Once a clear and pristine body of water that was frequented by travelers passing through this area, it is now gray, brackish, and contains the bodies of the slain soldiers. The color of the lake's water has even changed to a dull gray.

Despite Haiel's anger towards the clear-cutting of the woods, he has not restored the surrounding area to its former glory. Entire areas that had once been forested would forever remain completely barren of trees. The trunks of the trees that had once stood in these locations have long since become petrified. The grasses and plants in this location have also left this place, as though they could not continue to grow in such a tainted area.

Inhabitants: The Lake of Sorrows is no longer home to any living creatures. After the battle wherein Sevryon and his forces were defeated, the lake became salty from the blood of the fallen. The indigenous fish and aquatic plants died. The surrounding vegetation likewise died and refused to return. The predators of the domain avoid this region, which means that the only creatures that inhabit the area are the undead.

Four types of undead inhabit this region. The former foot soldiers are now relegated to a similar task in death – that of guarding the area. They exist as skeletons, wights, and ghouls. The irregular solders who dealt the most damage to the predators of the area were transformed into shadows, which assumed the task of patrolling the perimeter of the woods in search of individuals who would travel through the regions. They do not distinguish between good or evil, but simply kill any living thing that enters the area. The former commanders of the army are now ghosts.

In perhaps his most cruel punishment, Haiel made certain that the undead within this area are fully aware of their former lives. Even the skeletons remember who they were and can converse with one another and strangers, though they no longer have access to their former skills or class abilities. For all purposes, they are common lesser undead with an Intelligence score of 10 (or higher if the base creature normally has an Intelligence score). Other than being aware, however, they function as the base creatures found in the *MM*.

When the living wander within five miles of the Lake of Sorrows, the undead swarm to their location, rapidly overcoming them, though they do not kill their prey if possible. Captives are brought to the lake and submerged, at which time they must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or instantly become an undead creature.

Secrets: Near the lake, at the heart of the undead population stands Sevryon's command post. Once made from wood, the lumber has long since petrified, causing the structure to appear wooden, but it has the qualities of both stone and wood (thickness 6 inches, Break DC 35, Hardness 8, Hit Points 90, Climb DC 20). Because of its extremely non-magical nature, the structure itself is worth 200,000 gold pieces. However,

given the fact that moving the structure is close to impossible, the more easily reclaimed prize lies within. Sevyron, who did not trust his allies, brought the most valuable pieces of his treasures with him to Wildwood, and these items remain within his command post. Included are 100 rubies worth 1,400 gold pieces each, 2,000 gp., a *helm of underwater action*, *boots of speed*, and a *folding boat*.

The other major secret of the Lake of Sorrows is that the unique properties of the lake (the ability to transform living beings into undead, the bloated bodies that do not decompose, and the salty content of the lake itself that doesn't allow life to exist) are the result of an artifact called the *Finger of Death*, which Haiel cast into the center of the lake upon Sevyron's defeat.

The Finger of Death: The finger of death is an artifact created thousands of years ago for the purpose of cursing large bodies of water. The artifact was originally created by the lich Thaeloth, who planned to destroy Penance by cursing its water supply. The lich removed the middle finger from his left hand and imbued it with magic so powerful that few beings comprehend its awesome power. Israfel discovered this plot, destroyed the lich and cast the offending finger into the domain of Wildwood, where it was later found by Haiel. The finger of death can be used in one of two ways: it can be cast into a body of water, or it can be used directly against an opponent via a ranged touch attack. When cast into a body of water, the liquid immediately becomes salty and undrinkable. All plant life that would normally derive nutrition from that water dies and cannot grow again until the finger is removed. Characters coming into contact with the water must make a Fortitude save or become an undead creature. First through fifth level characters automatically transform into skeletons. Characters level 6 –10 must make a Fort save (DC 15) or become a zombie. Characters level 11 – 15 must make a DC 20 save or become a wight. Characters level 16 – 20 must make a DC 25 Fort save or become a shadow. Characters level 21 and above must make a Fort save (DC 30) or become a ghost. When used as a ranged touch attack, the finger of death does not kill surrounding vegetation or spoil standing water, but it has the same ability to transform its target into an undead creature.

Strong necromancy, Wiz 20th.

The Charred Woods

In the course of warfare, there is sometimes no other recourse but to deny your enemy the resources he so desperately craves by utterly destroying them. The Charred Woods is one such example of the aforementioned scorched earth policy. This beltway of burnt trees and blackened soil is roughly five miles wide and over 120 miles long. It begins approximately forty miles east of Wildwood's border with Penance, following a circuitous path parallel to the lower branch of the River Tanais. At all times, the Charred Woods remains between fifteen and thirty miles south of the vital waterway linking the timber industry with its markets back in Penance. The vast tract of forbidden wilderness acts as a buffer between the settlements under the dominion of Sevenil's King Odreck Viminth and the unspoiled woodlands of the thorns and their allies. Created as a measure of last resort, the Charred Woods serves as a bitter and painful reminder of the desperate efforts sometimes required to maintain nature's sanctity irrespective of the dire cost. It is a testament to the unending battle between progress and the preservation of the primeval.

History: The conflict erupted tens of thousands of years ago when the first loggers from Penance crossed the border into Wildwood with the intention of harvesting timber from the pristine forests to their east. At first, Haiel and his indigenous allies fended off the invaders with a combination of crippling guerilla assaults and the rapid replanting of new trees to take the place of fallen trees. Despite the continuous setbacks and staggering casualties suffered by the foreign invaders, the highly motivated entrepreneurs showed no signs of letting go of their lucrative enterprise. Backed by the military might and limitless economic resources of the Pedestal's bloodlords, the merchants finally made headway into Wildwood, establishing settlements along the banks of the lower branch of the River Tanais. Slowly but surely the determined timber merchants pressed further into Wildwood, pushing the natives deeper into the feral wilderness. The bitter contest reached a critical stage a little more than a millennium ago as the forces of industry approached the outskirts of the thorns' sacred grove of Edanne. In response to the imminent encroachment on their cherished lands, the elder druids of the ancient settlement solicited the candid opinions of their constituents in regards to determining a unanimous course of action. Virtually every thorn vowed to fight to the bitter end except for one vocal dissenter, the now legendary thorn druid, Pyrethrum. The debate raged for several days, but the determined rebel stubbornly refused to budge, vehemently insisting that victory in battle offered only a temporary respite from the loggers' relentless march into their homeland. Wore down by the protestations of his brethren, the crafty Pyrethrum proposed a compromise. In exchange for agreeing to the resolution to go to war, he stipulated that if the struggle turned against the thorns, they would adopt his plan to burn hundreds of square miles of forest to serve as a buffer between Edanne and the dominion of Sevenil's king. Grudgingly, the assembly acquiesced to his demand, setting in motion a crucial series of events that forever altered Wildwood's landscape.

Aided by the military presence of their wild frey allies, the thorns launched a quick succession of devastating assaults, expelling the unwanted trespassers with relative ease. The surprisingly rapid victories bolstered the status of Edanne's elder druids while casting doubt upon Pyrethrum's credibility within the community. However, the jubilance borne from success proved fleeting, just as Pyrethrum had predicted. Within less than a month, more than

a thousand troops dispatched by the bloodlords of Decree made the perilous trek down the lower branch of the River Tanais aboard three war galleys. The impressive force retook the logging outposts from the wild frey and pressed inland, intent on eradicating the thorn nuisance forever. With the future of their race and their sacred grove at stake, the elder druids reluctantly adopted Pyrethrum's revolting plan. Faced with no other alternative, the thorns spread out along a 125 mile perimeter and performed the unthinkable. As the slow moving army hacked its way through the vibrant forest's undergrowth, they unleashed a coordinated barrage of druidic magic that consumed the marauders in columns of flames and transformed a massive swath of woodlands into a roaring conflagration. The sight of smoldering trees sickened many of their ranks, but it accomplished its intended goal, to permanently halt the progress of Penance's loggers. Little by the little, the forest slowly reclaims portions of the Charred Woods; however it still achieves its desired goal of defending much larger portions of the forest from despoilment at the hands of avaricious loggers and merchants.

Overview: From the aerial perspective of a passing airship, the Charred Woods appears as a giant scar marring the verdant surface of Haiel's feral domain. From the ground, the unsightly, jagged blemish is a disturbing vision to behold. Rows of blackened, dead trees immolated by the ancient inferno tower above the ground, casting ominous, dark shadows shaped like gnarled tendrils onto the bleak earth beneath it. Deep gouges dig into their contorted, rotting trunks while heaps of primordial, white ash lay upon their exposed roots. The malodorous, charcoal-colored soil teems with colonies of fungi devouring the abundance of decaying, organic matter dating back to the creation of this seared wasteland. Even after the passage of more than a millennium, the disgusting odor of burning wood and flesh hangs heavy in the stagnant, thin air. Refreshing breezes never waft through the spiny branches of the dead trees; therefore the atmosphere has remained practically unchanged for centuries. Despite the absence of a living canopy or any other visible obstacle impeding the entry of sunlight, the entire locale perpetually basks in an eerie, smoky twilight regardless of the season or the time of day. This inexplicable phenomenon accounts for the region's inability to ecologically recover from the catastrophic fire responsible for its inception. The eternal shroud of grayness enveloping the realm and its nutrient deprived soil prevent green plants from taking root within the largely lifeless realm, thus insuring the Charred Woods' endurance for generations to come.

The Charred Wood's longevity and its deathly appearance sometimes prove insufficient to convince obstinate merchants that its reclamation and the annexation of the lush woodlands beyond it are not a hopeless cause. Despite the logistical difficulties of hauling lumber across roughly five miles of lifeless, yielding earth in addition to repelling the foul creatures now inhabiting the bleak landscape, the most articulate and influential of these misguided individuals occasionally manages to convince a bloodlord to support such a foolish expedition. Accompanied by a small band of likeminded followers, they venture into the decimated region only to become hapless victims of the unique environmental conditions or the cruel denizens lurking within the locale. Despite the repeated failures of these endeavors, there is invariably someone of importance willing to take a chance that they can succeed where so many others stumbled. As a result, adventurers deliberately or inadvertently fall prey to outlandish schemes pitched by charlatans promising the financier fantastic monetary rewards.

In addition to the difficulties imposed by the topography and the monstrous inhabitants, the simultaneous discharge of druidic magic on such as grand scale left its indelible mark on the land itself, affecting it in ways previously unimaginable. Like all fires, the primordial inferno consumed virtually all of the locale's oxygen supply, replacing the life-giving gas with its toxic counterparts, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. Because the area lacks the green plants that convert carbon dioxide back into oxygen, air-breathing creatures find the going through the desolate wasteland extremely difficult. A character merely walking through the area must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1 per previous check) every hour; otherwise he takes 1d6 points of nonlethaldamage. Characters sustaining damage in this manner grow fatigued and remain in this condition until they recover the nonlethaldamage lost in this manner. If the character fails this saving throw and remains in the area, the time increment between saving throws decreases to every ten minutes and in addition to sustaining 1d6 points of nonlethal damage from a failed saving throw, the character also suffers one point of temporary damage to all of his ability scores. Creatures lapsing into unconsciousness as a result of oxygen-deprivation die of suffocation without outside intervention. The *DMG* provides the specific details of suffocation under The Environment heading. Not surprisingly, thorns are predominately unaffected by these conditions because they do not breathe in the conventional sense. Obviously this gives them a decided tactical advantage against their humanoid adversaries.

Inhabitants: The Charred Woods is one of the most sparsely populated regions of Wildwood, comparable to the pits and caverns delineating the northern border between Wildwood and Eclipse. Although air-breathing creatures occasionally venture into the forsaken woodlands to devour carrion or pursue fleeing prey, none of them take up permanent residence within its confines. The only structures inside of its boundaries are the simple outposts constructed by the thorns shortly after the great conflagration. A pair of thorn druids mans each of these remote stations, continuously monitoring the loggers' activities in the adjacent woodlands. With the exception of the thorns, no green plants, even those that do not depend upon photosynthesis for food, are found within the unique ecosystem.

Despite their prevalence in the locale, thorns are definitely in the minority when compared to the other denizens dwelling within this inhospitable locale. Earth and fire elementals appear in significant numbers, undoubtedly borne from the havoc and



devastation wreaked by the primeval blaze as well as the potent magical forces unleashed during the creation of this bizarre environment. Earth elementals greatly outnumber their flaming cousins, but the sight of the mobile sheet of flame is far more impressive than the hulking mound of black earth. Even more plentiful than these extraplanar foes are the legions of the living dead skulking throughout the desolate woods. Most rise from their earthly graves as skeleton or zombies, but a small percentage assumes a more sinister form, haunting the Charred Woods as ghouls, ghosts or even worse, vampires. Because many of these unfortunate souls succumbed to asphyxiation from prolonged exposure to carbon monoxide, their remaining flesh bears a sickly, pink tone. However, humanoids are not the only beings comprising the ranks of the undead. Perhaps the most feared denizen of the Charred Woods is the terrifying arborgeist, the restless, incorporeal spirit of a treant ravaged by flames. Although their numbers continue to dwindle with the passage of centuries, they still pose a threat to adventurers wandering through the desolate graveyard of scorched trees and burnt earth. (Arborgeists appear in the sourcebook *Into the Green*, also available from Bastion Press.)

Secrets: While Pyrethrum's efforts undeniably spared the sacred grove of Edanne from ruination at the hands of Penance's timber industry, a small, but important faction of elder druids never reconciled the need to destroy such an expansive tract of pristine wilderness for their race's self-preservation. As a result of their influence during the decades following the cataclysm, Pyrethrum's significance in thorn history steadily waned until he achieved a status of virtual anonymity within the community that he helped to save. Less than a century later he disappeared altogether, but many rumors and legends insist that his peers banished him from Edanne and in an ultimate sense of irony forced him to live out the remainder of his days within the desolate wasteland created by his inspiration. His eventual whereabouts and ultimate fate remain unknown, but several credible sources claim that he now wanders the Charred Woods as a vengeful ghost attacking the remote outposts of the plant brethren that betrayed him.

The Scarlet Forest

Exploitation and despoilment are the lasting hallmarks of the parasitic relationship between the unguarded temperate woodlands of Wildwood and the bloodthirsty armies of neighboring Arena. In the eyes of an avaricious warlord, the anarchic forest is nothing more than an overstocked warehouse of natural resources ripe for the picking. Armed with a destructive array of heavy logging equipment and legions of troops wielding sharpened axes, the greedy mob ravages the landscape like a plague of locusts devouring a farmer's crop. The cacophony of steel splitting wood and mighty trees crashing to the ground resonates throughout the region, raising the alarm to Wildwood's stalwart defenders. What ensues is typically a protracted, bloody guerilla

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campaign pitting the professional soldiers of Arena against ragtag bands of poorly disciplined natives enjoying one important tactical advantage against their adversary, an intimate familiarity with the terrain and its inhabitants. In the end, Wildwood's inhabitants eventually repel the invaders but not until they wreak catastrophic devastation, reducing the pristine forest into a steamy wasteland of rotting tree stumps and mangled wildlife. Although this tragic scene plays out with frequent regularity along the massive border with its warmongering neighbor, there is one legendary locale where the plants reign supreme. Druids and rangers dwelling nearby refer to this tract of pristine wilderness as the Scarlet Forest, a name attributable to the trees' fondness for the taste of humanoid blood. The few adventurers foolish enough to venture into the locale claim that many of the trees proudly display crimson streaks on their trunks and along the tips of their branches. The veracity of these reports remains unproved, but there is no dispute that the Scarlet Forest is a very dangerous place even for the most storied adventurers.

History: The creation of this unique ecosystem is a relatively recent development, dating back roughly 250 years earlier when an eccentric elf druid named Savelar Turraloth dwelt amongst the mighty trees and dense undergrowth prevalent throughout the region. A grizzled veteran of numerous skirmishes against trespassing adventurers and the vanguards of approaching armies, the decades of continuous conflict steadily eroded his trust in all humanoids, transforming the formerly affable soul into a bitter misanthrope intent on preserving the natural sanctuary at any cost. Over the course of the next few years, Savelar experimented with the concoction of a miraculous growth elixir capable of animating plants while granting them sentience. After numerous failures the bold experimenter finally accomplished his intended task; however the jubilance borne from success rapidly deteriorated into disappointment. The suddenly intelligent trees seemed preoccupied with marveling at the surrounding natural wonders rather than displaying a proclivity to fight back against humanoid incursions. The disillusioned druid went back to the drawing board, modifying his tonic by adding bodily fluids procured from some of the region's fiercest predators. After several more efforts at trial and error, he finally developed a formula that exceeded even his wildest expectations. The sickening mixture transformed the normally placid trees into wooden killing machines with an insatiable appetite for blood. Let loose by their self-proclaimed master into the surrounding forest, the hungry predators feasted on the native wildlife, virtually wiping out the entire animal population within a few short weeks while sending some of the locale's most ferocious beasts scurrying for safety.

Upon witnessing this extraordinary sight Savelar beamed like a proud parent, reveling in the destruction and chaos caused by his vengeful prodigies. At first, the grand experiment progressed according to plan as the mighty army of walking trees easily disposed of a scouting party from Arena and a band of treasure seeking explorers. Yet, as their numbers steadily increased, an air of superiority began to emerge within their community. The conniving plants no longer viewed Savelar as their creator and benefactor, and instead they perceived him as a rival threatening their existence. Less than six months after their arrival, the trees proclaimed their supremacy over the region, bludgeoning their former master into an amorphous heap of pulverized bones and swollen dead flesh. They became the undisputed rulers of their domain; however their mad quest for power blinded them to one important fact, that none of them knew the ingredients to Savelar's formula. Despite numerous searches, the befuddled trees failed to locate any of his research notes or other information pertaining to the concoction's creation. To make matters worse, they soon discovered that some unknown magical force probably crafted by their deceased designer prevented them from straying beyond the confines of Savelar's former domain. Faced with the prospects of eternal imprisonment and the eventual extinction of their kind, the trees' demeanor quickly changed from cruel and haughty to maniacal and desperate. Although consumed by hatred for humanoids they also realize that they offer the only hope for halting their ceaseless march toward utter annihilation. Nonetheless, humanity and other indigenous wild beasts continue to exact a steep toll against them as the past two and a half centuries of incursions reduced their numbers from an all time high of 236 individuals to their present day population of 103. Despite the sharp decline, the Scarlet Forest still poses a formidable threat to anyone wandering into the unwelcoming environment.

Overview: Spanning an area encompassing approximately 400 square miles, the Scarlet Forest begins roughly 300 miles south of the intersection between Wildwood, Arena and Penance with the River Hebrus forming its western boundary. Shaped vaguely like a rectangle, the forsaken woodlands stretch twenty-five miles inland and sixteen miles downriver. On the surface, the forbidden expanse of sinister wilderness appears very similar to rest of Wildwood's deciduous forest; however closer inspection reveals a host of unsettling dissimilarities. Despite its far flung reputation for danger, the Scarlet Forest appears remarkably quiet and still in comparison to the surrounding area. With the exception of the meager buzz generated by a few scattered colonies of social insects, the locale lacks the incessant cacophony of primal screams and melodious mating calls resonating through the vibrant adjacent woodlands. Surprisingly, the diversity of plant life is also limited. Trees are certainly well-represented within the Scarlet Forest, but shrubs and other types of undergrowth are in very short supply. The scarcity of greenery covering the forest floor enables onlookers to take notice of the numerous piles of disturbed soil prevalent throughout the region. Experienced woodsmen recognize these oddities as the aftermath of an animated tree uprooting itself, yet the most distressing feature of the Scarlet Forest awaits those that penetrate its calm exterior and venture into the savage heart of this ominous domain. In a nauseating display of unmistakable savagery and

carnage, a gigantic mound of mangled skeletons and rotting corpses of hundreds, perhaps even thousands of butchered humanoids towers thirty feet above the ground. Heaps of sundered weaponry and equipment as well as the decedents' personal effects surround the perimeter. Obviously the deliberate creation of the indigenous inhabitants, this macabre trophy stands as an unmistakable testament of their intense loathing for all humankind.

Remarkably the terrain is fairly negotiable for travelers. In most areas, land-based creatures can walk through the forest without hindrance from vines and other forms of annoying underbrush. Similarly, numerous holes in the relatively sparse canopy allow light to penetrate, basking the surface in the warm glow of the Forge's suns. Unfortunately, the mystical force preventing Savelar's creations from running amuck throughout Wildwood does not extend its hospitality to trespassing humanoids. An inexplicable aura of dread doggedly nags at unwelcome interlopers from the moment they set foot onto the unwelcoming landscape. The boding sense of doom constantly distracts humanoids and monstrous humanoids venturing into the Scarlet Forest. As long as they remain within the forbidden tract of wilderness, they suffer a -1 penalty to all skill checks, attack rolls, damage rolls and saving throws. This is a mind-influencing, supernatural effect that does not provide a saving throw and is not subject to spell resistance. In addition, weapons, shields and other items crafted from wood also prove less effective in the Scarlet Forest. The enhancement bonus of weapons and shields is reduced by -1, while the caster level of items such as wands, rods, staffs and miscellaneous magic items is decreased by -1.

Inhabitants: Needless to say, Savelar's prodigies occupy the highest rung of the Scarlet Forest's rather limited ecosystem. Scattered throughout the Scarlet Forest, they remain constantly vigilant for humanoid trespassers. Natives refer to these arboreal guardians by a variety of names, but the most common is bloodtree, an apropos moniker considering their taste for blood. In actuality, the bloodtrees are really a colony of exceptionally powerful treants. Unlike typically encountered treants this variety is neutral evil, and they are all Gargantuan-sized. Furthermore, the elixir that permanently transformed them from normal trees into treants also imbued them with their intense hatred for humanoids and natural belligerence. Unfortunately, the metamorphosis spawned one unexpected side effect; it prevented them from reproducing. This unanticipated drawback to Savelar's formula only further agitated the already malevolent creatures, exacerbating their irrepressible rage and loathing for humankind. Their insatiable contempt is plainly exhibited by their grisly pile of shattered bones and decaying cadavers that they proudly refer to as the hill of triumph in their native language. The grotesque spectacle is also intended to serve as a warning to all of the Scarlet Forest's indigenous residents.

Although none of the other inhabitants challenges the bloodtrees' supremacy, they are certainly not alone within the Scarlet Forest. Other malevolent plants and the occasional trespassing predator also stalk the foreboding wilderness in search of prey. Assassin vines, death mosses and the solitary tendriculos are the most common plants encountered within the Scarlet Forest although they are encountered in proportionally far lower numbers than in Wildwood's more populated areas. Animals and their dire cousins also stray into the locale, and even though they are not the object of the bloodtrees' disgust, they still make a tasty meal for the carnivorous predators. In another demonstration of their amazing adaptability, a burgeoning tribe of resourceful trolls dwells near the eastern bank of the River Hebrus, feeding on the marine life found in the waterway and humanoids that manage to elude the bloodtrees. For the obvious reasons, there are no humanoid settlements within the Scarlet Forest, and those humanoids living along the outskirts of the forbidden tract of wilderness intentionally steer a very wide berth around the area.

Secrets: Local residents dwelling outside the forsaken woodland unanimously agree that Savelar's research notes and the ingredients to his growth elixir remain hidden somewhere within the Scarlet Forest. Speculation runs rampant as to the precise location of the mysterious cache of journals and logs, but the most popular and plausible theories contend that the information lies buried beneath the ground in a clandestine laboratory or other appropriate facility. As a result of this widely held belief, some local communities hire courageous, skilled adventurers to delve into the tainted forest and retrieve the priceless documentation before the bloodtrees unearth it. To date, none of the companies that returned from these ill-fated expeditions discovered any conclusive evidence to support the aforementioned hypothesis. Nonetheless, coordinated efforts are still underway to finally solve this baffling quandary.

An equally puzzling mystery perplexing local residents is the actual nature of the mystical barrier preventing the bloodtrees from escaping into Wildwood proper. Undoubtedly, Savelar played a central role in its construction, but the precise details regarding the bloodtrees' confinement continue to stump even the wisest druids. The most prevalent explanation claims that a drastically modified version of the druidic incantation, *antiplant shell*, bars all plants from exiting the Scarlet Forest. The notion further contends that the potent spell emanates from some central point at the heart of the Scarlet Forest and that it is powered by a mighty artifact crafted by Savelar.

In contrast to the widespread uncertainty surrounding these ancient conundrums, there is no doubt that the plundered treasures of deceased adventurers relegated to eternal rest on the hill of triumph remain within the clutches of the avaricious bloodtrees. Some believe that these riches are equally disbursed amongst the brutal wooden tyrants, while an equally vocal group insists that they lie at the bottom of a repository concealed somewhere within the Scarlet Forest. Whatever their exact location,

the mere mention of this pilfered loot is sufficient to whet the appetite of rashers venturing to Wildwood in search of wealth and fame.

The Dragons' Graveyard

Dismissed by some as little more than a curiosity, this five square mile area contains a concentration of dragon corpses in various states of decay. The vast majority are little more than skeletons, though some lifeless husks in various states of decay dot the region as well. For centuries, three questions have puzzled scholars. Why do the vast majority of the draconic corpses belong to very old and older dragons? Why haven't the bodies been put to use by the various groups of necromancers, who would normally value such prized corpses? How it is possible for the evil aligned chromatic dragons to rest alongside the metallic good dragons?

It remains a mystery why no reputable scholars have ever seen any creature tending this region, even though from time to time expeditions to further explore the secrets of the Dragon's Graveyard met with the tragic disappearance of the explorers. No living dragons have ever been spotted here, though it is assumed by their presence that they come here to die. Why they choose to do so remains a mystery, and it is something that dragons refuse to discuss. Those good aligned dragons that are generally approachable by mortals either feign total ignorance, or they downplay the mystique of this place as nothing more than a fanciful collection of bones. The truth remains hidden, though there are mortals throughout the Forge who have learned the terrible secrets of this location and have sworn to keep their forbidden knowledge locked away, lest they face the wrath of dragonkind.

History: In an age long past, in a time when the Forge itself was new and the Feathered Fowl were just beginning to populate the world, Haiel pulled some of his first predators to the Forge. What force in the multiverse could transform his forest into a beautiful gem of terror better than dragons? Haiel scoured the known worlds in search of a mighty reptile worthy and potent enough to serve as the progenitor of the most fearsome lineage of dragons imaginable. Haiel focused his attention on pulling green and black dragons into Wildwood, two species well suited for his lush, green realm. However, Haiel had had no prior experience with dragons, unlike several other members of the Black Flock that had pulled dragons into their domains with varying degrees of success. Much to Haiel's dismay and befuddlement, the first few dragons that he pulled into Wildwood almost immediately deteriorated both physically and mentally. Their bodies quickly eroded and were only exacerbated by the raging insanity that soon overwhelmed their tortured minds. Perplexed by this unexpected development, Haiel queried Israfel about his predicament. She explained to him that the Forge's innate and omnipresent magical energy somehow affected the dragon's unique physiology unless the dragon bound himself to the Forge through a ritual of binding. Armed with this newfound knowledge, Haiel pulled a frighteningly cruel and



Illustrated by Terry Pavlet

cunning green dragon named Tarraxxoss into his domain. In accordance with Haiel's instructions, the malevolent great wyrm performed the mystical rite and established his lair in the present day location of the Dragon's Graveyard.

Pleased with the outcome of his latest endeavor, Haiel began importing dragons in earnest causing their population to rapidly swell. Within the brief span of a few decades, green and black dragons spread throughout Wildwood along with lesser numbers of metallic dragons. The dragons' proliferation excited Haiel; however his exuberance changed to dismay as he watched the reptiles magically alter his beloved landscape in accordance with their own designs. Unbeknownst to the blade of the green, shortly after their arrival the crafty and resourceful dragons led by Tarraxxoss soon discovered that the ritual of binding did more than enable them to adapt to the Forge; it also enabled them to shape the wilderness around their fortified lairs and attract scores of sentient followers. These rapidly expanding areas became known as dragonholds, and Tarraxxoss' dominion ranked as the greatest of them all. As his personal power and the size of his dragonhold increased, the conniving dragon consolidated his growing power, slaying any potential rivals and dragging their mangled corpses back to his underground labyrinth as an addition to his grisly trophy collection. Within the secure confines of his dragonhold, the wicked reptile's magical abilities and influence matched those of Haiel himself. He could spy on his territory from the safety of his fortified lair and instantly materialize anywhere within his dragonhold to deal with a potential threat or an unwanted trespasser. Small settlements of willing humanoid followers populated his burgeoning empire, providing tribute and protection to the vain dragon who in turn granted the community's most trustworthy leaders and warriors with a lethal arsenal of magical abilities. No longer willing to acquiesce to the rulership of a being that he considered his inferior, Tarraxxoss set his designs on wresting Haiel's coveted role as overlord of Wildwood. Unfortunately, for Tarraxxoss, his machinations did not go unnoticed. The Feathered Fowl became aware of Tarraxxoss' plot and quickly formulated a response. Although generally not known as a masterful politician, the savvy Haiel used his draconic foe's ambitiousness against him. Tarraxxoss' rampant murders instilled fear and loathing amongst vast numbers of his reptilian kin. Seizing upon this widespread sentiment, Haiel enlisted the aid of dozens of dragons in his quest to rid Wildwood of this potential usurper. Haiel and his draconic allies launched a surprise assault against Tarraxxoss. Despite sustaining heavy casualties, the blade of the green and his force cornered Tarraxxoss and eventually destroyed him. Much to Haiel's surprise, a horrific cataclysm followed Tarraxxoss' decimation. The violent upheaval ensued, forcing the shattered bodies of countless slain dragons to the surface. Above ground, violent storms raced across his former dominion, razing the humanoid settlements to the ground and scattering his followers. Over the next few hours, the squalls subsided and the land returned to its former glory before Tarraxxoss' arrival.

Once again, Haiel used the situation to his own political advantage. He strictly forbade other dragons from creating dragonholds. Despite his proclamation and the overt threat of retaliation, most dragons take Haiel's law with a grain of salt and quietly establish dragonholds of their own, although none, including that of Mastuu Dargus, even begins to rival that of their fallen ancestor. To further ensure his mastery of Wildwood, Haiel drastically reduced the number of dragons pulled into his domain into a mere trickle thus giving birth to the uneasy relationship between Haiel and Wildwood's dragon population.

Over the passing eons, the significance and events that took place in the Dragon's Graveyard slowly faded from memory and recorded history until Cryosyreth (Male half-dragon/half-troll, Brd 12/Bbn 5), a charismatic and ambitious half-dragon ventured to the remote locale along with a contingent of his humanoid followers, all of whom possessed varying degrees of draconic ancestry. The progeny of a long dead green dragon and a troll, Cryosyreth uses Tarraxxoss' memory as a rallying cry amongst his supporters, harkening back to a distant eon when dragons and not an alliance of men, elves and the Feathered Fowl held sway in Wildwood. For now, Cryosyreth's impassioned ideology generates

Dragonhold

Dragons are innately attuned to all things mystical. As a result, the intrinsic magical energies that permeate the Forge have a much more profound effect upon dragons than other beings that lack such an affinity. Left unchecked, the interaction between the two divergent intangible energies is far too powerful for the dragon to control causing him to go mad and eventually destroy him. To counteract this effect, the dragons of the Forge have developed a ritual of binding that alleviates this problem. In addition to the preceding effect, the ritual also enables the dragon to exert direct influence over the immediate vicinity surrounding the dragon's lair. This area is known as a dragonhold.

A dragonhold's size and scope depends upon the dragon's wishes, although in Wildwood, they rarely encompass more than a one-mile radius around the dragon's actual lair. Within the confines of his territory, the draconian resident can shape the topography, climate and plant life in accordance with his wishes. In the vast majority of cases, the transformations are fairly minor and sometimes unnoticeable for the dual reasons of avoiding Haiel's scrutinizing gaze and because the existing wilderness is often ideally suited for the dragon.

(If you want to fully incorporate dragonholds into your campaign, *Legacies of Oathbound, Issue 2* provides extensive details about the creation, maintenance and effects of a dragonhold in addition to a wealth of additional information about dragons in the Forge).

emotional appeal amongst his followers; however few doubt that a hidden political agenda actually motivates the popular leader. Since his arrival here a century ago, the Dragon's Graveyard has assumed a religious and spiritual significance in the eyes of many indigenous dragons as it continues to expand thanks to Cryosyreth and his half-dragon minions who continually add new skeletons and corpses to the somber graveyard of fallen draconic heroes.

Overview: The Dragons' Graveyard is a roughly square shaped area five miles across. Throughout can be found the skeletal remains of draconic corpses intertwined with the growing vegetation. In many cases the combination of bone and vegetation has given them an appearance that is almost alive. The massive frames roughly hold their original shapes, but these are outlined and filled in with the greenery of the forest. Leaves and barbs replace the spikes the dragons had in life. Vines and other greenery replace the muscles.

Roughly two hundred and fifty distinguishably separate dragon corpses are located in this area, averaging ten per square mile. Indeed, explorers need not look far to find the skeletal remains this area is known for. Extracting the corpses from the vegetation would prove difficult if not for the half dragon guardians here, but under their stewardship, not a single dragon's corpse has gone missing.

Hidden behind vegetation and natural rock formations are the entrances to the caverns where the half-dragons make their homes. These areas are guarded by three elite half-dragon guards (level 8 fighters or better). Within are the twisting tunnels where the half-dragon society thrives. There are five separate tunnel clusters, each connecting with the others in various locations. Some of the chambers were clearly excavated and follow clean, geometrical shapes, while the majority of the tunnels were formed naturally and still hold (more or less) their original shapes.

Inhabitants: The society of half-dragons of the Dragons' Graveyard live in subterranean caverns, constantly watching over the skeletal remains of their ancestors. While Cryosyreth rules their kind here, the draconic corpses are recognized as their ancestors, and some of them are viewed as gods. The half-dragons normally ignore visitors to the Dragons' Graveyard unless those visitors begin disturbing the bones and corpses there. Any creatures that do so incur the immediate wrath of the half-dragons who watch over this place. The half-dragons quietly surround the intruders in this area, and then fall upon them in one massive attack that rarely leaves any survivors.

The half-dragons must also serve as guardians, protecting Cryosyreth and their own civilization from the predators that prowl the forests of Wildwood. Despite the fact that they are powerful creatures in their own right, there are other beasts that would come here and demand a heavy toll from them if they are not properly defended. Sentries stake out positions miles away from the Dragon's Graveyard so that they can spot approaching threats. If they aren't powerful enough to overcome the threats themselves, they quickly fly to larger groups of guards, who then move to intercept the threat. In the rare occasions where the threat is too powerful for this approach, they rouse Cryosyreth to fight in their defense. Their ferocious leader only enters combat to deal with major threats, although he is still aided by his subordinates.

Any necromancers who come here with the intention of taking the draconic corpses are usually easily spotted by their undead entourage. These fowl villains are dealt with rapidly and permanently upon their approach. They are swiftly killed before they even near the graveyard itself.

To date the defenses have yet to be bested, but there have been those mortals who have escaped after plundering their storehouses of treasure and learning their secrets. It is made known before such individuals completely flee the area that should their secrets become known, they will be hunted relentlessly and eventually slain, no matter where they might try to hide.

In addition to being the guardian protectors of the Dragons' Graveyard, the half-dragons that inhabit this region also take it upon themselves to bring the slain dragons from throughout the Forge to this location. They have few informants, but they often *polymorph* into a form that doesn't betray their heritage and go into the world in search of tales of dragons who have been recently slain. When they find them, they transfer their corpses into extra-dimensional spaces and then teleport back here so that the fallen dragons can join their kind.

Secrets: The most obvious secret contained in this location is the entire society made up of nothing but half-dragons. Those visitors who are respectful of the draconic corpses are allowed to look and leave without ever being approached by the denizens of this place. Those who begin poking around in the caves are quickly killed, as are any who defile the draconic corpses.

Very few mortals who have left this place have seen the massive hoards of treasure that lie within the half-dragons' coffers. Five chambers lie underground, each stuffed with gold, weapons, armor, wands, staves, and wondrous items. A few adventurers have deduced that since dragons collect hoards their entire lives, they must also dispose of it in some way before their death, therefore there must be a cache of treasure here somewhere. Only the lucky have seen these immense caches, and even fewer have actually managed to walk away with any of it. In addition to this, Cryosyreth also keeps his own cache of treasure, and though he is as greedy as his ancestors, he respects the fact that he wouldn't be able to take any of the items from these storage areas without provoking the anger of his kin. If there are items he feels he must have, he always trades items of equal value from his own horde.

For his part, Cryosyreth is patiently waiting and watching the unfolding developments between Mastuu Dargus, Sadranial and Haiel to come to fruition. Cryosyreth feigns support for Mastuu Dargus in the presense of her delegates; however he feels that his best chance for leading a massive and successful draconic revolt can only occur once Mastuu Dargus,

Sadranial and their respective allies are eliminated leaving only a weakened Haiel between him and his brethren's complete domination of Wildwood.

Garden of Fasalai

Despite the passage of more than ten millenniums since his violent death, the legend of Fasalai remains a controversial subject in many druidic circles. The mere mention of the name evokes a wide spectrum of emotional responses from Wildwood's indigenous humanoids. Some revere the bombastic orator and groundbreaking botanist as a prophet or messianic figure, while others view him as nothing more than a glib-tongued, self-promoting braggart that got what he richly deserved. Most opinions fall somewhere in the middle, although they tend to lean more in favor of the latter position than the former. Irrespective of the individual's perspective, Fasalai's abrasive personality and befuddling obstinacy left a profound impact on Wildwood and its normally reserved overlord. Nevertheless, his breathtaking garden provides a lasting testimonial to his horticultural genius, while his brutal demise bestows rarely seen insight into Haiel's enigmatic psyche.

History: During the course of his seemingly eternal tenure as Wildwood's undisputed ruler, no mortal being captivated Haiel as much as Fasalai. Although the blade of the green typically set his sights on importing exotic predators or transplanting entire societies into his wild playground, some esoteric quality about the eccentric druid stirred his imagination. In an act of impulsiveness, Haiel pulled the half-elf into his wild domain and deposited him in an abandoned replica of a city in central Wildwood, sparing him from the deadly hunt and chase scenario that newly arrived seeds must usually endure. Over the next few years, the Feathered Fowl watched with exuberant glee as the whirlwind of energy transformed the crumbling ruins into a beautifully manicured oasis of greenery. He refurbished moss-strewn, dilapidated statues into luxurious fountains cascading crystal clear spring water throughout the complex of boxed herb gardens and sculpted hedges. Initially, Fasalai's wilderness sanctuary only attracted exotic birds and pollinating insects, yet word of his astounding natural creation soon reached the attentive ears of interested humanoids. Fellow druids from a diverse array of native races including dovers, elves, humans, thorns and wild frey gravitated to the spectacular site and marveled in awe at his botanical achievement. A cult following quickly developed, and the shy, introverted Fasalai was soon surrounded by a growing legion of adoring followers. At first, the sudden influx of admirers made him nervous, but over the course of the subsequent months, he gradually became more comfortable with his newfound fame and accepting of their constant presence.

Aided by an expert team of capable botanists, the magnitude of his exquisite garden increased dramatically during the course of the subsequent decade, spreading well beyond its original boundaries and incorporating vast portions of the surrounding woodlands. After nearly ten years of painstaking work and careful nurturing largely performed under Fasalai's insightful direction, the fabled garden comprised twenty square miles of pruned shrubbery, fragrant herbs, vibrant, colorful flowers and hardy trees precisely arranged in orderly rows and groupings. By the time of its completion, Fasalai's previously solitary refuge supported a thriving population of 1,000 individuals scattered throughout the outlying areas bordering the horticultural sanctuary. Yet as the garden evolved, Fasalai's personality and outlook also underwent a surprising metamorphosis. Years of adulation and flattery gradually transformed the contemplative caretaker into an obnoxious windbag. He now basked in the spotlight that he longed to avoid nearly a decade earlier, relishing in the accolades heaped upon him by his druidic colleagues and a steadily increasing flow of avaricious sycophants. The shocking change and its repercussions set Fasalai on a violent collision course with Wildwood's typically indifferent master.

The path to the inevitable showdown began slowly and subtly. As his name became synonymous with the natural monument, he began to envision his relationship to the luscious garden in a differing light. He gradually moved away from his initial perception of himself as the garden's nurturer toward embracing his self-proclaimed position as the father of life. Egged on by an ever expanding inner circle of radical druids and an assorted rabble of malcontented zealots with a myriad of divergent aspirations, Fasalai started to employ his horticultural oasis as a public forum for bringing various issues to light. At first, minor grievances and petty personal squabbles dominated the discussions; however over the course of the next several years, he steadily assumed a more active role in the proceedings, frequently functioning as the debate's moderator or the champion of an obscure cause. By the time of the garden's completion, he phased out the public aspect of the meetings and made his botanical masterwork into a bully pulpit for his ambitious agendas. The increasingly egotistical Fasalai neglected his druidic duties, delegating the day-to-day maintenance of the garden to subordinates while spending the overwhelming majority of his day ranting to his fanatical lackeys about a wildly exaggerated injustice or other perceived slight committed against him.

In most cases, Haiel served as the subject of his scorn and derision. During his animated sermons, he assailed the blade of the green's oversight of Wildwood, proclaiming that the former Defender of Nature was in dereliction of duty while referring to him with such loathsome monikers as "the absentee father", "our neglectful parent" or his worst epithet, "scourge of nature". According to his philosophy, his resplendent garden represented nature's crowning achievement while Haiel's perpetual disinterest and gross mismanagement afflicted the rest of the feral domain with an incurable blight. The venomous and treasonous tone of his rambling preaching

increasingly alienated many of his oldest and most trusted confidants who steadfastly implored Fasalai to come to his senses and reconsider his dangerous course of action. Despite their vehement protestations and ominous warnings, their sound advice fell on deaf ears. Frustrated by Fasalai's obstinacy, many of them abruptly departed, giving even more power and influence to his most rabid and mentally unstable devotees.

The harsh criticism and disturbing calls for violence deeply stung Wildwood's aloof overlord, especially because they came from someone that Haiel once considered as his friend and ally. The situation left the laissez-faire member of the Black Flock in an awkward predicament. Fasalai's exquisite refuge of greenery rekindled Haiel's fond memories of his former life before his imprisonment on the Forge, yet their creator's seditious statements necessitated his response. After careful deliberation, Haiel decided to give his wayward protégé a final opportunity to realize the error of his ways and renounce his heretical beliefs. In an effort to demonstrate his awesome might to Fasalai, Haiel conjured a violent storm that wreaked havoc with the garden, uprooting several trees and leaving low-lying sections underwater. Unfortunately for both parties, the temperamental squall came too late. The few remaining voices of reason within Fasalai's camp were quickly drowned out by clamors for retribution from the most violent and fanatical elements within his constituency. Emboldened by these brazen cries for vengeance, Fasalai's loud voice boomed through the wilderness as he decried for Haiel to bequeath his lordship over Wildwood to his more able successor, Fasalai. Within moments after his daring proclamation, the incensed Feathered Fowl suddenly appeared in his midst. Undaunted, the mortal druid repeated his outlandish demand. Haiel stoically surveyed the ranks of his foe's entourage and correctly gauged that their bluster was nothing more than idle banter. Without uttering a single word, he approached the overly confident half-elf and in less than a minute, the precise thrusts of his wicked spear skewered Fasalai into a slumped heap of pierced flesh and sliced bone. As Haiel expected, his supposedly staunch followers turned and fled for the adjacent wilderness where hordes of savage beasts waited to greet them with a barrage of sharp claws and bared, jagged fangs. None survived the unspeakable carnage, leaving the Garden of Fasalai abandoned once again.

Overview: Despite the passage of 10,000 years, the Garden of Fasalai undoubtedly boasts some of Wildwood's most breathtaking scenery. The remarkable site is arranged in the shape of a giant square with each side measuring exactly four and a half miles in length. Commensurate with the uniformity inherent in its geometrical shape, the entire site is an outstanding representation of the marvels of symmetry beginning with its outermost perimeter. Six equally spaced rows of native trees, comprised predominately of oaks, beeches and maples delineate the boundary between the garden proper and the surrounding wilderness. The roughly 100-foot tall trees are close enough to form a porous but nonetheless contiguous canopy that partially darkens the adjacent woodlands and manicured shrubbery in its elongated, patchy shadows. The aforementioned shrubs are a constant feature throughout the garden serving a variety of unique purposes. The meticulously pruned woody plants comprise the next ring with alternating rows of rhododendrons and azaleas taking the proverbial lead. In addition to their stand alone usage, a plethora of more exotic varieties are employed as hedges for the locale's true showpieces, its elaborate maze and its numerous herbal and flower gardens.

An intricate labyrinth of tall, dense greenery separates the outer trees and shrubs from the inner circle of smaller, more ornamental plants. Its walls stand twenty feet high, four feet thick and stretch two and a half miles in length. They are positioned ten feet apart from one another and constitute roughly 400 rows of evenly spaced shrubbery. Even for creatures negotiating the correct path through the extensive maze without making any mistakes, the winding trek through the narrow passages comprises a total distance of almost twenty miles. Without the aid of magical assistance such as the spell, *find the path* or the ability to physically circumvent the imposing obstacle such as flying over it, the only method available to ground-based travelers trying to venture through the daunting barrier is trial and error. Over the years, the vast network of blind alleys, dead ends and winding passageways claimed the lives and sanity of numerous beings attempting to navigate their way through it.

Like the mighty stone walls of a military fortress, the redundant rows of shrubbery eventually give way to the garden's interior where colorful bouquets of flowering plants proudly display their lustrous wares. Purple tulips, golden daffodils, snow white lilies, and multihued orchids bloom in radiant splendor within the protective confines of carefully trimmed shrubs and bushes. Opulent fountains fashioned from marble and bronze statues bathe the rich, black soil in a continual wash of fresh, clean water. The only other discernable sound resonating through the still air is the repetitive buzz of pollinating insects as they gently coax nutritious pollen from the flowers' seemingly reluctant stamen. In contrast to the typically unruly and chaotic wilderness abutting it, a tranquil aura of serenity pervades the entire area even though the Garden of Fasalai lies dead smack in the middle of central Wildwood approximately 500 miles southwest of the isthmus between its two large lakes. Not surprisingly, the reason for this peaceful bliss does not emanate from the natural world and instead traces its origin to the realm of the supernatural. Immediately after the terrible slaughter 10,000 years ago, an oddly remorseful Haiel forbade the shedding of sentient blood within the Garden of Fasalai. As a result of his decree, a potent magical ward repulses all intelligent creatures attempting to enter into the area, although beings that make a Will save (DC 30) can walk through the mystical barrier and freely tour the grounds. Similarly, any attempt to attack an intelligent opponent mandates another successful Will saving throw at the same Difficulty Class as the previous one; otherwise the attack automatically fails, and the creature is

unable to target that particular foe again unless it does actual physical harm to him at a later time. If the attacker makes his saving throw, he can continue to attack that same enemy until the end of the combat without the need to make additional saving throws. Unless preoccupied with another task, Haiel's avatar generally shows up within 3d6 rounds after the commencement of hostilities and metes out the appropriate punishment to the battle's instigator. With the exception of a few exigent circumstances, the penalty for disobeying his stern edict is death.

Inhabitants: Although no longer permanently inhabited by humanoids, the Garden of Fasalai is hardly unattended. While Haiel callously destroyed all of its residents, his love of nature precluded him from letting the verdant oasis of placidity and beauty fall into a woeful state of neglect and apathy. To prevent this tragedy from taking place Haiel assumed his predecessor's caretaker duties, nurturing the blossoming plants with the same loving care that Fasalai showed them during the garden's blissful youth. In many respects, the Feathered Fowl prefers spending his time in this airy, vibrant locale instead of his overgrown, distant citadel on a remote island in the Northern Ocean.

Unfortunately for Haiel, other matters frequently demand his attention, inhibiting him from strolling through the hedgerows or more importantly, personally enforcing his specific directive regarding violence. In his absence, the blade of the green delegates this vital duty to several guardians. The foremost members of this retinue are four mighty treants interspersed amongst the outer perimeter of trees near the garden's boundary with the outside world. This quartet of intelligent plants generally works in unison and is amongst the oldest and strongest representatives of their race. Because of their relatively slow response time, they generally monitor the garden's outlying areas beyond the exterior maze's exterior walls. Transgressions committed within the labyrinth falls under the jurisdiction of Cuwatta and Tlaloc, a pair of couatls that patrol the vicinity. Swooping through the narrow hedgerows with the unerring accuracy of a *magic missile*, the enchanted creatures rank among Haiel's most trusted and devoted subordinates. The garden's last line of defense comes in its smallest package. Marshmallow, Lavender, and Chrysanthemum, three carefree but extremely potent pixie sorcerers playfully frolic in the sparkling fountains spread throughout the heart of the Garden of Fasalai. Although renowned for their mischievous pranks and their proclivity for good-natured fun, the trio of magical beings become deadly serious whenever a visitor breaks their master's strict laws. Violators running afoul of them meet a swift but typically humorous and ironic end.

In addition to these indigenous inhabitants, some druidic circles consider the Garden of Fasalai as a sacred site, prompting some of their members to make the pilgrimage to this destination. On average, roughly fifty druids and rangers from various domains throughout the Forge are present within the garden at any designated point in time. For most, the spiritual journey represents one of the most pivotal experiences of their lives as they experience nature's limitless possibilities firsthand. For others, the arduous trek proves a futile waste of time as Haiel's mystical wards prevent them from entering the hallowed grounds.

Secrets: Ancient legends passed down by the descendents of those who fled the garden shortly after Haiel's tempest claim that these followers hid their master's most powerful druidic artifacts in a secret location somewhere within the garden. The veracity of these tales remains uncertain; however many insist that the absence of these items was at least partially responsible for Fasalai's rather quick demise at the hands of Haiel. According to the majority of accounts, the revered druid possessed an incredibly potent staff along with a wooden ring of alien origins.

The Garden of Fasalai's sparkling waters possess tremendous curative properties. Drinking a single flask of the refreshing liquid heals the imbiber of all diseases, instantly neutralizes any poisons in his system and also restores 2d8 points of damage. These abilities remain in effect while the character remains within the garden's confines plus an additional 1d4 days after leaving the area. Creatures drinking more than one flask of water in a twenty-four hour period do not receive any of the aforementioned benefits from these subsequent doses.

The Crater of Haiel

Magic courses through the fiber of the Forge, and nowhere in Wildwood is its influence or strength greater than in the primeval forest surrounding Haiel's citadel in the hollow heart of the world's largest volcano. Whether its potency is attributable to the nearby presence of the domain's apathetic overlord and his mighty fortress or if the essence of the bound god seeps through an invisible or undiscovered fissure in the soil serves as a topic of heated conjecture in some intellectual circles, yet the fact remains that this locale literally exudes mystical energy. For countless generations, adventurous creatures unwilling to wait for evolution to take its meandering course have braved the 600 mile oceanic voyage from the mainland to this remote region to drastically accelerate the slow, natural process in accordance with their specific desires. After a brief period of attunement, the biological pioneers bask in the aura of the inherent supernatural forces in a deliberate effort to irrevocably alter their physiology in ways previously unimaginable. Partaking in a ritual frequently referred to as an enchantment of the flesh, the participant undergoes a startling transformation into a radically different being. Humanoids can acquire new anatomical features in addition to host of other abilities never found amongst unaltered members of their species. Some sport additional appendages, while others enhance the powers of their minds. Regardless of the path they choose, the metamorphosis is not without its price. This unnatural manipulation exacts a steep toll

on its benefactor, reducing his energy and vitality for extended lengths of time. Nevertheless, the allure of instantaneous bodily improvement often outweighs the costs or dangers associated with it. (Characters undergoing this transformation acquire a prestige racial level. Prestige racial levels commonly found in Wildwood appear in Chapter 10 of this sourcebook.)

History: Formed at the dawn of the Forge's creation, the Crater of Haiel is undeniably the oldest tract of wilderness in the entire domain. However, like the intrepid souls that venture here to permanently alter their physiques and psyches, the Crater of Haiel has also experienced several stages before settling into its present state. During its infancy, the Crater of Haiel was nothing more than the violent and tumultuous underbelly of an active volcano. The fiery mountain belched massive plumes of searing, hot ash reaching high into the atmosphere, seemingly touching the celestial bodies encircling the planet, while angry, red rivers of molten lava spilt from its summit and rolled hundreds of miles down the rocky slopes of the precipitous peak before colliding with the cool waters of the Northern Ocean. Despite the intense heat and noxious fumes generated by the smoldering behemoth, Haiel's stone citadel inexplicably remained intact. Initially, the forlorn guardian of Wildwood paid no attention to the raging inferno surrounding his lonely prison, as his thoughts were consumed by more pressing matters troubling his tormented soul. As the blade of the green's love of nature slowly returned to him, he grew to despise the malodorous mountain of billowing smoke and roaring flames that encapsulated his citadel. Longing to surround his eternal residence with greenery, Haiel sought a means to reclaim his home from the unrelenting conflagration around him. Although the exact methodology that he used to douse the flames remains a matter of speculation, legend claims that the resourceful master of Wildwood pulled immense icebergs from a distant world and dropped them into the funnel-shaped opening at the peak's summit until they finally extinguished the simmering beast.

Over the span of the next few millenniums, the toxic fumes slowly dissipated while the temperature within the cavity cooled, allowing vegetation to take hold and eventually thrive in the fertile and nutritious earth left behind from the volcano's demise. Haiel soon populated the burgeoning forest with a diverse array of prolific plant species culled from countless other worlds. He complemented the abundant flora with an eclectic collection of animals, predatory beasts and insects, making over the once lifeless cauldron of molten rocks and hot, poisonous gases into a primordial jungle. The immense opening on the mountain's summit allowed nourishing sunlight and refreshing rain to penetrate the crater's lower depths, while the imposing walls shielded Haiel's private incubator from the harshest weather conditions and the prying eyes of curious humanoids until the arrival of the ologatus approximately 5,000 years ago. The curious, manipulative master of Wildwood pulled the tenacious race of humanoids and a replica of their mountainous settlement onto his remote, island stronghold, fully expecting the placid race to quickly succumb to the unstoppable forces of nature. Much to his shock and dismay, the gentle humanoids swiftly adapted to their new environment, making their abodes within the forested foothills surrounding the dormant volcano. Shortly after their arrival, the inquisitive humanoids discovered winding, rocky passages leading into the mountain's interior. The awestruck ologatu explorers marveled at the breathtaking sight of Haiel's gargantuan citadel and his personal garden encircling it. Within a few years of this startling revelation, the race's penchant for meditation and transcendental experimentation also revealed the locale's amazing ability to transform one's body along a myriad of variant paths. As the ologatu population spread throughout the chain of islands stretching from the northeastern shores of Wildwood to the northwestern coast of Arena, so did the mystery of this forbidden locale. Other humanoids endeavoring to partake in the mystical enchantment of the flesh began making the harrowing journey from Wildwood's mainland to the remote island in search of physical and intellectual betterment. Despite the hazards and prohibitive costs inherent to a lengthy oceanic voyage and the island's indigenous predators, the number of visitors has slowly but steadily increased over the last five centuries, reaching a height of 243 individuals last year alone.

Overview: Sheltered from the harshest weather conditions and the reach of foreign merchants and Wildwood's more exploitive indigenous humanoid races, the Crater of Haiel is one of the most beautiful sites in all of Wildwood. Although Haiel personally tends to the plants on a regular basis, much of the garden's layout results from the locale's physical structure. The blade of the green's private greenhouse obtains the majority of its light and moisture through the opening at the mountain's summit; however he does complement these natural sources through magical intervention. Nonetheless, the largest trees are predominately concentrated around his citadel, in some cases reaching dizzying heights in excess of 1,000 feet. The foliage within this twenty-five mile radius of mighty trees is incredibly dense and actually resembles woody buttresses similar to those commonly found in medieval architecture. Ground-based movement through this area is virtually impossible without some type of magical assistance.

Beyond this inner sanctum of arboreal giants and tangled vegetation lies a horticultural paradise of unique shrubbery, colorful flowers and wild herbs. The native ologatus as well as druids venturing to this isolated region harvest many of these unusual plant species for their curative and hallucinogenic properties. Conservative estimates claim that this ninety mile wide ring surrounding Haiel's citadel and its vicinity contains more than one million different plant species, a boast that most humanoids familiar with the area consider fairly accurate. While Haiel allows nature to take its course in the warm, damp area adjacent to his stronghold, the normally aloof caretaker assumes a more proactive role in the growth and survival of the diverse flora. Utilizing his expansive arsenal of druidic spells, he magically provides enough sunlight and

water to enable the multitude of flourishing green plants to photosynthesize.

In contrast to the verdant interior, the crater's outlying regions are predominantly dark and humid. An enormous field of dank, black earth teeming with fungi and a small assortment of hardy green plants comprises a ten-mile wide belt separating the lush heart of Haiel's greenhouse from the mountain's exterior walls. Basked in an eerie eternal twilight, humanoids venturing through this area find the foul odor emanating from the putrid muck virtually unbearable. All creatures with capable of smelling the disgusting stench must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1 per previous check) every hour while traveling through this region; otherwise they are nauseated for as long as they remain in the area. Beings affected in this manner are limited to a single move action every turn as described under the Condition Summary heading found in the *DMG*.

Inhabitants: Despite the spectacularly scenic nature of the crater, the primeval jungle is hardly tranquil and peaceful. Although Haiel preoccupies much of his attention on the region's flora, he also pulls a wide assortment of predatory beasts as well as carnivorous plants and vermin into the area. Immense colonies of giant bees and wasps dwell in close proximity to the foreboding citadel of Haiel, building their hives and nests high above the ground in the canopy of the nearby trees. While these aerial predators scour the skies in search of prey, wily venomous serpents slither through the thick, twisting web of vines and tree trunks on the jungle's floor. Assassin vines are also commonplace throughout this section of the wilderness; however the virtually impassable terrain largely prevents bipeds and quadrupeds from venturing into this area. As a result, the overwhelming majority of the crater's predators reside within the middle ring. Huge dire animals and dinosaurs freely roam through the foliage on an endless quest for their next meal. Death mosses, shambling mounds and treants are the dominant plant species, whereas the insidious giant praying mantises are the undisputed leaders of the vermin population. Few creatures make their abode in the pestilent fens constituting the crater's perimeter with the exception of those specimens well adapted to swamp life.

There are no permanent humanoid settlements in the crater, although ologatus are clearly the most frequent visitors to the mystical site. Most venture here as part of a spiritual journey or to gather various medicinal herbs and mind altering narcotics; however a few entrepreneurial members of the race serve as guides to other humanoids traveling here for undergo an enchantment of the flesh. While the ritual can be accomplished anywhere within the middle and innermost rings, the ologatu guides lead their charges to the most secluded areas so that they can complete the transformation without interference from the indigenous predators. They typically charge their clients 1,000 gp worth of precious stones or jewelry comprised of such stones. Regardless of the amount of payment offered by their prospective employer, the ologatus do not tender services to anyone that they consider a threat to the crater's sanctity or to nature itself. Ullammu, the last ologatu that violated this principle in exchange for riches suffered the ignominious fate of being transformed by Haiel himself into an arboreal defender. The once revered barbarian is now the crater's most feared denizen, callously slaying creatures for even the most minor transgressions against the jungle or its natural inhabitants.

Secrets: Naturally, the greatest but poorest kept secret is the land's ability to transform creatures into a new form through an enchantment of the flesh. For some inexplicable reason, the outermost band of black mire does not convey this coveted property to those venturing here to perform the ritual; however this morass of malodorous, gooey earth hides perhaps the crater's greatest secret. Buried beneath the damp, loose dirt is a wealth of precious metals and gems rivaling even the most productive mineral mines found in Arena. Of course, any attempts to extract these precious commodities on a grand scale undoubtedly attract the interference of Ullammu at best or Haiel and his summoned band of minions at worst.

The Grove of Naltanseera

Unmarred by the scars of civilization, the lush and pristine Grove of Naltanseera remains one of the greatest natural marvels in all of the northern Wildwood. Two divergent and turbulent tributaries of the River Malamba surround the quaint, tiny island teeming with magnificent green vegetation and an abundance of insect and mammalian species. Gentle breezes and misty spray caress the blooming flowers and soft, verdant leaves of this idyllic paradise. However, this natural wonderland belies the presence of twenty-six elves studying the ancient and mystical fighting art of *ranaseer karymatha*. The adherents of this martial combat style are known as *sekaras.* (The *sekara* prestige class appears in Appendix B.) Dwelling inconspicuously among the trees and vegetation, the elves reinforce their spiritual bond with nature through the practice of their obscure form of armed combat. They train their bodies and minds beneath the elongated shadows of a ring of twelve massive trees, one for each species of tree on the island. Within the placid domain of these silent, impassive giants, the apprentice practitioners of *ranaseer karymatha* begin their day with up to four hours of silent contemplation and meditation. After achieving attunement with the natural forces around them, their physical training commences in earnest. Using their body as a conduit for nature's awesome power, they learn the intricate movements and supernatural techniques imparted to them through their sacred communion with nature.

History: The Grove of Naltanseera owes its creation entirely to the unrequited love of the beautiful elf maiden, Tianna Anseera. Tianna, the third daughter of Galapass and Ariella Anseera, always demonstrated her incredible ability to communicate with the

animal kingdom even from her earliest formative years. Although elves generally possess a remarkable affinity with the natural world, Tianna's gift exceeded anyone's wildest expectations. The elders of her small village three hundred miles northeast of the ancient settlement of Vertumnos marveled at the young girl's adeptness at placating even the most ferocious beasts. Convinced of the divine nature of his daughter's abilities, Galapass, a leatherworker by trade, sought the advice of the village's cleric. For several days he deliberated on Galapass' quandary before finally offering his assistance in the matter.

"A few miles from the village within a secluded copse of trees dwells a reclusive but powerful druid," he said with an aura of authority and confidence. "Take Tianna to him. Only he can unlock your daughter's full potential and allow her to realize the bountiful gift bestowed upon her."

Without hesitation, Galapass followed the priest's instructions. He and Tianna departed immediately to seek the druid's assistance. Forewarned by his animal companions of the pair's trespassing on his sacred ground, the suspicious and wary druid assumed the form of a large owl and perched high atop one of the copse's trees, allowing him to observe their actions. They arrived at the druid's copse a few moments later. Galapass scanned the surrounding wilderness, calling out to the reclusive druid; however he received an eerie silence in reply. Unnerved by the disturbing circumstances, fear overcame the doubtful and uncertain father. On the other hand, Tianna remained unfazed, quietly giggling and laughing. After a few minutes of consternation and waiting, Galapass turned to his daughter and said, "I cannot find this druid that the priest spoke of my child. We should return home."

Tianna smiled tenderly at him before replying, "What do you mean, father?" Tianna pointed her finger in the direction of the owl silently staring down at them from its perch. "He's right there, sitting in the tree." Overwhelmed by the young girl's unbelievable perception, he descended from the tree and assumed his natural form. At that moment, he agreed to train Tianna as his apprentice, a role that she and Galapass gladly accepted.

He imparted all of his wisdom and knowledge upon his young charge, including the study of an ancient form of combat known as *ranaseer karymatha*. As she entered into adulthood, her powers rivaled his in every respect. However, the dynamics of the relationship between the mentor and protégé evolved into something more. The close bond between the pair stirred many powerful emotions within the rapidly maturing young lady's soul. She slowly realized that she loved him and wanted to spend the rest of her life with him. Unafraid of rejection, she boldly proclaimed her undying love to him. Startled by her unsettling revelation, he pondered his response for several minutes before answering her.

"Tianna, I love you as well, but not in the way that you think," he replied. "When I first met you, you were but a child, a young, bright-eyed girl full of hope and limitless aspirations. Your father entrusted me with your care, a sacred responsibility. As the years passed and our bond grew deeper, I accepted you as my own daughter. I cannot requite the love that you seek. I am so sorry."

Confused and heartbroken, Tianna left her home and fled into the forest. After wandering the wilderness for several months, Tianna accidentally stumbled upon the lovely Grove of Naltanseera. Captivated by its natural beauty, she settled down within its tranquil confines and began reflecting upon her life. Although her mentor's rejection of her love devastated her, she came to realize that she experienced the most joy learning valuable lessons from him. An equally accomplished druid and practitioner of this unique fighting style, Tianna decided to impart her wisdom and knowledge to others, transforming the Grove of Naltanseera from a lonely island into a community of learning. Despite founding the grove 250 years ago, Tianna continues to train and enlighten her pupils in the art of *ranaseer karymatha*. Nevertheless, Tianna often wonders about the eventual fate of her mentor. Shame and the bitter sting of rejection always prevented her from returning at first, however as the years passed the dreadful specter of his imminent mortality proved too daunting to overcome. Now, as she enters her final remaining years, she regrets never looking back. Time and despondency over the loss of her only true love weathered her radiant beauty and angelic voice, but never dampened her spirit or her commitment to teaching. Just as her mentor served as a father figure to her, she perceives her students as her children, taking tremendous pride in their personal accomplishments and successes. In addition to her students, Tianna shares an inseparable bond with her animal companion of the last thirty years, Saallock, a white owl.

Overview: Entry to the Grove of Naltanseera and Tianna's vast wealth of knowledge remains restricted to elves only. She and her followers vigorously enforce this edict, forcibly expelling any curious humanoids or monstrous denizens attempting to uncover the secrets of this mysterious discipline or occupy her wondrous natural paradise. Even elves are not exempted from this policy. Tianna personally recruits her students from the ranks of nearby elf villages and settlements scattered throughout northern Wildwood as well as those from far off Vertumnos and only grants admittance to those she deems worthy of the honor. Tianna never administer tests, dismissing them as inaccurate gauges of an individual's inner character. She relies on interviews with relatives and associates of a prospective pupil to determine the neophyte's suitability for the study of *ranaseer karymatha*. On average, she recruits a new disciple every three to four years.

Initiates to Tianna's magnificent academy are immediately awestruck by the spectacular beauty of the isolated locale. The shallow but raging waters of the divergent river encircling the remote island not only enhance the breathtaking scenery but also provide ample protection against the marauding lycanthropes and ravenous trolls dwelling within the surrounding forest. Only comprising a total area of three square miles, the miniscule island supports a

dozen different varieties of coniferous trees ranging from a small copse of rosemary shrubs to a uniform row of majestic pines. A fragrant and tantalizing aroma emanating from its numerous evergreens blissfully blows through the air, while an abundance of blooming flowers adds a myriad of dazzling colors to the otherwise greenish black landscape. Tianna and her charges are accustomed to the peaceful serenity of their wild sanctuary; however its effects on other sentient beings are far more intoxicating. Any creature with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher that spends more than one hour on the island must make a Will save (DC 10); otherwise they fall asleep for 1d4 hours. As long as they remain here, they must continue to make a Will save (DC 10 + 1 per previous check) every hour to avoid falling into a deep slumber. After awakening from this nap, the creature remains exhausted for an additional 1d4 hours, although it does not have to make any more Will saves for the remainder of the day. If a creature makes five consecutive Will saves, it develops immunity to this effect for as long as it remains within the confines of the grove. If it leaves the island and returns at a later time, the cycle begins anew. Residing within the grove for more than one month bestows permanent immunity to the creature.

Inhabitants: Tianna and her protégés are the grove's dominant residents; however they are not its only sentient inhabitants. Five treants also dwell amongst the elves and remain on friendly terms with Tianna; however they are still prohibited from observing any of her training sessions. The good-natured creatures diligently respect her wishes by spending most of their time near the river banks tending to their arboreal brethren as well as keeping a vigilant eye on the opposite shore for any signs of monstrous activity. Although Tianna rarely ventures from the secure confines of her secluded island, she enjoys a warm relationship with the leaders of all of the elf settlements in northern Wildwood as well as Sadranial, the ageless queen of Vertumnos.

Tianna Anseera, female wood elf, Druid 7/*Sekara* 10; CR 17; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 7d8+14 plus 10d8+20; hp 116; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (+9 armor, +2 Dex, +3 deflection), touch 15, flat-footed 22); BAB +14; Grapple +15; Atk +4 *shocking burst quarterstaff* +19 melee (1d8+5 plus 1d6 electricity); Full Atk +4 *shocking burst quarterstaff* +17/+17/+12/+5 melee (1d8+5 plus 1d6 electricity); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA bird of prey, boomerang, channel force, dance on clouds, force of nature, funnel cloud, *ravanilis*; SQ animal companion, deflect critical, blend, nature sense, resist nature's lure, symbiosis, trackless step, *wild shape* 3/day, wild empathy, woodland stride; AL LN; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +18; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 21, Wis 23, Cha 19.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +21, Heal +16, Hide +12, Knowledge (history)(Wildwood) +15, Knowledge (local)(Wildwood)+13, Knowledge (nature) +23, Listen +10, Move Silently +18, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +15, Spot +9, Survival +23, Swim +14, Tumble +12; Brew Potion, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff).

Languages: Canine, Common, Elven, Giant, Gnoll, Sylvan, Thorn.

Possessions: +4 elven chainmail,+4 shocking burst quarterstaff,ring of spell turning, boots of striding and springing, cloak of elvenkind, circlet of blasting (major), figurine of wondrous power-onyx dog, horn of blasting, ring of protection +3, 4 potions-*barkskin, neutralize poison, speak with plants, water breathing*.

Druid Spells per Day: 6/6/5/3/2; Base DC = 16 + spell level; 0—*create water, detect magic, detect poison, read magic, resistance, virtue*; 1st—*cure light wounds x2, entangle, goodberry, magic stone, speak with animals*; 2nd—*barkskin, fog cloud, owl's wisdom, lesser restoration, summon swarm*; 3rd—*neutralize poison, sleet storm, spike growth*; 4th—*flame strike, scrying*.

Secrets: Unbeknownst to Tianna, her old mentor maintained a vigilant eye on the young woman whom he considered his only daughter. From afar, he monitored her maturation, beaming with admiration at her remarkable achievements. Several decades later, he married and fathered his only child, Valagos. Before dying, he told Valagos, now a young adult and an adept practitioner of the *ranaseer karymatha*, of his past with Tianna. He beseeched his son to continue his training under Tianna's guidance, but never to reveal his identity to her until the appropriate time. Valagos quickly garnered Tianna's attention, and she invited him to join her at the Grove of Naltanseera. He soon blossomed into her finest student, eventually equaling her skills and abilities. Weakened by her advancing age, she relinquishes most of the difficult lessons to Valagos who instructs her pupils in her stead. He closely guards his secret, resolved to reveal his true identity to her only at the time of her death, a moment that he fears is rapidly approaching.

The Stones of Blood

History: Shortly after the Forge's creation, a cosmic calamity of epic proportions pulled a large chunk of iron and nickel from the planet's pole, forming the rust moon, Zadkiel. The immense crater left by its departure now houses the domain of Eclipse. The incredible force unleashed by the violent separation spewed a cloud of debris reaching hundreds of miles into the atmosphere. Most of this dust and metallic material disintegrated as it plummeted back to the surface, but eight large pieces survived, ending up in the adjacent coniferous forest of northern Wildwood. Although buried hundreds of feet underground, these terrestrial boulders remain attuned to their celestial cousin and still exert tremendous influence on the surface. Over the course of countless generations, lycanthropes discovered that the relatively close proximity of the shattered, moon fragments augmented their already fearsome powers. As a result, the site became one of the most hotly contested hunting grounds in all of Wildwood. At the present time, a trio of werewolves known as The Hexed claim dominion over the roughly 500 square mile area.

Overview: The Stones of Blood consist of eight large rocks ranging in size from a few hundred pounds to three tons lying below the surface approximately 300 miles due south of the border settlement of Penumbra. As if placed according to some deliberate plan, a line connecting each of the stones forms a large oval measuring forty miles from east to west and twelve miles from north to south. The locale is physically indistinguishable from the surrounding wilderness; however the subterranean chunks of the rust moon immediately affect lycanthropes venturing through the elliptical perimeter. Afflicted lycanthropes automatically succeed at all Control Shape skill checks made within the area, while all lycanthropes benefit from a +4 enhancement bonus to their Strength, Wisdom and Constitution ability scores and a -2 penalty to their Intelligence and Charisma scores. Consequently, the triad of malevolent shapechangers and the handful of other powerful lycanthropes stalking the realm of towering pine trees continuously skirmish over fallen prey brought down within the welcoming confines formed by the Stones of Blood.

Inhabitants: An abundance of odd symbols depicting three interlocked bestial paws carved into the trunks of numerous trees along its oblong boundary clearly mark the territory as the hunting ground for the Hexed; however they are not the only creatures frequenting the locale. Even the aforementioned werewolves afford an extremely wide berth to Vrogg, a cruel troll/dire weretiger that also inhabits the region. In addition to these impressive specimens, a diverse array of other lycanthropes dwells along the outskirts of this section of the coniferous forest, occasionally venturing into the prime hunting ground despite the proprietary claims of the Hexed. Animals, including those of the dire variety, flourish within the area, but humanoids generally steer well clear of the lycanthropes' stomping grounds. Fearsome monsters, most notably hill giants, owlbears and trolls prowl the vicinity, although the curse of lycanthropy afflicts roughly half of the area's giant population.

Secrets: Ramzi Ulgort, a crafty wererat merchant in the employ of an unknown but extremely wealthy and influential individual from Penance is currently in the planning stages of assembling equipment, financing and manpower to excavate the Stones of Blood and sell them on the open market. From his base of operation in Penumbra, the wily entrepreneur is in the process of purchasing mining equipment from Arena and slave labor from the hovara slave traders in Penance. Despite his willingness to spend voluminous quantities of gold, few residents give the outlandish scheme any chance of succeeding.

The Circle of the Weeping Trees

History: According to an old adage popular amongst Wildwood's frontier humanoids, beauty is a brilliant beam of sunlight, bringing joy to the world with its arrival and sadness with its departure. For more than 350 years, such a beacon of radiance walked the pristine forests of Wildwood, gently nurturing the plants and trees growing within the loving confines of her sacred grove with motherly care and steadfast devotion. Her true name remains a mystery; therefore her contemporaries simply referred to the alluring nymph as the lady of the oak, an apropos moniker given her devout love for the mighty trees under her doting care. Despite the passage of more than three centuries and countless standoffs against predators and humanoids seeking to despoil her beloved woodlands, the ravages of age and conflict never sullied her astonishing loveliness. Nonetheless, death eventually claimed its coveted prize, but even the netherworld's triumph failed to extinguish the breathtaking vision of undying beauty. Upon learning of her mortal demise, an elf admirer of the captivating fey employed his potent mystical powers to indefinitely preserve her comeliness, casting powerful incantations on the fallen woman before encasing her body in a glass coffin resting upon the ground in the center of her grove. For the past sixty years the lady of the oak's gentle repose has remained undisturbed, as the immense woody guardians that she raised from saplings keep vigilant watch over their sweet mistress.

Overview: The Circle of the Weeping Trees comprises only a few acres of deciduous forest near the domain's sparsely populated border with Anvil. In stark contrast to the unkempt wilderness surrounding it, the lady of the oak's grove seems untouched by the encroaching vegetation and the region's wild beasts. The rays of the Forge's suns shine down upon a magnificent garden of vibrant flowers and meticulously pruned shrubs highlighted by a ring of twenty-four gigantic oak trees maintaining an eternal vigil around the translucent sarcophagus of their mourned caretaker. The penetrating beams of sunlight pierce the glassy confines of her sepulcher, basking the disarming visage of the lady in a warm, beckoning glow. Despite the tacit invitation to approach closer, a magical force inexplicably bars all creatures from entering the garden unless they make a Will save (DC 27). Failure prevents the creature from making another attempt until he gains another level. The few individuals that succeeded in this difficult endeavor describe the romp through the garden as one of the most blissful experiences of their entire lives. Accomplishing this feat gives the character a +2 inherent bonus to his Charisma score, although he can only benefit from this gift once in his entire lifetime. This is considered a supernatural effect. If a being attempts to do deliberate harm to any of the grove's plants or the lady's earthly remains, her mouth opens, and she emits a terrifying shriek. The horrific scream duplicates the effects of the spell *wail of the banshee* as if cast by a 17th level sorcerer, Will save (DC 27).

Inhabitants: With the exception of the flowers and trees dwelling within the garden, no other creatures reside with the Circle of the Weeping Trees. None of the plants displays any signs of sentience.

Secrets: Fortunate souls able to enter into the garden vehemently insist that they felt an eerie presence while walking through the horticultural oasis. Some conclude that the spirit of the lady of the oak lives, while others attribute the odd sensation to the ghost of her elf benefactor. The proponents of the latter notion also

believe that his mortal body along with his magical treasures lies somewhere within the grove.

The Melodious Copse

History: In many corners of central Wildwood, the echo of pan pipes expertly played by a musical virtuoso resonates throughout the feral woodlands. Almost unanimously, the maestro responsible for the soothing melody is one of the forest's satyrs, a race of fey with a natural inclination for woodwind instruments. Although they are technically gifted musicians, the true strength of their music lies in their passionate view of life. Innately hedonistic, satyrs undertake every endeavor with amazing verve, pouring their romanticism, debauchery and wildness into their intoxicating songs. Competition among the woodland minstrels is intense and the rivalries fierce. In most cases, a few melodies are all that is needed to determine the better performer; however one storied contest proves the exception to the rule. Sixty years ago, a long running feud between the two greatest satyr bards of their era, Baronacles and his former understudy Naronaclus, finally reached a crescendo that culminated in a musical duel lasting several days. While the contest's actual winner remains a very sore topic of debate amongst the most celebrated critics, one fact is undeniable, that the captivating tunes forever transformed the site of the monumental confrontation between the two musical giants.

Overview: The Melodious Copse lies 600 miles due west of the fabled settlement of Pindara in the heart of Wildwood's deciduous forest. Visually, the twenty-five square mile tract of untamed woodlands appears no different than its immediate vicinity, but a creature blessed with remarkably keen hearing detects a startling dissimilarity between the enchanted, circular copse and the adjacent thickets. The rapturous and distinctive whistle emitted by a solitary set of pan pipes reverberates throughout the forest, giving the listener the impression that he is blissfully walking through an auditorium rather than a savage timberland. Only creatures making a Listen check (DC 30) can hear the melodious tune, while those failing remain oblivious to the joyful aria echoing in their mind. Any character that distinguishes the captivating song from the background noise feels relaxed and content, as if under the influence of the bard spell *calm emotions*. They remain in this state as long as they stay in the area and continue to hear the music; however if they leave the Melodious Copse, the effect wears off 5 rounds after their departure. Once the character exits the mystical thicket, he is immune to the music's sedating properties for the next twenty-four hours. This is a spell-like mind-affecting effect.

Inhabitants: In the hearts and minds of Wildwood's satyr population, the Melodious Copse is their most spiritually significant locale. As a result, satyrs are the most commonly encountered creatures in the area, although they are not the only ones. Dover and frey bards from Penance and other regions of Wildwood frequently make the arduous trek to the remote site to experience the heavenly delight firsthand. Unfortunately, the music's soothing influence also attracts the interest of Wildwood's savage beasts, particularly its bountiful varieties of dire animals as well as its more malevolent predators such as lycanthropes, girallons and trolls. Initially the calming melody pacifies the typically belligerent monsters enabling residents to socially interact with some of the forest's intelligent denizens, but as soon as they leave the area their aggressive tendencies instantaneously resurface, often triggering a particularly violent outburst. As a result of this common occurrence, satyrs and other indigenous beings keep a watchful eye on the trespassing interlopers in an effort to deliberately avoid their wrath once they depart from the tranquil wilds.

Secrets: Astute observers swear that the trees in the Melodious Copse sway to a distinctive rhythm in a manner reminiscent of a dancing humanoid. The legend goes so far as to claim that pan pipes and other wood instruments fabricated from wood harvested from these trees emit much deeper tones and notes than those crafted from traditional materials. The myth receives additional credence based upon the fact that the Forge's most renowned and accomplished bard, Odyar Khan occasionally plays a wooden flute carved from the branch of an elm tree found in the locale. Inspired by this popular fable, many bards come to the remote locale not only to immerse their ears in the wondrous music but also to test the veracity of this prolific theory.

Crescent Falls

History: Originally a druid's preserve, Crescent Falls found its way onto most of the domain maps several hundred years ago and has long been a popular stopover point for travelers because of its natural beauty. For two hundred years travelers would stop here to camp, fish, and engage in other activities, but as is the case with most of Wildwood, there was the omnipresent danger of hostile predators nearby. Ultimately, local entrepreneurs made an arrangement with the native druids to keep the area as free as possible from the threat of these wild beasts. Once it developed a reputation as a safe haven and groups of travelers increased in numbers, inns were built to accommodate those who wanted to room here.

Overview: Crescent Falls is located in central Wildwood, and is the point where four medium-size rivers merge with the River Malamba that eventually drains in the Northern Ocean. The four rivers approach from the north, the northeast, the east, and the south, and then drain to the west. Each river ends at a cliff, each at the same altitude, which is followed by a five-hundred-fifty foot drop-off into a bowl shaped indentation below. A scenic destination location, five separate inns have been constructed within sight of the falls, while a rune gate (described later in this chapter) opens to a location a mile away from here. Because of the lack of predators in

the area, several scenic hiking trails have been blazed and are kept clear by the locals.

Inhabitants: Three main groups of people can be found in the Crescent Falls area. Travelers are the most commonly found beings here. They are commonly drawn here not only from Wildwood, but also from Penance, and Arena, because of the scenery.

The locals are evenly split between the inn staff and the druids. All five inns are owned by separate groups, each of which has changed ownership several times during the roughly two hundred and fifty years that they have stood. They are all open to any travelers wishing to stay a few nights here. Although each inn has a common room that faces the falls, any rooms with a view come at a premium price. Rooms vary from inn to inn, but the lowest price for a night in a room without a view is 8 gold pieces, while the highest is 15 gold pieces. Rooms with a view of the falls usually run twice as much as the less scenic rooms.

The druids of Crescent Falls work closely with the entrepreneurs here to ensure that the predators stay out of a two mile radius from this site. Their duties also include watching the visitors to ensure that their presence does not leave a lasting impact on the land. There are far too many occasions where they spot travelers attempting to chop down the nearby trees, or harvesting flowers and berries. The one message they must convey to everyone who passes through here is that their visit must not leave a mark upon the land.

Secrets: As can be expected, this is a popular destination for many wealthy individuals as well as many that wield a great deal of magic. This is often a location where clandestine affairs are conducted. Occasionally that means that a guest meets an untimely end at the hands of another here. In addition to this, each of the inns has discovered a lucrative business in holding and protecting items of extreme value. Sometimes these items are stored temporarily while they are sold to other guests while in other cases their storage is of a semi-permanent nature, and is intended to keep these items out of circulation. Several wizards, level 15 or higher are employed to defend these caches of valuables.

Heart of the Nkoll

History: Because of a failed attempt to dominate the great city, Penance is the most commonly known location in the Forge where nkoll could once be found. While a large group of them escaped destruction and began a bloodhold in the maze beneath the great city (as detailed in *Wrack and Ruin*), the nkoll also exist in great numbers within their community in Wildwood. Twenty thousand years ago Haiel pulled a small community of nkoll into Wildwood from their homeworld of Kasara. Originally numbering roughly two thousand, the huts of their homeland were replicated down to the minutest details. Given the fact that their native habitat is mostly jungle, the nkoll weren't immediately aware that they had been dislocated. It wasn't until they witnessed the rising of the red sun that they realized they were on another world.

The nkoll are known to collect creatures and force them into service to protect them and fight their battles. Because of the unique nature of the enhanced sensations of the Forge and the jungle environs of Wildwood, within a few short years the Wildwood nkoll began to succumb to their more savage instincts. They soon began hunting the creatures they once forced into service. The thrill of the hunt consumed them, prompting them to abandon their huts and other trappings of civilization in favor of the trees. Despite the change in their preferred habitation, the nkoll continued to breed rapidly spurred by the belief that they are the most powerful and righteous beings within the Forge. Because Wildwood is such a large domain, the spread of the nkoll has gone largely unhampered and unnoticed. Death at the hands of the plethora of predators in the jungle is the only factor preventing their numbers from exploding. Currently there are 15,000 nkoll packed within the lands under their control.

Overview: The jungles of the southern portion of Wildwood are home to the largest nkoll settlement within the Forge. At the center of their civilization is an immense humanoid skull of unknown origin seventy five feet tall, which serves as the seat of power for their priest-king, L'Ss'Tara. Their huts are scattered across a roughly twenty-five square mile area surrounding the grisly throne of their wicked and barbarous monarch.

Inhabitants: The nkoll are a primarily evil medium-size snakelike species. Two tentacles that function as arms sprout from each shoulder of their humanoid-like torso (the nkoll racial statistics appear in Oathbound: *Wrack and Ruin*). All but a few nkoll worship the snake-god Akaya, and their political power is bestowed upon their high-priests. They take great pleasure in the hunt of the other predatory creatures of Wildwood, though intelligent beings are captured and sacrificed to Akaya by L'Ss'Tara in a ceremonial chamber within the great skull. The few nkoll who choose to leave the nkoll society are hunted down and returned to the society whenever possible, but unless they are in search of their errant members, they almost never leave the territory that they already dominate.

Secrets: The great skull at the center of their territory once belonged to a creature so powerful that it was approaching godhood, not knowing the fate that awaited him should he actually succeed in its quest. Originally a medium sized human, the creature began to grow larger as it was able to persuade mortals to worship him. Grown to immense proportions, three thousand years ago this potent being made the mistake of wandering through the nkoll controlled territory, where it was defeated in battle. All divine spells within the skull are cast at a +2 caster level, provided that the creature casting the spell is evil and worships an evil deity.

Runegates

History: As can be expected, druids are one of the more common groups of individuals found within the domain of Wildwood. Several different groups exist, but they have usually been bound by their appreciation and love of nature as well as their goodwill towards one another's orders. Because of the size of the domain, travel from one location to another remains one of the largest concerns. Teleportation spells are typically unavailable to druids, thus limiting their modes of transportation to overland movement, flight when wildshaped, or a select few spells known by the more powerful druids that allow them to move quickly, though not instantaneously to their intended destination. To remedy this situation, druids

from throughout Wildwood came together to create the runegates. Employing rituals known only to an elite circle of exceptionally potent spellcasters, the druids and a handful of trusted wizards crafted these gates, which allow an individual to travel instantly from one gate to another within the domain of Wildwood.

Overview: A total of 26 runegates exist throughout the domain of Wildwood. Their outward appearance is that of a fifty foot diameter ring comprised of the largest indigenous trees in the area. The center of the ring is clear of all foliage except for grass. A traveler must posses two magical runes carved into a small stone slab in order to activate a runegate. The first rune must match the gate the creature enters while the second must match the destination. Only druids native to the 26 locations in Wildwood possess the knowledge to craft the runes, and each rune only works in the hands of the traveler it was crafted for. All creatures within the ring of trees immediately travel to their destination when the rune is activated. Runegates block spells that allow travel, such as the *teleport* spell, for a distance of five miles surrounding the runegate.

Inhabitants: Nearby each runegate is a druid's grove. These are located on the accompanying map**. For their own protection, the druids from each settlement carefully monitor the distribution of these devices. While it is not unheard of for a runeholder to bring others with him or her, transporting large groups of strangers is widely discouraged and often severely punished. If the transgressor repeats the offense, it typically results in the revocation of that particular rune from the guilty party.

Secrets: Runes are magic items with the following description:

Runegate Runes: These are small, square tablets of one-inch thick stone approximately four inches long on each side. Inscribed into the center of the stone is one of 26 runes, each matching the location of a runegate in Wildwood. Upon entering a runegate, the runeholder bearing the rune matching their point of origin states the name of the druid grove that granted it to him or her. The rune glows briefly indicating that the runegate is active. The runeholder then repeats the process by stating the name of the druid grove that granted the runegate to his intended destination. The two runes begin to glow, and everyone within the runegate is instantly transferred to their desired location. Runes may only be crafted by a druid from the grove that owns their corresponding runegate.

Faint conjuration; CL 1; Craft Wondrous Item, *pass without a trace*; Price 1,800 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Greater Rune gate Runes: As the runegate rune, except that it grants access to all runegates.

Faint conjuration; CL 10; Craft Wondrous Item, *pass without a trace*; Price 18,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

The Dead Exchange

History: Fifty years ago the Dead Exchange was established by the asherake lich Zartegeist as a place to exchange the bodies of the dead. Most of the cities of the Forge disallowed this unusual trade, and those that don't have laws that specifically ban it from occurring are normally inhabited by individuals who would take up arms against anyone caught plundering graves or otherwise disturbing the sanctity of the dead. Zartegeist announced the establishment of this meeting place to the most powerful necromancers and undead lords throughout the Forge. His initial invitation brought a host of interested individuals from throughout the Forge, including those hailing from the domains of Penance, Arena, and Wildwood in particular. Year after year the number of participants in the market grows by an average of 3%.

Overview: The Dead Exhange is a marketplace held in secret between necromancers and powerful members of the undead where corpses are bought, exchanged, and sold. The exchange takes place in a deserted and unnaturally chilly clearing far away from the nearest civilization only a few miles from Wildwood's border with the Vault. The exchange occurs three times per year. The most important ground rule of the Dead Exchange is that only unanimated corpses may be sold at this location, though the buyers and sellers typically negotiate the terms of the contract here while completing the actual transaction in another mutually convenient venue. Although corpses of varying conditions are typically sold in this grisly bazaar, the intact bodies of the recently dead fetch the highest prices in this gruesome marketplace. The earthly remains of important individuals also attract a bevy of interested purchasers regardless of the cadaver's state of decomposition. The source of these gruesome products also varies wildly. Some are bodies that were robbed from graveyards, others were scavenged from the sites of recent battles, and still others are brought here to eliminate the evidence of foul play.

Inhabitants: The only permanent resident of the Dead Exchange is Zartegeist, who lives in a tower he restored six centuries ago. He is present during the Dead Exchange, though his skeletal servants keep watch for him to make certain that everything runs smoothly.

Secrets: Not surprisingly, Zartegeist is a warlock originally hailing from the neighboring domain of the Vault. Although he remains in relatively good standing with his fellow wizards in the barren wasteland bordering Haiel's feral kingdom, the ambitious practitioner of the mystical arts has designs of his own. Realizing that he lacks the power to directly challenge any of the Featherer Fowl, he continuously strives to form political and military alliances with the wealthiest participants while simultaneously amassing an army of undead warriors and beasts. His ultimate goal is to carve out his own kingdom encompassing parcels of territory from Wildwood, Arena and the Vault.

Chapter 6 Predators

"A column of brave elf warriors, one hundred strong marched onto the field to face the gargantuan green dragon stoically awaiting their arrival. As they pressed forward, a sinister grin crossed the malevolent face of the foul beast and in the blink of an eye, a green haze and a foul odor hung over the earth as a mound of corpses suddenly littered the ground."

-- The Chronicle of Caragath describing the first meeting between the elves of Wildwood and Mastuu Dargus.

In its simplest terms, Wildwood is a domain of predators and prey. While the specific role that each creature plays depends upon the circumstances, at one point in its lifetime every living being experiences the exhilaration and terror of the hunt from both vantage points. Life in Haiel's feral kingdom is best summarized in one all-encompassing adage, "survival of the fittest". The strongest, fiercest and cleverest predators eventually rise to the summit of the ecosystem's complex food chain while the weak, injured and elderly quickly succumb to the monstrous denizens stalking the wilderness. Hunters attaining the loftiest positions within the natural hierarchy soon lay claim to a vast tract of territory that they call their own. They are the master of their realm, stealing prized kills from lesser predators while roaming through their lands with virtual impunity. Naturally, they typically select areas with an abundance of wildlife and geographical features conducive to attracting wild game such as a reliable source of water and other desirable topographic characteristics. They delineate the boundaries of their stomping grounds by carving totem symbols onto trees along the perimeter of their neck of the woods. Intermittently placed along the edges of their dominion, these intricate runes often depict an aspect of the predator's persona or its greatest kill, while acting as an intimidating warning to potential rivals daring to intrude onto his expanse of the wilderness. Despite the ominous message conveyed by the telltale etchings, mindless beasts and unintelligent monsters are unaware of the signs' meaning, whereas sentient beings frequently ignore the cautionary proclamation and trespass into his fertile hunting grounds in search of prey. In most cases, the interlopers go unnoticed; however on the odd chance that their presence is detected, at best they forfeit their kill while under the worst case scenario, they lose their lives at the hands of the superior adversary.

Unlike the bloodlords of Penance and the warlords of Arena, Wildwood's fearsome predators do not exert political, economic or social control over the subjects residing within their territory. The untamed domain's powerbrokers do not create laws, levy taxes, conscript recruits, mint currency or perform any other inherently governmental function. In fact, their apathetic influence rarely extends more than a mile or two from their personal residences that in most cases consist of little more than a meager compound populated by a few hundred followers, servants and subordinates. Although bereft of the trappings of wealth and military might commonly affiliated with important individuals, these potent beings are more than a match for their civilized counterparts. The foremost of these predators is the terrifying green dragon, Mastuu Dargus. Nearing the end of her second millennium in Wildwood, the venerable and cruel reptile only grows more powerful and deadly with age. Behind her, a diverse array of monsters and humanoids jockey for supremacy lead by a cunning trio of werewolf rangers inhabiting the coniferous forests of northern Wildwood. Collectively, this lycanthropic triad known as the Hexed is the only entity with even a remote chance of defying the draconic overlord of central Wildwood. In all, Wildwood boasts approximately 100 predators claiming dominion over a particular stretch of wilderness; however in actuality only a handful of these accomplished hunters exercise any noteworthy authority or influence on the affairs of Wildwood.

The indifference endemic amongst the untamed domain's most significant residents undoubtedly trickles down from its supreme hunter, the Feathered Fowl, Haiel. While the other members of the Black Flock adopt a hands on approach in the shaping of seeds into potential successors, the Blade of the Green displays no interest in accomplishing such a feat and instead occupies much of his time in voyeuristic activities as he scrutinizes the outcome of his natural experiments. As his counterparts devise machinations and schemes in furtherance of their escape plans, Haiel does his best to maintain the *status quo*, continually populating his unruly kingdom with a fresh supply of horrific beasts and displaced humanoids pulled into Wildwood from countless other worlds. Although he is usually just a distant observer of the ensuing life and death struggle, Haiel occasionally participates in the spectacle whenever the primordial urge to kill overcomes his impassive nature. Unlike the realm's mortal predators, Haiel can trespass on any lesser predators' territory without fear of retribution. However, he rarely exercises this privilege as he prefers to avoid confrontations with his domain's most formidable denizens by staging his cat and mouse game in a remote and isolated tract of wilderness unclaimed by any of Wildwood's noteworthy inhabitants. Likewise he never interferes in the internal affairs and conflicts of his subjects unless the impending crisis directly impacts him. Inadvertently, his laisez-faire approach is largely responsible for the formation of a lawless and brutal culture founded on the sole principle of "survival of the fittest".

Haiel

Like the other members of the Black Flock, the Blade of the Green endures the gnawing agony of internal conflict; however the nature of his inner struggle differs significantly from the plight of his counterparts. His fellow jailors long for emancipation from their eternal penitentiary, but the shackles of the Great Oath prevent them from utilizing their awesome might to attain their elusive goal. On the other hand, Haiel does not suffer from this contradictory dilemma. Although he sympathizes with the quandary faced by

the others, he displays no interest in abdicating his title or seeing the bound god released. His peers envy his outlook toward the situation, yet they remain unaware of the long simmering turmoil troubling the apathetic overlord of Wildwood. It is a tragic tale of unrequited love from the distant past during his long lost days in the service of the deity imprisoned at the heart of the planet.

Untold eons ago, Haiel's omnipotent master entrusted him with the important task of protecting the wilderness on countless worlds from despoilment and destruction. Given the lofty title, Defender of Nature, the enthusiastic Haiel immediately set about accomplishing his delegated duty, forging close ties with indigenous druids, rangers and hosts of other beings displaying an affinity for the natural world. Haiel performed his assignment astoundingly well, continually adding to his already impressive knowledge of plants, animals and monsters in addition to honing his formidable skills as a hunter and woodsman. He led an idyllic existence until one fateful day when he first gazed upon the mesmerizing countenance of a radiant being named Israfel.

Instantly captivated by her irrepressible charm and beauty, he sheepishly approached the object of his affection, presenting her with a freshly picked bouquet of aromatic, colorful flowers. Although mutually attracted to him, the coy Israfel graciously accepted his gift while gently rebuffing his advances. Undeterred by this initial setback, he continued his pursuit, lavishing her with exotic plants and animals procured from one of the many worlds under the bound god's dominion. Haiel's efforts obviously flattered Israfel, yet she inexplicably never reciprocated his romantic overtures. Finally, after several months of one-sided courtship, Israfel finally revealed the truth to her suitor, that she was the bound god's wife and the mother of his two children, Barbello and Orif'elle. The unexpected news proved doubly devastating to Haiel. Not only did Israfel deny her love to him, but the revelation of his interest in his master's wife threatened his very existence. Fortunately for Haiel, fate smiled upon him. Less than a month after his rejection by Israfel, a coalition of rival deities incarcerated Israfel's divine husband within the Forge. In his mind, the fortunate turn of events spared him from the bound god's jealous wrath and also removed the only obstacle standing in the way between him and his beloved. Yet, much to his chagrin, Israfel pledged her undying fidelity to her incarcerated spouse, depriving Haiel of the love he so desperately sought.

These events weighed heavily on his psyche and over the course of time, they transformed the formerly energetic and optimistic naturalist into the uncaring, aloof manipulator that he is now. To him, passion only sowed pain; therefore it is better to remain indifferent but safe, rather than risk disappointment or hurt through action. As a result of this philosophy, Haiel, the most potent predator in Wildwood, prefers to live vicariously by observing the actions of others instead of participating in the grand spectacles of his own design. Despite his conscious effort to lead a life bereft of emotion, the simmering desires and sensations repressed deep within his soul occasionally ripple to the surface, particularly when they concern Israfel. Even the passage of immeasurable eons did not diminish his fondness for her. Behind his callous, detached exterior lies a vulnerable, badly wounded soul longing for catharsis.

During this slow metamorphosis, his vision of nature and his role within it also changed dramatically from his perception during his mortal lifetime. Not only does he still fervently protect the wilderness against encroaching civilizations, but he pulls entire societies from alien worlds into his domain as a twisted form of amusement, watching with giddy delight while the irresistible forces of nature wreak havoc upon the disoriented citizenry. Commensurate with his overall philosophy, he generally pulls wild, primordial beasts incapable of expressing more than the basest feelings into his savage realm. Devoid of any political or economic aspirations, these mindless monsters pose no threat to his tenure as the ruler of his dominion. Haiel envisions Wildwood as a primeval realm where brute strength, cunning and instinct are the attributes necessary for survival unlike traditional models, such as Penance and Arena where force of intellect, unbridled ambition, political savvy and personal magnetism serve as the keys to success.

At the heart of the matter, Haiel is a lonely, spiteful soul finding at least some measure of solace and revenge in the simultaneously beautiful and cruel surroundings of nature. When initially faced with the prospect of spending an eternity on the stark, lifeless wasteland of the Forge without the companionship of Israfel, Haiel fell into a deep depression. Only the reappearance of wildlife and lush greenery buoyed his sagging spirits, breathing new life into the downtrodden guardian. Unfortunately, the sudden infusion of vitality coupled with his emotional scars brought his brutal, bestial nature to the forefront. In contrast to his previous role during the bound god's tenure, he realized that he can mold Wildwood into virtually any desirable form, granting him the abilities of a deity in many respects. Yet, while a deliberate plan heading toward the eventual creation of a successor guides the selections of the other members of the Black Flock, a morbid sense of curiosity and a callous disregard for life inspires Haiel's choice of creatures and matter to pull into his realm. In his mind, as long as he is compelled to eternally guard his citadel, it is preferable to derive at least some degree of enjoyment from the experience rather than engage in futile attempts to escape the shackles of the Great Oath.

Haiel's Secrets

As long as the bound god remains incarcerated, there is a chance, albeit an extremely remote chance, that Israfel renounces her vow of fidelity and pledges her undying devotion to Haiel. The existence of this slim possibility is the primary motivation behind his decision not to pursue an avenue of escape from the

bonds of the Great Oath. If his citadel remains intact, his rival for Israfel's affections can never completely extricate himself from the oath confining him to the Forge. While he is painfully aware that the other members of the Black Flock, especially Israfel, do not share his viewpoint toward liberation and the potential release of the imprisoned deity, Haiel tries to soothe their discontent whenever the opportunity arises. Typically not known for his diplomatic abilities, he demonstrates remarkable glibness and persuasiveness under these circumstances, cajoling the other Feathered Fowl with the expertise of a seasoned politician. However, success is usually fleeting as the desire for freedom quickly overrides his cogent arguments.

Although he is not the lovesick puppy of his naïve youth, his feelings for the charismatic queen of Penance never wavered regardless of his deliberate efforts to conceal his emotional bond to her. In her presence, he maintains a cool, rational demeanor as an internal struggle rages within the fiber of his being. He outwardly displays no visible signs of affection toward her, but he is incapable of denying any of her requests as demonstrated by his willingness to grant asylum in Wildwood to the berns, a belligerent race of upright insects that intrigued Israfel. Likewise, he also views the requests of her offspring, Barbello and Orif'elle, in a similar vein, yet their influence is considerably less than Israfel's. Nevertheless, Israfel's fidelity to the bound god remains unchanged, irrespective of his efforts to convince her otherwise.

Haiel's preoccupation with Israfel and his laissez-faire policy towards the inhabitants of his feral domain led to an unforeseen and troubling development, the meteoric rise of Wildwood's dragon population spearheaded by the terrifying great wyrm, Mastuu Dargus. The mighty reptile's ultimate goal remains unknown, but there is no doubt that boundless avarice and an insatiable will to dominate course through the veins of the female dragon and her multitude of equally malevolent offspring. Haiel firmly believes that as Mastuu Dargus approaches the end of her second millennium in Wildwood, the notion of cheating death and attaining immortality in addition to absolute power is certainly an attractive prospect to his most fearsome rival. He keeps a wary eye on the machinations of the ambitious dragon, while simultaneously consulting with his forest-dwelling allies such as Sadranial, the ageless queen of Vertumnos, in regards to the best course of action to deal with the growing, draconian menace.

Haiel seeks advice in this matter as well as obtaining news of events in Penance and Arena during his monthly gatherings with Israfel and Barbello. They meet on the last day of every month at the intersection of their respective domains in a remote locale known simply as "the Throne". During these conversations, the trio share information about new seeds pulled into their worlds, exchange treasures and obtain guidance on particular dilemmas within their realms. Not surprisingly, he greatly looks forward to the opportunity to spend time with Israfel and to a lesser extent, her daughter, Barbello.

The Citadel of Haiel

Deep in the heart of an ancient forest flourishing in the depths of a dormant volcano, a foreboding step pyramid cloaked in a mantle of green soars more than fifteen miles above the tree line, casting an ominous, gray shadow onto the forest's canopy. The island housing his mammoth keep sits more than 600 miles from Wildwood's mainland in the heart of the Northern Ocean amidst a chain of substantially smaller landmasses stretching from the banks of the River Malamba to the northwestern shores of Arena. Finding an ocean-going vessel or an airship willing to make the perilous trek to the isolated locale proves extremely difficult and terribly expensive. For those brave souls with the means of securing transportation to the distant island, the wild, unruly deciduous forest growing outside and within the volcano teem with countless predators and invisible dangers. A mysterious race of humanoids known as the ologatus are the most populous creatures inhabiting the area while numerous dire animals and even an assortment of carnivorous dinosaurs also reside within the dark recesses of the woodland's interior. Despite the propagation of trees and other green plants, the island's most dominant feature is the rocky volcano that seemingly reaches into the heavens. Its base measures 250 miles in diameter while the ice-packed opening at its summit stands 150 miles above the surface and its diameter is of an identical length. The steep and icy incline of the mountain's face, the bitterly cold temperatures and the lack of breathable air at this dizzying height make it astoundingly difficult for creatures to gain access to the fortified stronghold via the arduous trek leading up to the summit of the volcano. However, the indigenous ologatus as well as other residents know of secret passages through the volcano's wall and into its interior. Naturally, the few adventurers braving the harrowing journey to this remote locale in search of Haiel's hidden treasures or to partake in an enchantment of the flesh typically utilize these clandestine trails to gain access to their elusive prize. (For additional details concerning the volcano's interior, see The Crater of Haiel in Chapter 5, Forbidden Wilderness.)

Completely bereft of any visible entrances or openings, dense tangles of overgrown vegetation resembling sinewy, green and brown tendrils tenaciously cling and voraciously burrow into the structure's stony walls, making the dull, gray stones of Haiel's pyramid appear much brighter and more porous than they actually are. At its base, each of the massive edifice's four sides measures five miles long; therefore at ground level, the complex encompasses a total area of 25 square miles. The walls gradually ascend; however they are not sheer surfaces like those found on a classical pyramid. Instead, the walls of Haiel's citadel resemble massive steps because the fortress actually consists of numerous levels built on top of one another. As the pyramid rises, the levels become smaller until the gargantuan complex finally reaches its apex a little less than sixteen miles above the ground. Despite the enormity of the compound, its

size is utterly dwarfed by the magnitude of the volcano and the crater that provide it shelter.

The citadel's interior is a labyrinth of narrow passageways, antechambers and small rooms choked by unchecked plant growth. Even though there are no openings to the outside world, stagnant pools of brackish water measuring several inches in depth are found throughout the complex, while the walls emit an eerie luminescence that nourishes the green plants in the glow of its warm light. Irregardless of the presence of a plentiful light source, the plants' twisted appendages and tangled root systems impede all modes of travel except for the most diminutive creatures. Negotiating a path through the dense thickets without some type of magical intervention or the use of cutting implements to hack through the morass of weeds and vines proves virtually impossible even for the most accomplished woodsmen. In addition to the logistical difficulties imposed by the uncontrolled plant growth, many of them are also carnivorous and aggressive. Colossal assassin vines lurk around virtually every corner, whereas hungry death mosses, shambling mounds and tendriculouses stalk the dark corridors in search of unsuspecting prey. In addition to the hazards and obstacles imposed by its living residents, deadfall pits, snares and other innovative booby traps also bar passage through the convoluted maze of meandering hallways and befuddling dead ends.

The immense quagmire of confusing architecture, wicked denizens and ingeniously lethal devices eventually culminate at the mystically locked, petrified wooden doors barring entrance into Haiel's chamber which rests in the center of the pyramid. A fearsome quartet of huge stone golems constructed from the same rocky material used to build his grand fortress supplements the impressive physical barrier warding the Feathered Fowl's eternal resting place. Inside, gnarled and intertwined vines resembling seemingly infinite layers of spider webs fill the enormous room. The twisted stems wrap around literally hundreds of magical items and artifacts scattered throughout the locale, suspending them in varying positions. The vast inventory of treasure consists predominately of druidic items pilfered from the unfortunate victims of Haiel's hunting games. Staffs comprise the vast majority of the deadly arsenal followed by rings, weapons, shields and a diverse array of armor. Nonetheless, Haiel's awesome display pales in comparison to the stockpiles amassed by other members of the Black Flock, particularly Barbello and Nemamiah.

Beyond the impenetrable mass of contorted vegetation is an intensely focused column of pure energy that keeps Haiel's true body in a perpetual state of suspended animation. Within the confines of this bright beam, the listless corporeal form of Wildwood's overlord inexplicably floats a few feet above the ground. Although he appears lifeless, his physical body acts as a reservoir of mystical power, bestowing tangible form to his potent avatar as well as empowering him with his ability to pull entire worlds into his feral domain. When not engaged in the pursuit of vicarious thrills, Haiel's avatar spends most of his time within the secure confines of this enclosure, scanning the expanses of the universe in search of new predators to import into his massive playground. The terrifying being also serves as the citadel's last line of defense against an intruder attempting to usurp Haiel's lordship over Wildwood. Fortunately for the blade of the green, only a handful of daring creatures have demonstrated enough sheer might and intellect to penetrate his citadel's outer defenses, yet none of these bold adventurers succeeded in reaching the heart of his formidable stronghold.

Haiel's Avatar

Male Feathered Fowl
Medium-Size Avatar (Equivalent to an Outsider)
Hit Dice: 30d8+480 (720 hp)
Initiative: +22
Spd: 90 ft.; fly 120 ft. (perfect)
AC: 58 (+18 Dex, +30 natural) touch 28, flat-footed 40
Base Attack/Grapple: +30/+42
Attack: *Longspear of Argomon* +64 melee
Full Attack: *Longspear of Argomon* +64/+59/+54/+49 melee
Damage: *Longspear of Argomon* 1d8+28/19-20 x3
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. *Longspear of Argomon*)
Special Attacks: *Longspear of Argomon,* precise wound, pull
Special Qualities: Avatar, DR 15/organic (see below), druid abilities, fast healing 10, magical immunity, ranger abilities, regeneration 10, SR 31, truesight, truespeech
Saves: Fort +33, Ref +35, Will +38
Abilities: Str 35, Dex 47, Con 43, Int 39, Wis 53, Cha 31
Skills: Appraise +22, Balance +28, Bluff +15, Climb +20, Concentration +46, Craft (sculpting) +24, Craft (trapmaking) +30, Decipher Script +22, Diplomacy +18, Disable Device +24, Disguise +12, Escape Artist +38, Forgery +16, Gather Information +30, Handle Animal +43, Heal +51, Hide +51, Intimidate +20, Jump +30, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +44, Knowledge (geography) (Wildwood) +47, Knowledge (geography (Penance) +24, Knowledge (geography) (Arena) +19, Knowledge (geography) (Anvil) +19, Knowledge (history) (Wildwood) +47, Knowledge (history) (Penance) +23, Knowledge (history) (Arena) +20, Knowledge (history) (Anvil) +17, Knowledge (local) (Wildwood) +47, Knowledge (local) (Penance) +24, Knowledge (local) (Arena) +17, Knowledge (local) (Anvil) +17, Knowledge (local) (Eclipse) +17, Knowledge (local) (The Vault) +17, Knowledge (nature) +50, Knowledge (religion) +44, Knowledge (the planes) +34, Listen +41, Move Silently +48, Open Lock +20, Ride +20, Search +18, Sense Motive +30, Sleight of Hand

+20, Spellcraft +37, Spot +40, Survival +51, Swim +20, Tumble +20, Use Rope +22.

Feats: Anticipation, Bane of Enemies (epic), Blinding Speed (epic), Combat Reflexes, Epic Weapon Focus (longspear), Evasive Actions, Improved Critical (longspear), Improved Initiative, Killer Instinct, Legendary Tracker (epic), Power Attack, Run, Skill Focus (Knowledge) (nature), Sprinter, Superior Initiative (epic), Track, Weapon Focus (longspear).

Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 30+

Treasure: *Longspear of Argomon*, *rings of the dual moons*, *staff of the woodlands*, *+7 killing long bow*, *baneful quiver*, 10d10 assorted precious stones

Typically Equipped Items: Book of the Great Oath, *rings of the dual moons*, *instant cage*, *staff of the woodlands (40)*.

Typically Prepared Druid Spells: (6/11/10/10/10/10/8/8/8/8; base save DC 31 + spell level): 0-level—*create water*, *detect magic*, *flare*, *light*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*calm animals*, *charm animal*, *cure light wounds x3*, *detect snares and pits*, *entangle x2*, *jump*, *obscuring mist*, *summon nature's ally*; 2nd—*barkskin x2*, *chill metal x2*, *gust of wind*, *heat metal*, *resist energy*, *lesser restoration*, *tree shape*, *wood shape*; 3rd—*call lightning x3*, *cure moderate wounds x2*, *meld into stone*, *sleet storm x2*, *spike growth*, *wind wall*; 4th—*control water*, *cure serious wounds x2*, *dispel magic x2*, *flame strike x2*, *giant vermin*, *pine needles*, *scrying*; 5th—*awaken*, *baleful polymorph*, *call lightning storm*, *cure critical wounds x2*, *transmute rock to mud*, *tree stride*, *wall of fire*, *wall of thorns x2*; 6th—*antilife shell*, *greater dispel magic*, *fire seeds*, *ironwood*, *liveoak*, *move earth*, *repel wood*, *stone tell*; 7th—*control weather x2*, *creeping doom*, *fire storm*, *heal x2*, *greater scrying*, *sunbeam*; 8th—*earthquake x3*, *finger of death*, *repel metal or stone*, *reverse gravity*, *sunburst*, *whirlwind*, *word of recall*; 9th—*antipathy*, *elemental swarm*, *foresight*, *shambler*, *storm of vengeance x3*, *sympathy*.

Typically Prepared Ranger Spells:
(9/8/8/8; base save DC 31 + spell level): 1st—*animal messenger, calm animals, charm animals x2, entangle, magic fang, read magic, resist energy, speak with animals;* 2nd—*barkskin x2, cure light wounds x2, hold animal, snare, speak with plants, spike growth;* 3rd—*command plants x2, cure moderate wounds x2, plant growth, remove disease, tree shape, water walk;* 4th—*animal growth x2, commune with nature x2, cure serious wounds, freedom of movement, nondetection, tree stride.*

Consistent with his bestial nature, Haiel appears as a lanky but athletically built humanoid with several noteworthy exceptions. An odd avian-like mask completely covers his head, although it gives four powerful, curved horns affixed to his forehead enough room to protrude through the bizarre helm and spread out in four divergent directions. He sports a pair of black, feathered wings attached to his back and a slender, spiked tail. Scraps of hides and fur cover portions of his torso and appendages; however between the sparse patches of clothing rows of spiny bristles as well as areas of bare skin teeming with rippling muscles are visible. Despite the presence of these unusual quills, Haiel is completely hairless. A badly worn, leathery tome hangs from a braided rope slung around his neck. He holds a petrified wooden long spear ending in a deathly sharp point in his wickedly clawed hands. Armed with this frightening weapon, Wildwood's greatest hunter pursues his quarry with reckless abandon and slays his prey with workmanlike efficiency. While absorbed in the thrill of the chase Haiel rarely speaks, but on those infrequent occasions when he does communicate with his victim, his gruff and feral voice sounds like the growls of a snarling beast.

Combat

Whenever Haiel indulges his primordial lust to kill, he typically abandons his flight ability and chases his target on foot, using his terrifying longspear with dazzling proficiency. Similarly, he also refrains from directly using his arsenal of druidic spells against his mark, but he does not display the same restraint when applied to spells that augment his abilities. Haiel picks and chooses his spots carefully, but once he engages an adversary, retreat is not an option. However, when seriously threatened, Haiel employs all of his combat abilities. Fortunately, for him, defeat occurs extremely rarely, and when it does, his typically mindless, primordial conquerors prove unable to take advantage of their stroke of good fortune.

Avatar (Ex): The blade of the green interacts with the Forge and its inhabitants through an avatar, receiving all of the following powers and abilities.

- Avatars can interact with creatures and objects on the Ethereal and Material planes.
- Avatars are immune to all fear effects.
- At will, avatars can use *greater teleport* to travel to any location within their domain. This ability does not function outside of their home domain.
- Avatars have several thousand black bird spies in their service. At will, the birds can merge with the avatar or split off. When in their home domain, the birds can also use *greater teleport* to travel to any other location within their home domain. Like the avatar, this ability does not function outside of the birds' home domain.
- An avatar can see and hear through the eyes and ears of any of its birds. Birds are self-sufficent observers blessed with the *true seeing* ability. When they find something interesting, they telepathically alert their master.
- Avatars are bound by the Great Oath to keep the secrets of the Forge and protect their citadels from breach by slaying any living creature that enters, except for other avatars. The avatar must destroy any creature that enters the citadel's central chamber, even if that creature is another avatar.
- Avatars are bound by oath from the physical act of destroying their own avatars or the avatars of other members of the Black Flock.

Damage reduction 15/organic (Ex): Weapons crafted from previously living matter such as wood, bone or ivory affect Haiel normally, whereas weapons forged from inorganic material such as stone or metal are subject to damage reduction.

Druid abilities (Ex): Haiel has all the abilities of a 30th level druid with the exception of attracting an animal companion. As an epic spellcaster, Haiel does not gain any additional spells; however he can wild shape 9/day and two bonus feats.

Magic immunity (Su): Haiel is immune to the effects of all druid and ranger spells regardless of the caster's class except for his own magic. This immunity applies to spells that appear exclusively on either or both lists but do not appear on any other character class' list of spells except for domain spells for clerics. For instance, *entangle* appears on the druid and ranger spell list, but it is also a spell available to clerics with access to the plant domain. Because the spell is found on the ranger and druid spell list as well as a specific domain, Haiel is immune to this spell. On the other hand, *reverse gravity* appears on the druid spell list and on the wizard's spell list. As a result, Haiel is not immune to the effects of this incantation.

Precise wound (Su): Whenever Haiel's spear scores a critical hit; he can forego dealing additional hit points of damage and instead inflict 2d6 points of ability damage to his foe's Strength, Dexterity or Constitution scores. This ability can not affect his Charisma, Intelligence or Wisdom scores. Therefore, the critical hit deals normal damage plus an additional 2d6 points of ability damage. Haiel can employ this ability up to five times per day.

Pull (Su): Although bequeathed with the ability to pull beings and inanimate objects to him, Haiel rarely deploys this power during combat except to extricate a particularly potent or dangerous weapon from the hands of its wielder.

Ranger abilities (Ex): Haiel has all the abilities of a 30th level ranger with the exception of attracting an animal companion. He possesses all of the combat mastery feats associated with ranged attacks and his favored enemies include dragons, aberrations, magical beasts, giants, humanoids, monstrous humanoids and undead in that particular order. As an epic ranger, Haiel has seven favored enemies, and he is considered a 15th level caster whenever he utilizes his ranger spells.

Truesight (Su): At all times, Haiel receives the benefits of the spell, *true seeing* as if cast by a 30th level druid.

Truespeech (Su): Haiel comprehends and fluently speaks all languages, engaging him to converse with any creature capable of hearing his voice.

Longspear of Argomon (Major Artifact)(Epic Weapon): Haiel acquired this cruel *+10 instinctive returning throwing longspear* in the treasure horde of a powerful green dragon that he pulled into his domain. The origins of the weapon are unknown, but the cruel device has been a mainstay in Haiel's inventory for more than 100,000 years. Its shaft is carved entirely from petrified wood while its tip is forged from cold iron. Its sturdy construction renders the weapon immune to all sunder attacks. Up to ten times per day, the wielder can strike the weapon against the ground, immediately discharging an *earthquake* or *whirlwind* spell, (wielder's choice) as if cast by a 20th-level druid.

Mastuu Dargus

Totem Symbol: A cloud engulfing an elf skull.

The greatest predator in Wildwood, Mastuu Dargus is a great wyrm green dragon with hunting grounds that extend for fifty miles in all directions from her lair. The outermost boundary of her hunting ground overlaps the perimeter of the last stronghold against her, the illustrious elven community of Vertumnus. Despite her past confrontations with the noble humanoids, the wicked dragon has long possessed a deep curiosity about the elven species as well as a measure of grudging respect for their culture and way of life. Nonetheless, she utilizes her might to indulge her primal pleasures giving birth to numerous half-elf/half dragons in an effort to transform their society into a mockery of the race she has done battle against for more than six centuries. As the most powerful predator in Wildwood, Mastuu is the only individual being capable of challenging Haiel's supremacy. Aware that her growing power has drawn the interest of Wildwood's overlord, she is careful not to ruffle his feathers too much, although she does not openly back down to him.

Mastuu Dargus is well aware of the fact that she is the most powerful predator of Wildwood, and she occasionally takes steps to ensure that her status remains unchanged. While most predators that have carved out just a small parcel of land and exert very little real control, Mastuu keeps a scrutinous vigil over the various individuals who enter her territory or those who could one day rival her in power. While she normally leaves most of the existing predators alone, she is more than willing to destroy any that look as though they could one day become a threat. Very few creatures ever match her in size or raw brute force, but there may be those who could best her in a magical battle. In the event that a threat enters the forest that Mastuu Dargus does not feel she can beat, she first attempts to use her influence over the other predators of the domain to align against the new threat. Should such an attack fail, she would attempt to negotiate a treaty with the new power. Only if negotiations fail and the creature represented a grave threat to her or her territory would she attack it herself. Mastuu is a capable combatant, but she prefers unfair fights where there is little actual risk to her well-being.

Despite her extensive riches and her lofty status, the one thing that Mastuu Dargus covets most is the elven city of Vertumnus. Outsiders know little of this city, though a few details have leaked through the seemingly impenetrable veil of secrecy enshrouding the wondrous metropolis. The city's outer perimeter is well guarded by patrols of elves under the direct

Illustrated by Terry Pavlet



supervision of the settlement's ageless queen, Sadranial. The settlement boasts a well-armed and competently trained militia numbering close to 1,000 individuals equally divided between infantrymen, cavalry and archers. At the present time, an unofficial truce exists between the two rival powers; however the conniving reptile has no intention of keeping the peace indefinitely. She is slowly biding her time as she waits for her crossbred offspring to mature before enacting her grand scheme to topple Sadranial from her lofty position and acquire the wealth of the elven settlement. At the present time, five of her prodigies are now residing within the settlement, discreetly and slowly obtaining important military and political positions within the city's hierarchy. In addition to her well placed network of spies, she plans on utilizing her children that are incapable of passing as elves as the backbone of her fighting force. Lead by her oldest son, Quagroth (Half-elf, half-dragon, Bbn 10), her legion of loyal and devoted troops is now forty-three strong. Although they are vastly outnumbered by their humanoid adversaries, their immunity to their mother's breath weapon enables them to spearhead an assault against their enemies without worrying about getting caught in the crossfire.

Mastuu Dargas' acrimonious relationship with the indigenous humanoids began shortly after Haiel pulled the upstart reptile into Wildwood more than 600 years ago shortly after she attained wyrm status. The wily and powerful dragon immediately asserted her dominance in the region, quickly driving off an equally matched rival with the assistance of a small tribe of gnolls that she coerced into aiding her. During her initial years in Wildwood, the fledling dragon maintained a low profile, discreetly but steadily increasing her territory without attracting the interest of the humanoid populations dwelling just outside of her sphere of influence. However, Mastuu Dargus' growing wealth and ambition placed her on a collision course with Sadranial and her stalwart elven warriors. The conflict began with a series of tepid engagements designed to gauge each opponent's strength; however the battle erupted in earnest when Mastuu Dargus flagrantly trespassed onto the elves' hunting grounds and butchered one of the settlement's most beloved commanders. Sadranial quickly marshaled her forces and met her draconic adversary in a section of the forest now known as the Field of Ash. The two potent foes exchanged mighty blows, Mastuu utilizing her terrible breath weapon and brute strength to annihilate several hundred elf soldiers while Sadranial lobbed devastating spells and awesome magical powers against her reptilian adversary. Although the brutal engagement claimed more than 250 lives, the end result was still a stalemate as Mastuu Dargus and Sadranial withdrew from the field and retreated back to their respective lairs. The unofficial ceasefire has remained in effect for the past six centuries; however the behind the scenes maneuvering between the two foes has continued unabated as both sides attempt to woo various allies to their cause.

When Mastuu Dargas is not preoccupied with her elven neighbors, she spends much of her time adding to her extensive wealth by slaying passing explorers. Over the course of the past 600 years, the avaricious dragon has killed more than a thousand humanoids as well as thwarting the plans of nearly two hundred adventurers hired by various parties to eradicate her from Wildwood. While humanoids unknowingly passing through her territory still fall prey to her, the number of adventurers willing to even consider affecting her demise has dwindled to a precious few. During the last century, only six adventurers have taken on the perilous assignment, and the last attempt occurred almost fifty years ago.

Mastuu Dargus, Female advanced great wyrm green dragon: CR 29; colossal dragon (air); HD 46d12+460; hp 759; Init + 0; Spd 40 ft., swim 40 ft., fly 250 ft. (clumsy); AC 53 (+51 natural, -8 size) touch 2, flatfooted 53; BAB +46; Grapple +78; Atk +55 melee (4d8+16, bite); Full Atk Bite +55 melee (4d6+16), 2 claws +53 melee (4d6+8), 2 wings +53 melee (2d8+8), and tail slap +53 melee (4d6+24); Space/Reach 30 ft./25 ft. (30 ft. with bite); SA breath weapon, crush, frightful presence, rend, spell-like abilities, spells, tail sweep; SA; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 15/epic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to acid, low-light vision, spell resistance 34, water breathing; AL LE; SV Fort +35, Ref +25, Will +34; Str 43, Dex 10, Con 31, Int 24, Wis 25, Cha 24.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +49, Concentration +51, Diplomacy +49, Hide +41, Intimidate +49, Knowledge (arcane) +49, Knowledge (geography) (Wildwood) +49, knowledge (local) (Wildwood) +49, Knowledge (nature) +49, Listen +49, Move Silently, Search +49, Sense Motive +49, Spot +49; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Empower Spell, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Spell Capacity, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Maximize Spell, Multiattack, Power Attack, Snatch, Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Focus (bite), Wingover.

Languages: Canine, Common, Draconic, Elven.

Possessions: *+3 kama*, *+4 longsword*, *+3 leather armor* , *+2 large wooden shield*, *rod of flailing*, *rod of the python*, *rod of rulership*, *staff: frost (Charges: 20)*, *ring of rebirth*, *amulet of might fists +2*, *figurine of wondrous power-obsidian steed, orb of storms, carpet of flying, 10 ft. by 10 ft. mantle of spell resistance,*, gold dragon comb with red garnet eye (1,100 gp); brass mug with jade inlays (100 gp); silver-plated steel longsword with jewel in hilt (700 gp); gold and topaz bottle stopper cork (700 gp); (2) black velvet mask with numerous citrines (90 gp); carved harp of exotic wood (1,000 gp); solid gold dragon idol (10 lb.) (1,100 gp); old masterpiece painting (1,000 gp); (2) brass mug with jade inlays (400 gp); gold and topaz bottle stopper cork (1,500 gp); silver-plated steel longsword with jet jewel in hilt (200 gp); silver ewer (40 gp); silver comb with moonstones (800 gp); ceremonial electrum dagger with a star ruby in the pommel (1,000 gp); solid gold idol (10 lb.) (700 gp); brass mug with jade inlays (200 gp); gold and ruby ring (9,000 gp); brass mug with jade inlays (100 gp); embroidered and bejeweled

glove (3,000 gp); silver comb with moonstones (1,000 gp); 19,000 gp.

Gifts: Intimidating.

Breath Weapon (Su): 70-ft. cone, damage 28d6 acid, Reflex DC 43 half.

Spell-like abilities: 3/day – *suggestion, dominate person*; 1/day – *plant growth, command plants.*

Sorcerer Spells Known (*Sorcerer spells per day:* 6/8/8/8/7/7/7/7/6/6); (Save DC 17+spell level): 0 – *acid splash, detect magic, flare, ray of frost, mending, message*; 1st –*floating disk, identify, obscuring mist, protection from good, sleep*; 2nd – *blur, fog cloud, scorching ray, see invisibility, web*; 3rd – *dispel magic, displacement, slow, stinking cloud*; 4th – *animate dead, black tentacles, dimension door, polymorph*; 5th – *baleful polymorph, break enchantment, cone of cold, wall of force*; 6th – *acid fog, chain lightning, greater dispel magic*; 7th –*greater teleport, instant summons, prismatic spray*; 8th – *create greater undead, moment of prescience, polar ray;* 9th—*imprisonment, meteor swarm, weird*. Mastuu Dargas casts spells as a 21st-level sorcerer.

Hunting Grounds

Mastuu's hunting grounds lie in the central portion of Wildwood and are confined to a roughly one hundred mile diameter circle centered around her lair. The city of Pindara lies three hundred miles south of the outside border of her hunting grounds and the remotest outposts of the city of Vertumnus overlap the outer reaches of her influence. Although Mastuu hunts the entire region, her hunting grounds are so large that she doesn't usually concern herself with intruders unless they represent a serious threat to her or possess material riches or magical treasures that she covets.

Because of her immense size, Mastuu Dargus experiences tremendous difficulty navigating her way through the maze of trees and dense underbrush prevalent throughout her hunting grounds. As a result, the gargantuan reptile typically takes to the air, flying a few feet above the forest's canopy while utilizing her acute senses to locate potential prey traveling along the surface. When she spots or hears an ideal target, the massive dragon swoops down through the trees, leveling many of them in the process, and attempts to land on top of her foe or snatch her foe off the ground and return to the air. Because of these frequent forays into the forest, much of her hunting grounds are littered with the rotting remains of fallen trees. In general, creatures moving through the area encounter a fallen tree approximately every fifty feet, requiring them to expend an additional 5 feet of movement to pass through the square containing the decaying log. In addition to these obstacles, her territory also contains six streams, five ponds and one unnamed lake comprising an area of two square miles. When she ventures from her lair, this body of water is a frequent stop along her trek through the wilderness in search of food and treasure.

Lair: Mastuu Dargus dwells within a massive cave complex accessible through a large opening created by an ancient river. The subterranean chamber was originally just barely large enough to fit her massive body, but since then she has excavated a much larger space for her to live in. In addition to this, she and her half-dragon children have excavated two additional and extensive underground levels where she and her prodigy make their abode.

The half dragon children of Mastuu Dargus live in the upper level of her massive complex. Their existence remains a closely guarded secret, as they are only allowed to leave her lair on rare occasions and even when they do, they must polymorph into a suitable humanoid form. As a result of their isolation, many of them anxiously await the day when their mother unleashes them against their hated kin in one final, climatic confrontation.

Mastuu Dargas dwells in the lower level, making her bed atop an immense pile of gold coins, precious stones and magic items in an enormous chamber encompassing a total area in excess of one square mile. In addition to the aforementioned treasures, the walls of this room are adorned with macabre souvenirs garnered from her fallen adversaries. More than 2,000 bleached humanoid and bestial skulls hang throughout the gargantuan cave, serving as a frightening testament to the awesome might of its terrifying resident.

Needless to say, virtually no sentient creatures purposely venture anywhere near her lair, while those that accidentally stray too close to her abode meet a swift and horrific death. Rarely willing to place herself in danger, the clever dragon has cultivated a burgeoning population of death mosses to serve as guardians, allowing the carnivorous plants to roam freely throughout her territory and wipe out any unwanted trespassers. Ever the opportunist, the greedy dragon quickly claims the inevitable spoils resulting from these lethal encounters and adds the treasures to her massive hoard.

Favorite Prey: Not surprisingly, elves top her list of favored prey; however she is not averse to hunting other humanoids particularly humans and dovers. She prefers sentient beings over mindless beasts; however when she is particularly hungry she is willing to settle for any variety of meat or even a tasty shrub or sapling. Oddly enough, she avoids devouring thorns and inexplicably affords the intelligent plants a wide berth whenever they cross paths.

Allies and Enemies: Although renowned for her physical strength and magical might, the crafty dragon is also a shrewd politician and sly diplomat. Although she firmly believes that she is stronger than Sadranial and her subjects, she is also aware that the queen of Vertumnos is a close friend and ally of Wildwood's aloof overlord, the Feathered Fowl, Haiel. As a result, she finds it necessary to cultivate allies amongst the lesser predators dwelling within her realm. In addition to the carnivorous plants that function as her unwitting sentries, she also enjoys a cordial relationship with some of the malevolent predators inhabiting her dominion including the indigenous gnolls and trolls. Through a combination of fear and bribery, the manipulative dragon is slowly building a legion of followers to supplement her half-dragon army for her inevitable showdown with the settlement of Vertumnos.

In addition to her living allies, her potent arsenal of spells enables her to summon hordes of undead to fill the ranks of her forces. She positions these horrific abominations at the perimeter of her territory, utilizing them to maintain a silent vigil on the activities of her enemies as well as keep a loathsome eye on potential trespassers. If needed, she can call upon these undead creatures to fight for her, but doing so is a time consuming process since she must meet them in the locations that they have been placed and give them new orders.

Obviously, Vertumnos is Mastuu Dargus' greatest enemy, yet her animosity toward the venerable settlement also places her at odds with Haiel. Although the blade of the green typically refrains from getting involved in disputes between rivals, it is entirely possible that he could intercede on behalf of Sadranial if her demise and the destruction of Vertumnos appeared imminent.

With the exception of the aforementioned parties, the only other major enemy of Mastuu Dargus worth speaking of is the enigmatic predator Razorclaw. Although she has tangled with the elusive wild frey on numerous occasions, the clever feline continues to elude her adding to her growing frustration and dislike for the sly predator.

The Hexed

Totem Symbol: Three interlocked bestial paws

A dreaded plague torments the chilly, coniferous woodlands of northern Wildwood, spreading its baleful influence like a wispy bank of fog rolling across dew-laden blades of grass. Amidst the shadows cast by the mighty pine trees soaring above the needle-strewn forest floor, the sickening curse of lycanthropy firmly grasps the realm in its bestial claws. In the glow of the Forge's dual moons during the weeks of Blooming and Sleeping, the agonizing cacophony of primeval cries and bloodcurdling howls emitted by its tortured man-beasts reverberate throughout the wilderness, sending shivers up the frightened haunches of its indigenous humanoid population. However, none of Wildwood's lycanthropes elicits more fear than Iumaxx, Koromaxx and Ophelmaxx, a triad of werewolf rangers known simply as The Hexed.

The dire affliction first affected the trio of indigenous human shapechangers as teenagers when a natural werewolf in his wolf form sank its filthy fangs into Iumaxx's tender flesh while the strapping youth hunted small game in the wilds around his tiny village. Within a span of a few months, the rebellious young man passed the foul scourge onto his two younger cousins, Koromaxx and Ophelmaxx. Already pained by the angst of adolescence, the defiant threesome wreaked havoc within their small, isolated community by mercilessly butchering its meager supply of livestock and brutally attacking explorers venturing too close to their domiciles. The sweet taste of fresh meat and success intensified the werewolves' lust for blood and their innate desire to strike out on their own. No longer able or desirous to control their blasphemous transformation into unholy beasts, they grew more brazen and less remorseful for their actions. The crisis reached its boiling point when Iumaxx's father, the unofficial leader of the miniscule clan caught his treacherous son in the act of devouring a dover pilgrim. Horrified by the gory sight, his startled parent stood shocked and motionless, trying to summon the courage to demand an explanation. Without hesitation, the enraged Iumaxx responded to his unspoken inquiry by leaping onto the old man and ripping a massive chunk of skin, muscle and blood vessels from his scrawny neck. The unspeakable act of carnage sent Iumaxx into a blind rage as he tore through the village on an insane rampage, killing anyone crossing his path. Inspired by their older cousin, Koromaxx and Ophelmaxx joined their relative in his mad spree and within less than an hour, the savage trio reduced their clan of forty-three persons to nothing more than a pile of mangled corpses rising from a nauseating pond of spilt blood.

The salacious orgy of mindless violence exhilarated the calculating but still green predators. Unbeknownst to the erstwhile hunters, the gruesome spectacle aroused the interest of Wildwood's typically indifferent overlord. Haiel devised an elaborate scenario to test the mettle of these newcomers, pitting the novice werewolves against a series of carefully selected foes before the examination culminated in a confrontation between the triad and Neckwringer, a powerful, oafish hill giant. After a pitched battle and several close brushes with death, the cohesive unit triumphed over their outwitted adversary, leaving the large brute in a crumpled heap of shattered bones and shredded flesh. After vanquishing the fearsome giant, they suddenly realized that their strength rested not in their individual abilities, but rather in their functionality as a well-oiled machine. Over the course of the next decade, the unit's combat prowess, tactical expertise and their dominion steadily increased. Iumaxx, the eldest of the three donned the mantle of leadership, coordinating their assaults with the precision and foresight of an accomplished general. Koromaxx became a deadly archer while his younger brother Ophelmaxx mastered the art of simultaneously wielding a weapon in each hand. Separately, they pose no threat to one of Wildwood's dragons or its most noteworthy individuals but together they are a formidable foe for any of the feral domain's most terrifying predators including the awesome dragon, Mastuu Dargus.

As the exuberance of youth slowly fades, and the triad reluctantly approaches middle age, their primordial lust for wanton destruction also wanes. The passage of twenty years in the rough and tumble world of Wildwood transformed them from cruel, impulsive beasts consumed by an uncontrollable, primeval urge to kill into cold, calculating strategists bereft of any remorse for their wicked actions. Despite their conscious efforts to reign in their innate wildness and bestial temperament, they still demonstrate a volatile personality capable of manifesting into an intense eruption of violent



behavior at even the slightest provocation. Because of their explosive demeanor, other lycanthropes generally afford them an extremely wide berth. Surprisingly, the trio rarely argues amongst themselves, and even when such conflicts occur, the confrontation's duration and intensity remains fairly short and low-key.

Iumaxx

Iumaxx is the oldest of the three relatives and the group's leader. In humanoid form, he appears as an aging man with a rounded face, thin blond beard and a head covered by curly tufts of golden hair. His steely, gray eyes constantly emit a chilling, lifeless stare and small patches of dried blood pool inside of the deep fissures on his parched lips. These disturbing characteristics make new acquaintances extremely uncomfortable in his presence. Irrespective of his unnerving physical appearance, Iumaxx possesses an extremely glib tongue, and his mere presence radiates an aura of importance negating any shortcomings attributable to his odd facial features. Unlike his younger cousins, Iumaxx abhors the use of weapons and typically fights while in hybrid or dire wolf form. His dire wolf animal companion, Wruthgar, accompanies him at all times.

(The stats presented below are for Iumaxx while in human form. These stats are the same as his stats while in hybrid or animal form unless otherwise noted. Changes for his hybrid state appear within these brackets { }, while those presented within these brackets [ ] represent his animal form. If the hybrid and animal stats are the same, they appear in the following format {[ ]}.)

Iumaxx, male human Ranger 12/werewolf: CR 16, Medium Humanoid Shapechanger (human), {[Large Humanoid]}; HD 12d8+48 plus 6d8+42; hp 197; Init +3, {[+5]}; Spd 30 ft., [50 ft.]; AC 22 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +3 natural, +1 shield) touch 13, flatfooted 19, {[AC 21 (+5 Dex, +6 natural) touch 15, flatfooted 16]}; BAB +16; Grapple +19 {[+27]}; Atk +4 *primeval longsword* +23 melee (1d8+7/19-20), {Claw +25 melee (1d6+10)}, [Bite +26 melee (1d8+10)]; Full Atk +4 *primeval longsword* +21/+16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+7/19-20) and +3 *shortsword* +20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+4/19-20), {2 claws +25 melee (1d6+10) and bite +21 melee (1d8+5)}, [Bite +26 melee (1d8+10)]; SA {[Curse of lycanthropy—Iumaxx is an afflicted lycanthrope thus he cannot spread the curse of lycanthropy]}, [trip]; SQ Alternate form, animal companion (Wruggar, dire wolf), wolf empathy, low-light vision, favored enemies (humanoid, elf +4; humanoid, dover +4; magical beast +2), scent, wild empathy, woodland stride, swift tracker, evasion, {[damage reduction 5/silver]}; AL CE; SV Fort +20, Ref +19 {[+18]}, Will +15 {[+12]}; Str 16 {[30]}, Dex 16 {[20]}, Con 19 {[25]}, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Climb +13 {[+20]}, Concentration +13 {[+16]}, Handle Animal +14, Heal +15, Hide +15 {[+19]}, Jump +10 {[+17]}, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (geography) (Wildwood) +8, Knowledge (nature) +13, Listen +16, Move Silently +14 {[+16]}, Ride +10 {[+12]}, Search +6, Spot +23, Survival +15, Swim +8 {[+15]}, Use

Illustrated by Jeff Ward

Rope +8 {[+10]}; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Endurance, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Run, Track, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (bite).

Languages: Canine, Common, Elven.

Possessions: *+3 leather armor, +4 primeval longsword, +3 shortsword, +3 cloak of resistance, orb of storms, greater horn of blasting, figurine of wondrous power, obsidian steed,* 5 potions-*cure serious wounds.*

Ranger Spells Known (2/2/2; base save DC 13 + spell level; cannot cast while in hybrid or animal form): 1st—*entangle, resist elements*; 2nd—*barkskin, cure light wounds*; 3rd—*greater magic fang, reduce animal*.

Gifts: Last Stand (Earned), Savage (Earned).

Koromaxx

Older than his brother, Ophelmaxx, but younger than his cousin, Iumaxx, Koromaxx is the proverbial middle child of the trio. Commensurate with his station amongst his peers, Koromaxx lacks the personal magnetism of Iumaxx and the rashness of his impetuous sibling. He is a tall, lanky figure with dirty blond shoulder length hair, a bushy gray, yellow and brown colored mustache, a prominent, aquiline nose and dispassionate hazel eyes. His soft-spoken voice rarely exceeds the volume of a whisper, a trait consistent with his stoic personality. Unlike the other members of the triad, Koromaxx secretly longs for relief from his bestial affliction, yet his loyalty to his family overrides his personal concerns. As a result, Koromaxx retains his human form whenever possible, only transforming into his animal or hybrid state if an adversary melees him. In battle, the lightly armored humanoid wields a deadly longbow, preferring to fire upon his seemingly defenseless foes from afar. Despite his concentrated efforts to control his thirst for blood under these circumstances, the normally subdued Koromaxx becomes a remorseless, calculating marksman during the heat of combat. A sinister smile comes over her face whenever he fells a hapless victim with his lethal weapon. Even in the din of battle, his animal companion, a dire wolf named Ripper, constantly remains at his side.

(The stats presented below are for Koromaxx while in human form. These stats are the same as his stats while in hybrid or animal form unless otherwise noted. Changes for his hybrid state appear within these brackets { }, while those presented within these brackets [ ] represent his animal form. If the hybrid and animal stats are the same, they appear in the following format {[ ]}.)

Koromaxx, male human Ranger 11/werewolf: CR 15, Medium Humanoid Shapechanger (human), {Large Humanoid}, [Large Humanoid]; HD 11d8+33 plus 6d8+36; hp 175; Init +6 {[+8]}; Spd 40 ft., [50 ft.]; AC 24 (+6 armor, +6 Dex, +2 natural) touch 16, flatfooted 18 {[AC 23 (+8 Dex, +5 natural) touch 18, flatfooted 15]}; BAB +15; Grapple +17 {[+25]}; Atk +4 *icy burst longbow* +27 ranged (1d8+5 plus 1d6 cold,x3), {Claw +23 melee (1d6+9)}, [Bite +24 melee (1d8+9)]; Full Atk +4 *icy burst longbow* +27/+22/+17 ranged (1d8+5 plus 1d6 cold,x3), {2 claws +23 melee (1d6+9) and bite +19 melee (1d8+4)}, [Bite +24 melee (1d8+9)]; SA {[Curse of lycanthropy--Koromaxx is an afflicted lycanthrope thus he cannot spread the curse of lycanthropy]}, [trip] SQ Alternate form, animal companion (Ripper, dire wolf), wolf empathy, low-light vision, favored enemies (humanoid, dover +4; dragon +4, aberration +2), scent, wild empathy, woodland stride, swift tracker, evasion, {[damage reduction 5/silver]}; AL CE; SV Fort +17 {[+18]}, Ref +20 {[+20]}, Will +12 {[+10]}; Str 14 {[28]}, Dex 22 {[26]}, Con 17 {[23]}, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +9 {[+16]}, Concentration +14 {[+17]}, Handle Animal +13, Heal +14, Hide +20 {[+24]}, Jump +15 {[+17]}, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (geography) (Wildwood) +7, Knowledge (nature) +11, Listen +14, Move Silently +15 {[+17]}, Ride +10 {[+12]}, Search +4, Spot +22, Survival +14, Swim +2 {[+9]}, Use Rope +8 {[+10]}; Alertness, Dodge, Endurance, Improved Precise Shot, Many Shot, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Run, Shot on the Run, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Languages: Canine, Common, Draconic.

Possessions: *+4 leather, +4 icy burst longbow, greater bracers of archery, boots of striding and springing, +2 cloak of resistance, goggles of night,* 4 potions- *cat's grace, longstrider, magic fang, water breathing*.

Ranger Spells Known (2/2; base save DC 12 + spell level; cannot cast while in hybrid or animal form): 1st—*alarm, jump*; 2nd—*cat's grace, spike growth*.

Gifts: Boost Speed (Earned), Undetectable (Earned).

Ophelmaxx

Ophelmaxx is the youngest of the trio, a fact clearly borne out by his proclivity for rash actions and his fiery temper. Perhaps as a reflection of his trying personality, Ophelmaxx sports a full head of long, flaming red hair, although by some quirk of nature he is incapable of growing facial hair. His cool, expressionless blue eyes belie the primordial bloodlust surging through his veins. The comely young man cuts a dashing figure; however his gruff demeanor and volatility significantly detract from the influence of his good looks. Despite his chiseled physique, the powerful werewolf demonstrates remarkable agility for a being of his large stature and muscular build. Ophelmaxx prefers fighting in human form, wading into battle with a pair of expertly crafted, magical light maces. Like his kindred, a dire wolf named Moal accompanies him at all times. (The stats presented below are for Ophelmaxx while in human form. These stats are the same as his stats while in hybrid or animal form unless otherwise noted. Changes for his hybrid state appear within these brackets { }, while those presented within these brackets [ ] represent his animal form. If the hybrid and animal stats are the same, they appear in the following format {[ ]}.)

Ophelmaxx, male human Ranger 10/werewolf: CR 14, Medium Humanoid Shapechanger (human), {Large Humanoid}, [Large Humanoid]; HD 10d8+20 plus 6d8+30; hp 147; Init +8 {[+10]}; Spd 30 ft., [50 ft.]; AC 28 (+8 armor, +4 Dex, +2 natural, +1 shield, +3 deflection) touch 17, flatfooted 24, {[AC 21 (+6 Dex, +5 natural) touch 16, flatfooted 15]}; BAB +14; Grapple +19 {[+27]}; Atk +3 *wounding light mace* +22 melee (1d6+8), {Claw +25 melee (1d6+12)}, [Bite +26 melee (1d8+12)]; Full Atk +3 *wounding light mace* +20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+8) and +2 *unholy light mace* +20/+15 melee (1d6+4), {2 claws +25 melee (1d6+12) and bite +21 melee (1d8+6)}, [Bite +26 melee (1d8+12)]; SA {[Curse of lycanthropy--Ophelmaxx is an afflicted lycanthrope thus he cannot spread the curse of lycanthropy]}, [trip] SQ Alternate form, animal companion (Moal, dire wolf), wolf empathy, low-light vision, favored enemies (humanoid, human +4; humanoid, gnoll +4, giant +2), scent, wild empathy, woodland stride, swift tracker, evasion, {[damage reduction 5/silver]}; AL CE; SV Fort +14 {[+17]}, Ref +16 {[+18]}, Will +12; Str 21 {[35]}, Dex 18 {[22]}, Con 15 {[21]}, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12 {[+19]}, Concentration +11 {[+14]}, Handle Animal +9, Heal +10, Hide +16 {[+20]}, Jump +12 {[+19]}, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (geography) (Wildwood) +4, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +11, Move Silently +10 {[+12]}, Ride +8 {[+10]}, Search +2, Spot +19, Survival +10, Swim +5 {[+12]}, Use Rope +6 {[+8]}; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Power Attack, Run, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (bite).

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: +4 *chain shirt*, +3 *wounding light mace*, +2 *unholy light mace*, +3 *ring of protection*, *ring of major energy resistance-cold*, *rod of enemy detection*, *horn of evil*, *cloak of the bat*, *lantern of revealing*, 3 potions-*barkskin*, *cure light wounds*, *lesser restoration*.

Ranger Spells Known (2/2; base save DC 11 + spell level; cannot cast while in hybrid or animal form): 1st—*longstrider*, *summon nature's ally*; 2nd—*cat's grace*, *snare*.

Gifts: Boost Speed (Earned), Undetectable (Earned).

Hunting Grounds

The triad of bloodthirsty werewolves represents the most dominant force in the coniferous woodlands of northern Wildwood. Their dominion encompasses a long but narrow swath of land touching the eastern and western shorelines with the Northern Ocean. The tract of territory measures roughly 900 miles from east to west but only a meager 25 miles from north to south spanning a total area of 22,500 square miles. The focal point of their realm is the mysterious patch of forbidden wilderness commonly referred to as the Stones of Blood, (described in chapter 5). The Hexed confine most of their hunting to this specific area and its immediate vicinity, although they make the long, harrowing trek to the distant coastal regions at least once a year.

A diverse assortment of other wicked denizens also inhabits the confines of their expansive hunting grounds. Forty green dragons led by a belligerent and ancient male named Eloch are scattered throughout the region, although their numbers are primarily concentrated within the interior sections of the coniferous forest. Not surprisingly, the aggressive reptiles pose the greatest threat to the Hexed, an unfortunate reality that only strengthens the familial bond amongst the threesome. Confrontations are extremely rare, especially since the cohesive trio utterly decimated an adult green dragon unwilling to cede a kill to them less than three years ago. After the one-sided rout, all of the dragons including Eloch treat the Hexed with a great deal of deference. In addition to their draconic rivals, various species of giants such as trolls, hill giants and occasional stone giants also present a serious but different challenge to the savage trio. Like the Hexed, these cunning behemoths rely on numerical strength rather than individual power to accomplish their ends. The crafty Iumaxx uses his diplomatic skills to set the competing tribes against one another and the locale's other predators, cleverly ensuring that the massive brutes never unite under a common chieftain. Because of their efforts, their supremacy within their hunting grounds remains intact.

Lair: When not on the prowl, the trio along with their animal companions resides in a small complex of wooden cabins just outside of the western boundary of the Stones of Blood. The three rudimentary homes consist of nothing more than a dilapidated bed, some furniture, a miniscule assortment of emergency supplies and a few secret cubby holes concealing a substantial portion of their monetary treasures. During periods of prolonged absence, they utilize their limited spells to summon natural allies to keep a close watch on their enclave.

Favorite prey: The Hexed prefers hunting intelligent prey, particularly nomadic humanoids straying into their territory. Dovers and elves top their list, but they are more than willing to devour a passing human, wild frey or even a satyr if the opportunity arises. They detest the taste of thorns and other sentient plants, generally avoiding them whenever their paths cross. If the aforementioned prey is not available, they set their sights on virtually any other type of sentient beings such as magical beasts, aberrations and giants.

Allies and Enemies: The Hexed remains in relatively good standing with Haiel because of their ability to keep a tight rein on the green dragon population within their boundaries. On the other hand, humanoids almost unanimously detest the bestial predators and in some cases, the grief stricken and enraged relatives of a butchered humanoid sometimes form a posse to hunt down their loved one's killers. Despite a few close calls from these makeshift mobs, the Hexed always manages to elude their pursuers and eventually wear them out or lure them into a carefully orchestrated ambush and utterly destroy them. It is for this reason that the sly lycanthropes generally steer clear of even the smallest humanoid settlements and instead focus their efforts on solitary travelers and their entourages, feasting

predominately on merchants from Penance traveling to and from the border settlement of Penumbra.

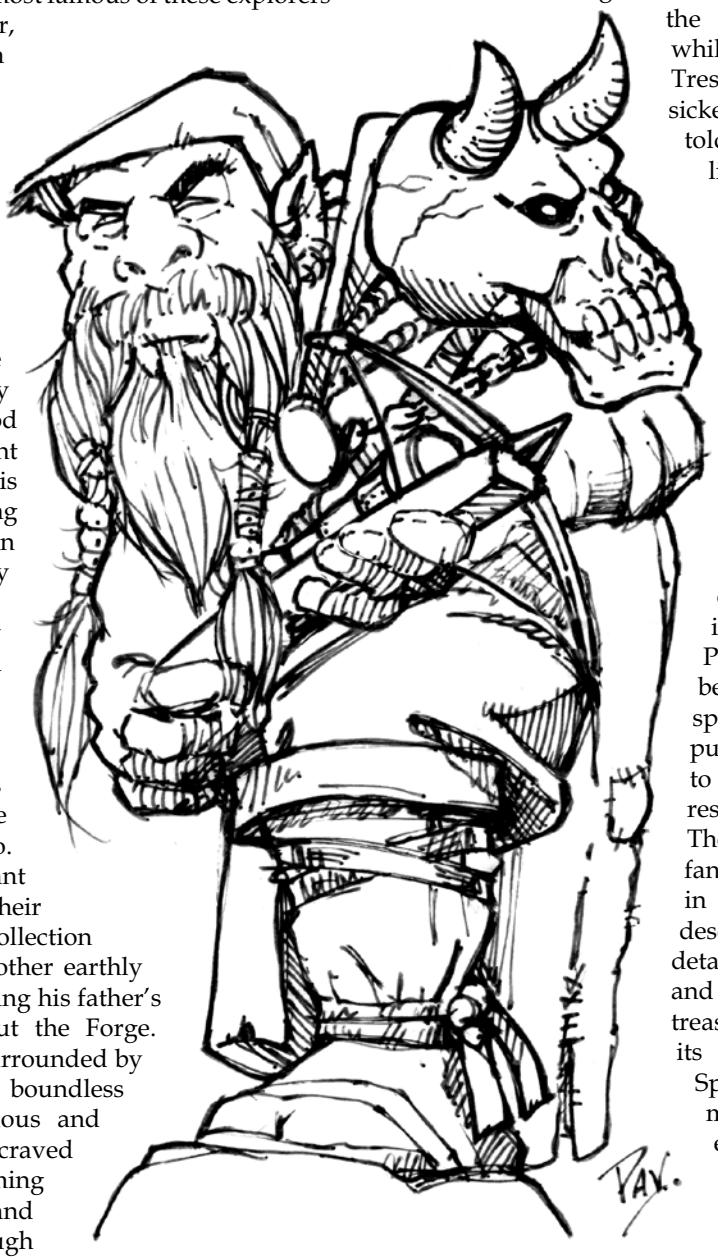
Tressen Gonaway

Totem Symbol: Profile of a crossbow bolt embedded between the eyes of a beast

In the estimation of most humans, the hot, sweltering jungle of southern Wildwood is one of the Forge's most inhospitable and unwelcoming environments. Plagued by a multitude of tropical contagions, swarms of bloodthirsty insects and a bevy of carnivorous plants, it is probably the most dangerous and lethal of Wildwood's diverse ecosystems. Irrespective of the risks posed by this daunting habitat, a handful of hardy and brave adventurers relish the challenge of not only surviving within this harsh clime, but actually thriving. The most famous of these explorers is the renowned hunter, Tressen Gonaway, an immigrant from the neighboring domain of Penance. Born into a life of opulent luxury in the bloodhold of Utopia, the headstrong youth turned his back on the trappings of wealth and instead made his way to the unruly domain of Wildwood in search of excitement and thrills. Much to his credit, the enterprising half-elf's success even exceeded his own lofty expectations.

The spoiled prodigy of an exceptionally rich human gold merchant from Penance and his lovely elf bride, Tressen came into this world a little more than a half-century ago. From birth, the jubilant parents showered their only child with a vast collection of clothing, toys and other earthly comforts obtained during his father's many trips throughout the Forge. Despite growing up surrounded by extravagant gifts and boundless treasures, the precocious and stubborn adolescent craved a simpler life teeming with adventure and exhilaration. Although he enjoyed accompanying his father on his exotic trips to his gold mines in Arena, the daring youth preferred traveling with his mother to her native realm of the Bactrian Forest. Under the tutelage of his doting parent and her druidic friends, the boy soon developed an affinity and love for the wilds, mastering the skills of foraging and hunting extraordinarily quickly. By the tender age of twenty, the strapping youth slew his first dire boar and only a few years later, he tracked down and bagged an entire pack of large worgs. Tressen felt more at ease in the wilderness than in the bustle of the sprawling metropolis, but his father insisted that he learn the intricacies of the family business, forcing him to reluctantly return home and tend to more pressing matters.

A few weeks shy of his twenty-fifth birthday, Tressen received the devastating news telling of his father's sudden and untimely demise. Distraught with grief and heartache, the inconsolable son and his mother rushed home to say farewell one last time. Upon their arrival, an avaricious entourage of sycophants and charlatans rather than the loving embraces of their family greeted the pair, feigning concern while clamoring for some of Tressen's inheritance. The sickening sight immediately told Tressen that his interests lie in the simplicity and savagery of the wilderness instead of the greediness and phoniness of the city. Within weeks of his father's funeral, the young man and his mother sold all of their interests in Utopia and Arena and left the city of Penance never to come back.



After their departure, they settled in the Bactrian Forest of Penance for a few years before an enigmatic tale spun by an exotic food purveyor on his way to Penance fueled the restless man's imagination. The traveler spoke of a fantastic, ruined city buried in the heart of the jungle, describing in exacting detail the ancient myths and purportedly hidden treasures concealed within its shattered buildings. Spellbound by the enticing mystery, Tressen left everything behind him and set out for Haiel's unruly kingdom. Equipped with nothing more than the clothes on his back, a handful of provisions and a trusty crossbow that once belonged to his father he ventured down the River Hebrus and

Illustrated by Terry Pavlet

then crossed over the border into the feral domain of Wildwood on a quest to find his elusive prize. Upon entering the foreign land, Tressen immediately encountered stiff resistance from its indigenous wildlife, as an assortment of hungry predators and monstrous creatures relentlessly dogged his trail. Nonetheless, he pressed onward, following the directions and clues provided by his benefactor to the letter. After traveling through the steamy jungle for more than a week and surviving three vicious assaults by marauding wild beasts, the exhausted and exhilarated explorer finally stumbled upon his destination, a magnificent stone city draped in a cloak of thick, green vegetation. After peeling away the dense layers of foliage, Tressen uncovered the outlines of six large, relatively intact ceremonial buildings and a massive amphitheater along with countless homes reduced to nothing more than heaps of rubble. Within a secret compartment atop the largest structure, Tressen found a mighty relic largely responsible for his legendary status, the Sighted Crossbow of Anvaru.

As news of his monumental discovery quickly spread, his fame and status amongst the indigenous humanoids and giants dwelling near the fabled ruins of Anvaru also grew. In relatively short order, the charismatic half-elf attracted a ragtag band of followers including dovers, elves, humans, and even a few wild frey and thorns. A makeshift settlement developed beneath the shadows of the mighty edifices of the fallen city, while Tressen and some of his associates thoroughly renovated the dilapidated arena. A vibrant community of 150 diverse individuals hailing from a variety of races and locales soon sprang up in the area with Tressen functioning as their reluctant de facto leader, an unwanted position he assumed solely out of necessity.

He shirks this responsibility as much as possible, and instead spends most of his time indulging in his favorites pastimes, hunting, carousing and womanizing. He approaches all three endeavors with equal verve, and his exploits in each of these disciplines are legendary. Both sexes find the pleasure of his company stimulating and intoxicating, but his closest associates are all too aware that his bubbling mirth can turn into seething anger at the mere drop of a hat especially after a long night of revelry. Irrespective of his vices and volatile temper, his followers demonstrate incredible loyalty and the community as whole functions as a rather harmonious and peaceful unit.

Tressen's physical appearance is just as alluring as his personality. The wiry half-elf's tall and lithe frame betrays his elf heritage, but his facial features appear all too human. He has high cheekbones, a ruddy complexion and a thin layer of light brown stubble covers much of his jawbone and chin. He keeps his sandy, brown hair short and parts it to his right. A pair of rounded spectacles rests on the bridge of his nose, making his warm, brown eyes appear larger than they actually are. He wears magical leather armor beneath an ordinary looking gray cloak, and he carries an odd looking crossbow of seemingly alien design and origin. Tressen prefers to stalk his opponent from afar, utilizing his deadly missile weapon with maximum effectiveness. If forced into melee combat, the rough and tumble brawler resorts to punching attacks or grappling his opponent.

Tressen Gonaway Half-elf Ranger 10/Hunter 10: CR 20, Medium Humanoid (half-elf); HD 10d8+40 plus 10d8+40; hp 192; Init +11; Spd 30 ft.; AC 28 (+5 armor, +6 Dex, +4 natural, +3 deflection) touch 19, flatfooted 22; BAB +17; Grapple +25; Atk *Sighted Crossbow of Anvaru* +32 ranged (1d8+6/18-20) or Unarmed strike +21 melee (1d3+4) or Grapple +25 melee (1d3+4); Full Atk *Sighted Crossbow of Anvaru* +32/+27/+22/+17 ranged (1d8+5/18-20) or Unarmed strike +19/+14/+9/+4 (1d3+2) and Unarmed strike +19/+14 melee (1d3+2) or Grapple +25/+20/+15/+10 (1d3+4); SA Ranged sneak attack +3d6, gain the upper hand; SQ favored enemies (Magical beast +6, animal +4, giant +4, dragon +2, monstrous humanoid +2), wild empathy, woodland stride, swift tracker, evasion, expert tracker, abandonment, ambush, dead eye, decoy, improved dead eye, blend with surroundings, greater dead eye, anticipate prey, half-elf traits; AL N; SV Fort +19, Ref +22, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 24, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Balance +16, Bluff +15, Climb +10, Concentration +11, Craft (sculpting) +11, Craft (trapmaking) +17, Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +13, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +9, Handle Animal +18, Heal +15, Hide +26, Jump +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (geography) (Wildwood) +19, Knowledge (nature) +21, Listen +23, Move Silently +33, Ride +11, Search +13, Sense Motive +7, Spot +25, Survival +13, Swim +7, Use Rope +12; Endurance, Evasive Actions, Improved Grapple, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Unarmed Strike, Killer Instinct, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (sighted crossbow).

Languages: Canine, Common, Elven, Draconic, Giant.

Possessions: *+3 improved silent moves leather armor*, *Sighted Crossbow of Anvaru*, *gauntlets of ogre power*, *cloak of elvenkind*, *amulet of natural armor +4*, *ring of protection +3*, *pale green ioun stone*, *ring of elemental command (air)*, *boots of speed.*

Gifts: Beast hunter, Cat and Mouse (arrival).

The Sighted Crossbow of Anvaru (Minor Artifact): Tressen Gonaway found this magnificent missile weapon within a concealed alcove at the apex of one of Anvaru's great buildings. The light beige crossbow's frame is constructed entirely from ivory, and it bears numerous pictographs depicting the slaughter of big game animals and beasts. Iron is the composite material for the device's moving pieces, but the origin of the tension string remains the subject of rampant speculation and conjecture. Even Tressen does not know what it is made from although he believes that it consists of tightly wound hairs plucked from the mane of a magical beast such as a unicorn. Whatever the answer is, there is no denying the power of this awesome artifact.

Tressen's weapon is a *+6 animal, magical beast bane sighted crossbow*. Unlike normal crossbows, the *sighted crossbow of Anvaru* does not require its wielder to load

ammunition. Instead, it magically conjures bolts whenever the weapon is fired; therefore the wielder can fire the sighted crossbow without reloading it, enabling him to utilize all of his attacks when he uses the full attack action. Needless to say, this prized treasure never leaves the sight of his owner, remaining with him even while he sleeps.

Hunting Grounds

Despite his prestige amongst Wildwood's elite hunters, Tressen's hunting grounds are relatively small for a predator of his power and experience. The northern boundary of his territory straddles the line of demarcation between the jungle and the deciduous forest of Central Wildwood, while the remainder of his dominion encompasses a thirty-mile radius around the fabled city of Anvaru. In all, Tressen lays claim to about 2,000 square miles of land; however that does not preclude him from venturing outside of his realm and hunting fearsome beasts in the surrounding areas. When Tressen is not on the prowl, he gives his followers free rein to stalk the jungle habitat in search of prey. During an average week, Tressen makes two forays into the surrounding wilderness, typically leaving his camp early in the morning and then returning with his quarry in tow sometime before nightfall on the following day.

His ballyhooed arrival affords him a cause for celebration and consistent with his well deserved reputation as a heavy drinker and lusty lothario, a raucous soiree almost immediately erupts as soon as he sets foot within Anvaru's perimeter. Wine and beer fermented from locally harvested grapes and grains flow freely throughout the compound while Tressen's good friend and long time associate, Macrattadus (male satyr Bbn 4/Brd 8), serenades the joyous crowd with stirring renditions of popular folk music on his magical pan pipes. After a few hours of revelry, the gracious host and his followers indulge in a riotous feast, hungrily devouring the savory meat of his latest kill as prepared by Tongaru (male wild frey Exp 10), his expert chef along with his retinue of assistants. By now, Tressen's interest is squarely focused on one of the many attractive young women dwelling within the community. As the night drags on, and the quantities of alcohol consumed steadily add up, the master seducer's success is all but assured. As the result of his roving eye and overactive libido, fifteen of his children now reside within his territory ranging in age from only a few months to sixteen years. His offspring shares varying degrees of human and elvish ancestry dependent upon their mother's racial background.

The party slowly winds down during the early morning hours, and the community does not stir back to life until the early afternoon of the following day when Tressen dons the role of entertainer and stages a grand spectacle within the confines of Anvaru's renovated arena. The flamboyant emcee and performer pits his grappling skills against a diverse array of animal and bestial opponents, locking horns with the likes of dire boars, dire tigers and girallons captured in the surrounding wilderness. After the spectacular show, the community settles in for an evening of relative peace and quiet before the cycle renews on the following day when Tressen goes back into the wilderness on a quest to bag new quarry.

In addition to the residents of Anvaru, his hunting grounds support a diverse variety of dire animals, dinosaurs and magical beasts. The area boasts two small humanoid settlements, a village inhabited by a clan of wild elves and a remote outpost manned by gnolls. A small tribe of trolls sometimes wanders through his territory, but they take great pains not to kill anything within the confines of his dominion lest they face Tressen's wrath. Surprisingly, his hunting grounds are completely devoid of any draconic residents, a situation that Tressen actively strives to maintain.

Lair: Like all of the residents of the closely knit community of Anvaru, Tressen dwells within a modest but richly furnished cabin beneath the shadows of the ruined city. His abode consists of five rooms highlighted by a spectacular trophy room proudly displaying the mounted, severed heads of his most storied kills including his favorite memento, a perfectly preserved specimen culled from one of the many half-dragon prodigies stalking southern Wildwood. Nearly all of the residence's furnishings are constructed from organic materials obtained from his countless hunts. Exquisite furs serve as rugs, beddings and upholstery for chairs crafted from bleached bones. Outside of these items and his personal effects, Tressen does not possess any other types of material wealth such as coins, gems or jewelry.

Favorite Prey: When searching for food, Tressen specifically targets big game such as dire animals and massive, wild beasts, but when he seeks a challenge, he prefers matching wits against giants, dragons and monstrous humanoids. He typically encounters the former within the boundaries of his hunting grounds; however in most cases he must venture outside of his territory whenever he hunts the latter. He never hunts his fellow humanoids except if the individual provokes a confrontation through his words or actions. Tressen typically allows non-sentient creatures to pass through his territory with impunity, yet he does not afford the same luxury to formidable, intelligent predators trespassing on his lands. Whenever his keen sense of smell and expert tracking ability detect a recent intrusion and evidence of a kill, he relentlessly pursues the unwelcome guest even if it takes him far beyond the perimeter of his territory. The most storied incident involved a particularly, dangerous half-dragon, half-troll known only as the Green Render. Reputedly the offspring of the terrifying dragon, Mastuu Dargus and a troll chieftain, the solitary, malevolent creature left nothing but devastation in its wake. During the night, the nomadic monster steamrolled through Tressen's lands, slaying dozens of helpless animals and uprooting numerous trees along the way. The enraged hunter dogged the vicious brute for more than a hundred miles before he finally caught up

to it. Armed with his trusted sighted crossbow, he crept up toward the napping monster and unleashed a barrage of magical bolts at the sleeping target. The infuriated Green Render awoke from its slumber and rambled toward Tressen who released another volley of projectiles before engaging the feral denizen in a lethal wrestling contest. After a pitched battle, the cagey half-elf's tactical expertise and martial prowess prevailed over the sheer strength and unorthodox techniques of his outwitted foe. The decapitated head of this fearsome adversary now hangs above the mantle of his trophy room serving as a lasting testament to his savage battle with his fiercest and deadliest opponent.

Allies and Enemies: Tressen is extremely friendly with the enclave of wild elves dwelling with his dominion, whereas tolerance best describes his relationship with the indigenous gnolls. Three green dragons living outside of his sphere of influence do not hold the renowned hunter in such high regard, and rumors continue to swirl that the trio is offering a massive bounty to anyone willing to rid Wildwood of the charismatic half-elf. So far, no one seems willing to accept their generous offer. Cognizant of these persistent tales, Tressen exercises increased vigilance whenever he leaves the friendly confines of his territory and sets foot on foreign soil.

Molamort

Totem Symbol: The claw of a huge feline.

Originally a warlord from the domain of Arena, Molamort is a half-fiend asherake living in exile in Wildwood. Deposed from his previous position, he now inhabits a hunting ground in the jungles of southern Wildwood near the border with his former homeland. He is a grim and sadistic figure who once dreamed of returning to his home domain along with a grand army to take revenge upon his enemies, but has since given himself over to the thrill of the hunt and the victory of the kill.

Molomort is the offspring of an asherake and a succubus. His father was a commander in the Grand Asherake's army and his mother had been pulled to the Forge from her home plane. Though she was able to leave the Forge at will because of her innate abilities, unlike many of the residents of this world, she found this world intriguing and decided to serve the Grand Asherake as an advisor. She trysted with one of the Grand Asherake's most powerful and promising warriors, which produced the half-fiend asherake Molomort.

As he grew older, Molomort came to understand that his mother held no real power in the Grand Asherake's court, but was there for her own reasons, which he never fully understood. From his asherake heritage, Molomort gained the bloodlust and ruthlessness of his species, and from his demonic parentage he inherited an instinctual need for power and chaos. Ultimately he realized that although his physical differences from the other asherakes his age were slight, he could not be content following a master, even if that master was an asherake who shared an odd link with Barbello and her powers. Molomort respectfully left the Grand Asherake's court and did not return.

After leaving the Grand Asherake's dominion, Molomort wandered Arena, enlisting in the armies of one warlord fighting against another. Among other minor warlords, he served in the armies of Minos Spar and Hateni. He would serve these warlords long enough to take out his aggression against a foe, and then he would leave. Each time he joined an army his thirst for blood and his natural aptitude for combat inspired those he served with, and when he decided it was time to leave, they inevitably left with him. As time went by he learned the tricks of command and how to lead armies. This in turn led to a stronger position of leadership among those who placed their trust in him. In little time his band went from a small group of those loyal to him to a mercenary company numbering nearly one thousand soldiers. It was then that he began hiring his company out to warlords to perform tactical assaults against enemy armies. The money he gained from this was reinvested in the acquisition of new troops. Eventually Molomort's company swelled to include roughly 2,500 soldiers. Once this occurred Molomort marched into a barely inhabited small oasis and gave its residents the choice of vacating the locale or enlisting in his army. Wisely, they unanimously chose the latter option.

Although he had attained the status of a full-fledged warlord, Molomort's fortunes abruptly changed. The oasis he picked was a comfortable enough place to live, but it lacked any real wealth. Numerous attempts were made to locate ore of any kind, but these attempts proved unsuccessful. At this time Molomort was not engaged in any combat, nor did he have a steady supply of income from any source, and his troops were beginning to lose faith in his ability to lead them. Confounded about his next step, Molomort once again approached the warlord Hateni; this time not to serve in his army, but to offer his services.

It was well known that Hateni held a personal vendetta against the upstart warlord Ossian for escaping from slavery, stealing the last shipment of gold from one of his mines, and for defeating his forces. In exchange for 15,000 gp., which was the amount to maintain his army for the remainder of the year, Molomort offered to harass Ossian while Hateni worked on combating the hated warlord on other fronts. Although Hateni had already thrown away more resources than he cared to think about against Ossian, he agreed to the half-fiend asherake's offer.

Molomort led his army in several surprise strike and fade attacks against Ossian's forces. Initially these were successful, catching his enemy's troops off guard, however Ossian quickly recognized that another threat was upon his army and reorganized the troops in order to mount a better defense. He quickly mobilized his units and mounted a counterattack while his scouts located the enemy's position. When Molomort's army attacked again, they were greeted with a stronger counter-attack than they had anticipated, forcing them to retreat back to their camp. Despite the stiff resistance, Molmort decided to renew his assault. This time they advanced on the army from numerous locations, with


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an attack plan that called for them to engage the enemy only long enough to inflict minor casualties and then retreat. Ossian had already guessed that this would be the next move Molomort would take, so he sent half of his army to hastily dig trenches in the sandy terrain surrounding their encampment and wait for the impending attack. When it came, the portion of the army within his oasis mounted an effective defense while the units that had been sent outside closed the noose around the smaller force harassing them, inflicting heavy casualties against his forces. Molomort's second in command, a nightling named Vrashan, incited the troops to turn on Molomort for leading them into a trap. Recognizing his failure, he took flight and fled from the field. Before what was left of the army could return from their ill-fated attack, Ossian's troops secured their encampment and claimed the wealth they had accumulated.

As a former warlord Molomort could no longer re-enter the ranks of the greater warlords as a soldier. They would view him as a threat to their leadership, and he had to admit, they would be right. In addition to that, Molomort feared that Hateni would be unsatisfied with the relatively insignificant amount of damage they had managed to inflict upon Ossian's army and would want to recoup his payment. Fearful that the same system he had so desired to become a part of when he was younger would destroy him, he fled to Wildwood where he vowed to raise a new army from the fierce creatures dwelling in the neighboring domain before returning to Arena.

Once in Wildwood Molomort was quick to partake of the hunt. Survival in these woods was a challenge and there were numerous creatures that would kill him, not because of any political motivations, but for sheer survival. He wandered for some time, but eventually settled in the jungles of southern Wildwood. Slowly but surely he managed to stake a claim to the hunting grounds he now controls.

The thrill of the hunt appeals to both his savage demonic nature as well the hunting instinct endemic to his asherake heritage. Unless he feels particularly threatened, he attacks with only his claws and bite attack, savagely ripping his prey to shreds. He relishes the kill, and once he has dragged the body back to his abode, he digs out the heart and eats it raw, then drinks the blood. Upon doing this he can feel the very essence of the creature he once killed coursing through his veins. If the hide can be preserved, he does so, crafting rugs, and mounting the head. His lair is decorated with these grotesque trophies.

Molomort, Half-Fiend Asherake Barbarian 15: CR 20, Large Outsider (Augmented Monstrous Humanoid) (Native); HD 15d12+45 plus 2d8+6; hp 147; Init +6; Spd 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 20 (-1 size, +2 Dex +5 natural, +4 deflection) touch 16, flatfooted 18; BAB +17; Grapple +28; Atk Greatsword +23 melee (2d6+10/19-20 x2) or Claw +23melee (1d6+7); Full Atk Greatsword +23/+18/+13 melee (2d6+10/19-20 x2) or 2 claws +23 melee (1d6+7) and bite +18 melee (1d8+3); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Natural weaponry (claws and bite), rage 4/day, greater rage, smite good; SQ Damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, illiteracy, immunity to poison, improved uncanny dodge, low-light vision, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10 and fire 10, spell resistance 25, scent, spell-like abilities, trap sense +5; AL; SV Fort + 12, Ref +12, Will +8; Str 24, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 19, Wis 11, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Climb +22, Craft (alchemy) +19, Craft (trapmaking) +19, Handle Animal +19, Intimidate +24, Jump +19, Listen +19, Ride +16, Survival +14, Swim +22; Power Attack, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Leadership, Improved Initiative.

Languages: Avian, Battlespeak, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Orc.

Spell-like Abilities (DC 19 + spell level): 1/day: *blasphemy, contagion, desecrate, horrid wilting, summon monster IX* (fiends only), *unhallow, unholy blight;* 3/day: *darkness, poison, unholy aura*.

Possessions: Greatsword, +4 *ring of protection*, *potion of heroism,* alexandrite (200 gp), rose quartz (60 gp), tiger eye turquoise (10 gp), banded agate (6 gp), obsidian (11 gp), golden yellow topaz (700 gp), red spinel (110 gp), bloodstone (30 gp), peridot (20 gp), azurite (8 gp), amethyst (130 gp), *figurine of wondrous power (ivory goats)*, *periapt of wisdom (+2)*, 2000 gp.

Gifts: Thick Skin

Hunting Grounds

Molmort lays claim to all the land in a fifteen mile radius surrounding his lair. The land is swampy jungle, though his lair is built atop a forested hill reaching a height of two hundred feet above sea level. The hill is quite steep, with numerous areas that are constantly on the verge of landslide. Other sheer cliffs exist alongside a couple of rough trails that are a difficult climb for even the fittest individuals of the Forge. Molomort uses flight to ascend to his lair, but there is a concealed backdoor that allows entrance and exit from the base of the hill. Even if this hidden egress point is discovered, it is difficult for most creatures to enter since it is blocked by a portcullis with a winch that requires a successful Strength check (DC 27) to open.

Five miles from his lair is the eastern edge of what Molomort refers to as the Killing Bowl. This is a vast depression in the ground three miles in diameter, ringed on all sides with gentle hills. The bottom of the killing bowl lies approximately a hundred feet above the waterline in the surrounding territory, so it is a relatively dry refuge for numerous types of creatures. Water accumulates in the middle of this area, forming a stream that cuts through one side of the bowl and then culminates in a waterfall on the other side. This is a pristinely wild area and new creatures are constantly being drawn here from elsewhere. Molomort hunts this area often and because of the frequent arrival of new creatures, it has yet to be "hunted out."

The rest of Molomort's hunting grounds are wet, swampy, and difficult to negotiate, even for him. Despite this, he finds that the largest, most difficult to kill creatures can be found in this region. Among the notable prey he's conquered in these regions are hydrae, an adult black dragon, and a pair of wyverns.

Illustrated by Bruce Colero

Lair: Molomort refers to his lair as *the Malachite Lodge.* It is a two level structure consisting of a large dwelling made of timber at ground level. Connected via a circular pit in one of his back rooms is the larger underground portion of his dwelling, which has a concealed exit a few hundred feet away from his lair. The two levels of his structures serve two distinctly different purposes. The upper level is a hand-crafted version of the upscale dwelling he had always hoped to be able to afford in Arena as a warlord. The lower portion of his lair houses the dangerous beasts that he has captured and attempted to convert into hunting beasts.

The top portion of Molomort's lair is seven thousand square feet of masterfully crafted housing. The outer walls are constructed from logs while the inner walls are made of timber. Despite the size and opulence of the structure, the floor is comprised of dirt. The walls are decorated with the preserved heads of the creatures he has killed while the skins have been carefully cured, patched where necessary, and converted into rugs. Molomort has no furniture in his lair to sit upon, but instead lounges upon heaping piles of rugs. Depending on the size, pattern, texture and overall attractiveness, some of his furs are used to cover the walls or hang in doorways to effectively separate the various rooms.

In addition to the trophies that he has spread throughout his lodge, Molomort has a master bedroom, five guest quarters, a large room for entertainment, several small rooms that serve a variety of purposes and a room that contains the treasures and weapons he has managed to acquire. Guests are often invited here. Initially he was trying to arrange for an army to lead back into Arena, but after a short period of trying, he realized who his allies were and began to invite them here solely for joint hunting expeditions. He keeps large stocks of alcohol and wines, including a few wines that have been brewed from the blood of the more memorable creatures he has hunted.

The lower level of Molomort's lair reveals him for the villain he truly is. Several massive underground chambers link together and house the various creatures that he has captured rather than killing. These creatures are treated with exceptional cruelty. Molomort trains them by beating them until they show him the proper amount of fear, at which time he begins to slowly reward them for following his instructions. Eventually, once a proper bond of fear and obedience is established, he takes them with him on the hunt. His most trusted hunting companion is a dire lion he named Eidolon. An ulterior motive behind collecting these creatures is that he may one day lead his best and strongest into Arena to slaughter one of the warlords and usurp his power.

In addition to the cave is a primitive arena Molomort has created in the central chamber. He occasionally invites his most trusted allies here where he unleashes creatures upon one another that have failed to become obedient. Most nights when he enjoys this bloodsport involve three separate matches and a great deal of gambling. Sentient creatures that enter his hunting grounds uninvited are brought here to battle his creatures.

Favorite Prey: Molomort discriminates very little in his prey. His hunting grounds are so rich in life that he literally has thousands of different creatures to hunt at any given time. The only criteria he sets is that they must be at least two-thirds his size in order to be a challenge, and their hide must be harvestable. He's been known to hunt the various large cat species that are plentiful here, the numerous dire animals, and scaly creatures.

Allies and Enemies: Molomort boasts a long list of both enemies and allies. Fortunately for him, the majority of his enemies remain in Arena. Chief among them is the warlord Hateni. He once served in the tyrant's army and gained the warlord's favor, but his later partnership led to such an extraordinary failure that Hateni feels cheated by Molomort, who, he feels, misled him by overestimating his chances of successfully harassing Ossian. On two separate occasions Molomort has faced assassins sent by Hateni, and both times he was not only prepared for their arrival, but he took them by surprise, quickly bested them, and then arranged to transport their flayed corpses back to the warlord (the skins of the corpses decorate the interior of his lodge).

Molomort has also made an enemy of the *consortium of hunters*, a small group of merchant hunters who operate just a few miles from his hunting grounds. Initially mistaking them for ordinary trespassers near his territory, Molomort killed several of them before it became clear that they were organized and very capable of defending themselves. After he had killed the fifth member of the group, ten of the fallen hunter's associates along with a green dragon cohort attacked him. Molomort was forced to flee to his underground chambers, but afterward he tracked them as they left his hunting grounds and killed three in strike-and-fade attacks. Though his lodge was damaged, he was able to rebuild, and since that incident there have been no further hostilities between the two groups.

Among his friends are a number of other predators who operate in the nearby regions. Unlike the *consortium of hunters*, Molomort used tact and diplomacy when approaching these individuals, inviting them to his territory for hunting and trade. This led to talks of alliances and other interests. Molomort became a favorite among many since he was able to relate the tales from when he was a mercenary in Arena. These hunting trips eventually led to stays in his lodge, which in turn led to the depraved arena fights and gambling that now happens there. At one time Molomort had planned to enlist the help of these hunters, but over time the dream of returning to his former home domain with an army at his back has faded, and he is now left with his fond memories, his stories, and his overwhelming cruelty.

Kansu Asammel

Totem symbol: Two fangs with a drop of blood dripping from each tip

Few humanoids venture into the festering bog dominating central Wildwood's coastal region adjacent to the Central Ocean, but the scant handful of brave explorers enduring the hardships of this uninviting environment relay frightening tales of an enigmatic predator stalking the malodorous quagmire of dank, stagnant pools of water and viscous, black mud. Some mistake the mysterious creature for a lycanthrope in hybrid form because of its unique combination of humanoid and bestial traits, but most correctly surmise that the odd and terrifying figure prowling the foreboding marshlands is actually a humanoid possessing animalistic features. Sightings of the reclusive creature are generally no more than brief glimpses, making it impossible to ascertain its racial heritage or other distinguishable features save for a polished gray greatsword that it wields in its furry, clawed hands. By all accounts, the mysterious being moves with the litheness and grace of a wild cat, moving along the soggy ground with astounding speed and balance while shimmying up slick, moss covered trees with remarkable ease. Yet, behind the brutal, primordial façade of a wild beast resides a tormented soul longing for redemption after years of self-loathing. His name is Kansu Asammel, and in a lifetime that seems to have taken place untold millenniums ago, he made one tragic error that altered his life forever.



Born into a small settlement of wild elves dwelling in the outskirts of the deciduous forest near Wildwood's western border with Penance, the young boy displayed an affinity for nature and the martial arts from an extremely early age. Although not hailing from the leadership caste of his community, the precocious youth's combat prowess earned him many important admirers amongst the village's elders. In the weathered eyes of his staunchest supporters, Kansu's talent more than compensated for his boorish behavior and arrogant demeanor, but other well-placed and influential individuals intensely disliked the obnoxious child repeatedly snubbing his nose at their authority. His parents attempted to diffuse the situation by reining in their unruly son; however the obstinate wild elf refused to budge and only grew more rebellious. The bitter feelings aroused by the amazingly gifted young adult literally divided the community into two divergent camps. His proponents overlooked his character flaws and insisted that he deserved to stand at the helm of their small militia, whereas his detractors countered that his atrocious manners did not warrant the bestowment of such an illustrious honor. Unfortunately, the political crisis came at the most ill opportune time.

Unbeknownst to the bickering factions, a contingent of loggers and soldiers dispatched by an ambitious bloodlord from Penance with an avaricious eye squarely fixed on the wild elves' tract of virgin wilderness was heading in their direction at breakneck speed. As the military force marched eastward, the opposing sides continued their petty squabble unaware of the rapidly approaching danger. Annoyed and perturbed by the entire proceeding, the rash Kansu left the settlement to gather his thoughts in the wilderness. Shortly after his hasty departure, the marauding raiders arrived. Deprived of their best warrior, the overwhelming force of foreign invaders routed the outmanned village militia with astounding ease. As the temperamental young man contemplated his future in the solitude of the woodlands, the victorious troops burned his home and the settlement's remaining buildings to the ground and dispersed the few surviving residents throughout the surrounding woodlands. When he returned three days later, the grisly landscape of tree stumps and smoldering corpses angered the volatile elf. The gruesome sight sent him into a violent rage. The infuriated warrior drew his greatsword and defiantly strode onto the field, itching to slay anyone he deemed even remotely responsible for this disgusting act. Fueled by his seething emotions, Kansu blazed a horrific trail across the land, mowing

Illustrated by Jeff Ward

down rows of startled loggers like a farmer reaping stalks of wheat. After a minute of brutal carnage, the trespassers counterattacked and drove Kansu back into the forest. Despite this setback, the damage inflicted by the fearsome warrior proved irreparable. Incensed by the wanton pillaging of his feral domain, Haiel, the normally apathetic overlord of Wildwood, mustered his natural allies and swept down upon the beleaguered intruders with an appetite for vengeance equal to that of plague of voracious locusts. Hordes of animals, carnivorous plants and savage, mindless beasts engulfed the outnumbered interlopers within a matter of minutes. Utterly beaten by the immense swarm, the stragglers abandoned their foothold in Wildwood and retreated back towards Penance in a mass of confusion. Although nature eventually triumphed over industrial progress, Kansu put all of the blame for his homeland's destruction on his mighty shoulders.

The consequences of his failure gnawed at his fragile psyche, prompting the despondent Kansu to aimlessly and recklessly wander through the untamed forests of Wildwood in a calculated effort to die at the hands or jaws of another creature. Despite his deliberate attempt at self-destruction, Kansu's subconscious desire to live manifested whenever he confronted danger along the way. He spent six months on this nomadic sojourn until he finally arrived at the distant shores of the Central Ocean. Standing agape at the edge of the sandy beach, something about the grandeur and beauty of the expansive body of water invigorated his downtrodden soul with newly found zeal. The spiritual experience forced him to confront his profound regard for nature, and he solemnly vowed to preserve its sanctity regardless of his personal safety and wellbeing. The rejuvenated wild elf made his way into the nearby swamps where he remains to this very day, acting as its champion against exploitation.

The groundbreaking revelation changed Kansu's perspective about his role in the world, but it did not substantially alter his personality. He is still the foul tempered and uncouth boor that he was in his youth, but the passage of an entire century since his birth and the traumatic events in his past significantly diminished his arrogance. He exercises considerably more caution than he did earlier in his life, but he is still prone to undertake rash actions when provoked. He keeps a wary eye on strangers traversing through the damp soil and murky water of his self-appointed dominion, intently scrutinizing their actions to gauge their intentions. The expert wilderness warrior prefers to remain out of sight while engaged in this activity, only revealing his presence to anyone despoiling the ecosystem.

The unfortunate individuals that incite his wrath and catch more than a passing glimpse of the swamp's elusive defender see an agile wild elf possessing several bestial characteristics. A moderate coat of dark gray fur covers almost all of his dark brown skin except for a thick mane of long, flowing black hair attached to his scalp and a complete absence of facial hair. Blood-encrusted fangs extend over his lower lip, and his proboscis resembles a wolf's snout. His fingertips end in razor sharp claws and a wiry, prehensile tail protrudes from the end of his spine. He wears a patchwork of animal skins as clothing, although he does sport a ring on each hand and an expertly tailored cloak draped around his shoulders. His hands tightly grip the hilt of an ornate, gray greatsword, while a longbow and quiver of arrows are slung over his shoulder. In combat he relies almost exclusively on his massive blade; he only utilizes his missile weapon against flying adversaries.

Kansu Asammel Wild elf Barbarian 17/FoBst 4: CR 21, Medium Humanoid (wild elf); HD 17d12+51 plus 4d8+12; hp 214; Init +12; Spd 40 ft.; AC 26 (+6 armor, +8 Dex, +2 natural) touch 18, flatfooted 18; BAB +20 (+1 epic); Grapple +24; Atk +*4 anarchic greatsword* +29 melee (2d6+10 plus 2d6 vs. non-chaotic foes/17-20), or Claw +24 melee (1d4+4) or +*2 composite longbow (+3 for strength)* +30 ranged (1d8+5); Full Atk +*4 anarchic greatsword* +29/+24/+19/+14 melee (2d6+10 plus 2d6 vs. non-chaotic foes/17-20), or 2 claws +24 melee (1d4+4) and bite +19 melee (1d6+2) and tail +19 melee (1d6+2) or +*2 composite longbow (+3 for strength)* +30/+25/+20/+15 ranged (1d8+5); SA Rage 5/day, greater rage, tireless rage; SQ fast movement, illiteracy, uncanny dodge, trap sense +5, improved uncanny dodge, indomitable will, damage reduction 4/-, elf traits, resistance to cold 5, scent; AL CN; SV Fort +19, Ref +17, Will +13; Str 19, Dex 26, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +20, Craft (sculpting) +6, Handle Animal +6, Heal +8, Hide +14, Intimidate +5, Jump +10, Listen +14, Move Silently +12, Ride +10, Search +2, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8, Survival +14, Swim +9; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: *Bracers of armor +6*, *+4 anarchic greatsword*, *+2 composite long bow (+3 for strength)*, *ring of improved climbing*, *ring of spell turning*, *cloak of resistance +3*, *figurine of wondrous power-serpentine owl*, *rope of entanglement*, *woodland boots*.

Gifts: Savage, Undetectable (earned).

Hunting Grounds

Kansu is a rare exception amongst the upper echelon of Wildwood's predators in the respect that his hunting grounds overlap into two ecosystems, the marshlands along Wildwood's eastern coastline and the deciduous forest of central Wildwood. His dominion begins at the southernmost tip of the swamp and stretches roughly 150 miles up the coast and another 100 miles inland. Although the forest comprises approximately half of his territory, he spends the vast majority of his time within the malodorous fens only a few miles from the Central Ocean. The solitary, nomadic wild elf endlessly roams through his expansive realm, rarely remaining in the same locale for more than a day before moving on to another area. While on the prowl he subsists

on a meager diet of foraged fruits, nuts and berries occasionally supplemented by meat procured from a fresh kill. In contrast to typical predators, Kansu only hunts for sustenance whenever he is unable to gather enough plant matter for his own consumption; otherwise he is a strict vegetarian.

Kansu cares little for his own self-preservation and instead devotes all of his energies towards the defense of the wilderness as his homespun form of atonement for his past transgressions. He typically remains in close proximity to the ocean and small rivers weaving a circuitous path through the marshlands, because he considers these waterways the gateway to nature's exploitation at the hands of humanoid merchants and explorers bent on making a fortune at his homeland's expense. Kansu ignores trespassing animals, magical beasts and other denizens that he considers "natural" creatures such as fey, dragons, elementals, plants and vermin, despite the inherently magical nature of both the fey and dragons. In fact, he is on particularly good terms with the forest's green dragons, and he is tolerant of the wetland's small but growing population of black dragons. Other creatures, particularly giants, humanoids and monstrous humanoids are not as fortunate as their presence always attracts his suspicious gaze. Through their actions, members of the aforementioned categories of creatures can gain his trust as evidenced by his warm relationship with the region's druids and rangers as well as a few scattered wild elf and dover settlements straddling the boundary between the forest and marshlands. Overcoming his prejudicial outlook and acquiring his friendship is a long and arduous process fraught with peril as a result of his explosive temper and penchant for saying the wrong time at the absolute worst moment. Nonetheless, Kansu is slowly seeing his fellow humanoids in a better light than he did only a couple of years earlier.

Irrespective of his progress with his hunting grounds' humanoid residents, they are an important but miniscule percentage of his realm's overall population. The quartet of animals, monstrous humanoids, magical beasts, and plants constitute the bulk of his dominion's inhabitants. Crocodiles and sharks troll the dank streams and brooks crisscrossing the mucky terrain, while giant serpents and amphibians stalk the muddy land. Intelligent and malevolent beings also make their abode within Kansu's realm led by coveys of wickedly evil hags and medusas. The area also supports an abundance of aggressive or sentient plants such as shambling mounds, tendriculouses and treants. For the most part, Kansu leaves all of these creatures alone with the noteworthy exception of its monstrous humanoids that he keeps a close watch on at all times.

Lair: The consummate nomad, Kansu infrequently sleeps in the same location for at least two consecutive nights. Any sturdy cluster of branches high atop a tree is more than capable of serving as the skilled outdoorsman's makeshift bed. Despite his proclivity for ceaselessly traveling through the untamed wilderness, he frequently revisits a number of locations dispersed throughout his dominion on a recurring basis. His favorite spot stands sixty feet above the ground in the loving embrace of an ancient, gnarled oak tree amidst a copse on the edge of the deciduous forest. Not only does he enjoy the scenery and serenity of this locale, but he also relishes the company of Kallanamestra, a beautiful and alluring nymph druid that tends to this particularly isolated section of woodlands. The pair typically converses for hours about vital subjects such as potential threats looming on the horizon as well as idle banter regarding the weather or the beautiful qualities of a specific flower. In many ways, Kansu regards the reclusive fey as his soul mate, confiding his innermost secrets to the thicket's enigmatic mistress. Irrespective of the vast differences between their personalities, their mutual love for the sanctity of nature and their common purpose of protecting the forest from the forces of industry and progress forge a lasting bond between them. As a token of his loyalty, Kansu entrusts his sizeable monetary fortune to her care. Even he does not know the secret location where Kallanamestra hid his earthly treasures, but he believes that it is guarded by a group of her treant allies living somewhere near his tree.

Favorite Prey: As previously mentioned, Kansu does not usually hunt for sustenance, and his choice of prey is extremely particular. He only kills creatures that he considers a viable threat to his stretch of the swamp and forest; however, the creatures that he takes the guiltiest pleasure in slaying do not generally meet this criteria. Instead, he deems their very existence an affront to all that he holds dear. Although not particularly skilled at combating these foes, Kansu reserves his greatest ire for the restless spirits and animated corpses comprising the ranks of the undead.

Whenever he spots one of the loathsome abominations, his rage consumes him, and he charges into battle wielding his greatsword with maniacal glee. Lesser types of corporeal undead quickly fall by the wayside under the weight of his terrible weapon, but more potent varieties present a difficult challenge. On one occasion, Kansu ran afoul of a powerful vampire haunting the swampland's misty interior. While the baleful creature felt the full sting of Kansu's destructive blade, the enraged barbarian barely repelled the wicked creature's attempts to subjugate his will. A similar encounter with the tormented ghost of a shipwrecked sea captain almost resulted in his demise as well. Irregardless of several close brushes with death, the impetuous wild elf still attacks his hated foes with utter recklessness. Even a brief glimpse of the walking dead hurls him into a blind fury and compels him into battle against his despised nemesis.

Allies and Enemies: Kansu enjoys a one-sided relationship with the six green dragons and four black dragons residing within his hunting grounds. His draconic allies look down upon him as their inferior rather than their equal. The smart and shifty reptiles extract information from their naïve counterpart while feigning cooperation with the outwitted barbarian, giving him scraps of worthless intelligence to flatter his ego. In contrast to his dealings with these ruthless swindlers, his association with the indigenous druids and rangers is based upon mutual respect and a genuine interest in the preservation of the wilds. Similarly, the

fey also hold him in high regard, partly as a result of Kallanamestra's outspoken intervention on his behalf.

The swamp's monstrous humanoids do not look upon him with such good favor. The foul hags inhabiting the swamps often utilize their arcane powers of deception and enchantment to trick or magically compel unfortunate souls wandering into their malevolent clutches to kill the meddlesome wild elf. Likewise, wasteful and brutish giants intensely dislike him, attacking him on sight with the same zeal that Kansu displays in battle against the undead. Despite his affinity for nature, dire animals, dinosaurs and magical beasts also regard the rangy humanoid as potential prey, giving chase to him whenever possible. For his part, Kansu does his best to avoid these confrontations, typically scampering up a tree to escape his pursuers and patiently wait for it to grow bored and move elsewhere.

Maneau Galle

Totem symbol: None

Perhaps no individual in Wildwood elicits a more visceral response or intense dislike than Maneau Galle, the enigmatic and reviled symbiotic surgeon dwelling less than fifty miles off the eastern shoreline on a secluded, heavily forested island in the Northern Ocean. Over the better part of the last three decades, the mysterious stronghold of this reputed madman has ignited countless wild rumors and feverish debate amongst the feral domain's humanoid population. Horrifying tales describing Maneau's surgical transformation of normal people into grotesquely mutilated versions of their former selves circulate throughout many of the settlements in the coastal regions closest to his lair. Some stories purport that the remorseless peddler of living flesh routinely ventures to the mainland searching for intriguing specimens to add to his vast inventory of organic material. Despite these persistent rumors, some misguided individuals looking for a short cut to augment their physical abilities voluntarily trek to his remote lair seeking the insane experimenter's medical services. Many never return, and the few individuals that do are practically unrecognizable without a thorough examination. Radical changes to their anatomy such as new appendages, sensory organs and bone structures make identification of the person extremely difficult even for his most intimate associates. Irrespective of the risks, the allure of a stronger, more durable body equipped with an arsenal of natural weaponry serves as a powerful recruiting tool for Maneau Galle's unsavory business.

His far-flung infamy belies his sad, humble origins. Born and raised in a small human settlement in the nearby coniferous forest of northern Wildwood, the troubled youth grew up under the autocratic thumb of his verbally and physically abusive father. Savage, unprovoked beatings and harsh tongue lashings took place with frightening regularity, permanently scarring the brilliant, introverted adolescent. As the oldest child in a family of seven, his father's oppressive gaze fell upon the slightly built young man's shoulders far more often than his younger siblings. Despite excelling in his intellectual pursuits, his disparaging father never praised him for his accomplishments and instead focused all of his industry deriding his son's physical weakness. After enduring seventeen years of endless scorn and contempt from the bitter old man, Maneau left his hellish abode in the middle of the night and fled into the hostile surrounding wilderness armed with nothing but his keen wits, a dagger, his extensive knowledge of the natural world and his only worldly treasure, a lustrous diamond inherited from his deceased mother.

Over the next few months, the resourceful young nomad deftly dodged numerous predators while subsisting on a vegetarian diet of fruits and berries. One day, the wiry, agile man encountered an unusual stranger in the woodlands, a fast talking half-elf named Harman Argrod. The shady entrepreneur plied his wares to his naïve customer, promising the wide-eyed Maneau instant strength and vitality. Seduced by his enticing offer, he unquestioningly gave his cherished family heirloom to the shady entrepreneur as payment for his services. The mysterious half-elf drugged Maneau with a paralytic elixir. When he awoke from his narcotic stupor, he discovered a pair of small, green reptilian wings affixed to the crest of his back along with a prehensile tail protruding from the end of his spine. At first, the surprising metamorphosis horrified him; however as he grew more adept at manipulating his new appendages, he desired to learn the craft himself. Utilizing his tracking skills, he located his elusive benefactor and convinced him to take him under his wing as an apprentice.

Under Harman's tutelage, Maneau's surgical skills and expertise developed at breakneck speed. Within less than five years, his reputation and prowess exceeded that of his master as the adroit symbiotic surgeon grafted previously incompatible types of living tissue onto receptive hosts. Initially, Maneau handled his newfound fame extremely well, but in time, the physical and mental scars caused by his traumatic childhood gradually came to the forefront. The once powerless child now wielded absolute control over the lives of his patients. He slowly began to envision his subjects in the same way that a sculptor looks at clay, considering them as nothing more than amorphous mounds of flesh for him to shape. His regard for his patients' wellbeing steadily declined, as the psychologically unstable Maneau indulged his own curiosity performing unauthorized experiments to test his bizarre, unfounded theories. Eventually, some of the grotesquely disfigured survivors of his ghastly research banded together on a quest for vengeance against the delusional and thoroughly power mad Maneau. Fearing for his life, the cowardly symbiotic surgeon and his loyal followers fled the mainland and headed toward a remote island in the Northern Ocean to continue his barbaric procedures. Confined to this isolated, secure locale for the past twenty-six

years, he has honed his insidious craft of transplanting living tissue into a sickening science.

Maneau is now fifty-three years old, but the deep, veined fissures running across his weathered, leathery skin coupled with his disheveled appearance make him look at least thirty years older. Several tufts of thin, gray hair tenaciously cling to his liver-spotted scalp, and his complexion is jaundiced. His facial features are pronounced and gaunt, as evidenced by his nearly skeletal, aquiline nose and his sunken eye sockets. His receding, angry-red gums tenuously support a mouth full of rotting, brown teeth. With the exception of his draconic, green wings and his potent tail, his frame seems fragile and weak. Because of his foreign appendage, Maneau never wears a shirt; therefore his bony chest and spindly arms are plainly visible. Fortunately, a pair of specially constructed loose fitting trousers covers his lower torso, held in place by a frayed, hemp belt tightly wound around his protruding hip bones. He is typically unarmed, but he does not venture anywhere without his trusted and equally insane bodyguard, Yorak Nabon (male faust, Bbn 5/Rog 7, CE). Maneau fights only if no other option is available; otherwise he utilizes his limited repertoire of magical items and equipment to make his escape.



Maneau Galle Human Ranger 3/Expert 16: CR 11, Augmented Medium Humanoid (human); HD 3d8 plus 16d6; hp 84; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., Fly 75 ft. (clumsy); AC 14 (+3 Dex, +1 natural) touch 13, flatfooted 11; BAB +15; Grapple +13; Atk +*1 dagger* +19 melee (1d4-1/19-20); Full Atk +*1 dagger* +19/+14/+9 melee (1d4-1/19-20); SQ Animal companion, favored enemy (Humanoid (human) +2), wild empathy; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +13, Will +17; Str 7, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 21, Wis 19, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Balance +16, Bluff +6, Concentration +15, Handle Animal +7, Heal +34, Hide +10, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +26, Knowledge (nature) +30, Knowledge (the planes) +26, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Profession (symbiotic surgeon) +32, Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +17, Survival +22, Swim +7; Dodge, Endurance, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Self-Sufficient, Skill Focus (Heal), Skill Focus (Profession) (symbiotic surgeon), Toughness, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Avian, Canine, Common, Draconic, Giant, Goblin, Orc.

Possessions: *+1 dagger, ring of blinking, dust of disappearance, dust of illusion, gem of brightness, figurine of wondrous power, golden lions*; 3 potions-*mirror image, owl's wisdom, shield.*

Gifts: Evolved, Steady-handed (Earned).

Hunting Grounds

Although he lacks the physical attributes and magical abilities befitting rival predators of his status, Maneau Galle lords over the entire island through his proxies led by his most stalwart companion, Yorak Nabon. Wildwood's natives refer to the forsaken locale as "Mutilation Island", a moniker attributable to the unfortunate creatures consigned to Maneau's hellish realm. Mutilation Island is actually the largest "body farm" in Wildwood. It is a giant warehouse of organic tissue where living creatures are kept like livestock for the purpose of providing donor material for transplantation to a host creature. Although populated by a wide spectrum of creatures, magical beasts, monstrous humanoids, giants and other exotic sentient creatures constitute the overwhelming percentage of its inhabitants. The island's native residents, the vogels are the most populous species found under Maneau's authoritative grasp. The insane surgeon considers them an ideal source of organic material because they possess wings and natural weaponry and their organic material is compatible with the majority of humanoids. Creatures possessing extraordinary abilities are also in high demand, particularly those with multiple powers, natural armor and weaponry and desirable

Illustrated by Jeff Ward

physical qualities such as brute strength and tremendous speed. All of these unfortunate beings sport the noticeable scars of this barbarous form of surgery. One or more limbs, sensory organs and other non-essential appendages are missing from their misshapen torsos. Some even possess jagged, intrusive lacerations in close proximity to their internal organs. Disease and infection run unchecked throughout their ranks, and as a result one out of every four prisoners dies within less than a year of his arrival.

The captive population is kept in line by a combination of verbal threats and public displays of brutality committed by Maneau's retinue of fifty steadfast warriors. Culled from a plethora of races, the fanatically loyal, biologically altered soldiers provide muscle for their maniacal master. Regardless of their race, they all possess a number of organic enhancements including wings, carapaces, exoskeletons, additional limbs, horns and even essential bodily organs. They serve him as compensation for their extensive biological augmentations and for a share of the riches obtained from his wealthiest patients.

Lair: The renowned surgeon resides in a ramshackle tent reminiscent of a makeshift triage center found on a battlefield. His simple abode includes his personal quarters, several storerooms for supplies and a medical wing where he performs his ghastly operations. In contrast to the unkempt appearance of the building in general, the surgical unit is utterly spotless and almost entirely enclosed. Numerous exacting anatomical diagrams cover the walls, while a heavy, airtight steel door provides the only access to the chamber. Opening the portal releases a strong aroma of alcohol apparently emanating from numerous steel trays containing bizarre surgical implements soaking in an opaque, liquid solution. The origin, construction and chemical composition of this obviously foreign equipment and materials remain a closely guarded and extremely valuable secret, but the general consensus is that a benefactor from a neighboring domain provided these supplies. Similarly, the location of Maneau's extensive cache of coins, gems and other valuable commodities also remains unknown, but most rumors place it somewhere in the general vicinity of his domicile.

Favorite Prey: Maneau is a staunch vegetarian, but that minor detail does not stop him and his cohorts from venturing to the mainland to capture exotic creatures preferably possessing an array of natural armor and weaponry as well as potent extraordinary abilities. Creatures that meet all three criteria are most desirable, placing young dragons and dragon eggs high atop the list. Monstrous humanoids are always a popular choice as their tissue is usually more suitable for transplantation onto Maneau's clients than that derived from other creature types. He and his handpicked cronies typically make the foray to the mainland at least once a month aboard a luxurious ocean vessel confiscated from one of his former customers, a wealthy but rather insignificant bloodlord from Penance. He typically makes the trip to fulfill several specific orders as well as replenish his comprehensive inventory of living flesh.

Allies and Enemies: With the exception of his devoted followers and his exclusive and clandestine clientele, Maneau Galle is probably the most universally reviled person in all of Wildwood, if not the entire Forge. The bereaved relatives of his mutilated and tortured victims frequently hire bounty hunters and adventurers to avenge their loved ones' deaths or rescue them from his vilified clutches. Although a handful of these desperate attempts succeed in smuggling someone off of the island, most end in miserable failure. Many insist that an evil cabal of sadistic bloodlords from Penance, warlords from Arena or even Stormbringers from Anvil covertly watch over Maneau and his island of unspeakable horrors. Whatever the truth, there is little doubt that an elite group of the Forge's powerbrokers benefited from his unsavory services.

Vaam Ranasyr

Totem Symbol: A two-branched sapling

Since the foundation of the Forge's domains, the organized armies of Wildwood's western neighbors have looked upon Haiel's lush, green forest and jungle as an inexhaustible warehouse of timber, pharmaceutical products and other useful commodities essential to the maintenance of their well-oiled military and economic machines. In some cases, the forest's denizens repel the unwanted invaders, while in others the trespassers establish a temporary foothold in this wild kingdom only to cede the territory back to the encroaching wilderness after procuring their necessary supplies and abandoning the site. However, one notable exception to this pattern exists. The monarch Odreck Viminth rules a rather sizeable kingdom encompassing a wide swath of land between the upper and lower branches of the River Tanais. Although the inaction of Wildwood's apathetic overlord seems to indicate he is willing to concede this stretch of woodlands to the self-proclaimed king, a devout band of homegrown terrorists are not ready to acquiesce to Odreck's territorial ambitions. The group is known as Forever Green, and the charismatic but somewhat deranged wood elf, Vaam Ranasyr is its widely recognized leader.

Vaam Ranasyr founded Forever Green twenty-two years ago after loggers from Penance callously chopped down a venerable copse of rare trees. The wanton destruction of the ancient thicket finally stirred the indifferent elf to take action. Vaam and his closest friends began a far-reaching guerilla campaign against the trespassers, launching lightning fast hit and run assaults against remote outposts and timber processing facilities along the northern border of Odreck's realm. Emboldened by a string of successful attacks, Vaam's plans grew more ambitious and the ranks of his organization rapidly swelled from a ragtag gang of six wood elves to 125 fervent members representing a variety of different races. The cagey

elf divided his force into smaller, semi-autonomous units consisting of eight to twelve individuals. After giving them their standing orders, his followers spread throughout the area and discreetly spied on the enemy, gathering a myriad of crucial intelligence about the strengths and weaknesses of important settlements and vital supply posts along the fringe of Odreck's dominion. Whenever these resourceful saboteurs identified a vulnerable target, half of the unit stayed behind to exploit the security flaw while the remainder moved onto their next assignment. As a result of their operations over the last twenty-two years, Forever Green can claim responsibility for the demolition of property valued at more than one million gold pieces as well as the loss of several thousand lives. While the overwhelming majority of Wildwood's sentient natives sympathize with Vaam and his cause, more than half consider his methods too extreme for their taste. Despite this pervasive feeling, he and his affiliates still receive significant monetary aid and assistance from the indigenous population.

At the age of 135, Vaam is still relatively young by elf standards, but more than two decades on the lam and several assassination attempts have taken their toll. The robust and muscular elf remains in superlative physical condition, wielding his deadly natural weapons with remarkable precision and agility; however his mental state is another matter. His paranoia increases on a seemingly daily basis, and his abruptly changing moods vary between both ends of the spectrum ranging from severe depression to hyperactive mania. Fortunately for him and his political movement, Vaam's slow but steady march towards insanity remains one of Wildwood's best kept secrets.

Vaam Ranasyr, Wood elf Druid 8/Feral Warrior 7: CR 15, Medium Humanoid (wood elf); HD 15d8+30; hp109 ; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +2 natural, +3 deflection) touch 17, flatfooted 20; BAB +13; Grapple +18; Atk Claw +19 melee (1d8+5/19-20); Full Atk 2 claws +19 melee (1d8+5/19-20) and bite +16 melee (1d6+2); SA imbue natural weaponry (magic), natural weapon, wilding; SQ awareness, eyes of the night, nature sense, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild empathy, wild shape (3/day), wild shape (large), woodland stride, elf traits, scent; AL CN; SV Fort +15, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 20, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +13, Heal +14, Knowledge (geography)(Wildwood) +12, Knowledge (local)(Wildwood) +14, Knowledge (nature) +12, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +4, Survival +21; Combat Casting, Cornered, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (claw), Multiattack, Self-Sufficient, Weapon Focus (claw).

Languages: Canine, Common, Draconic, Elven.

Possessions: *Bracers of armor +5, ring of protection +3, woodland boots, staff of natural armor (33 charges), major cloak of displacement, staff of the woodlands (23 charges), rope of entanglement, ring of blinking.*

Gifts: Hardy, Savage (earned).

Typically Prepared Druid Spells: (6/5/4/4/3; base save DC 14 + spell level): 0-level—*create water*, *detect magic*, *flare*, *light*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*charm animal*, *cure light wounds, detect snares and pits*, *entangle x2*, *obscuring mist*; 2nd—*barkskin, fog cloud, resist energy, warp wood*; 3rd—*call lightning*, *cure moderate wounds, greater magic fang x2*; 4th—*dispel magic, flame strike*, *pine needles*.

Hunting Grounds

Although disinterested in killing prey in the conventional sense, Vaam considers Odreck's entire dominion as the staging area for his political agenda. In his mind, loggers' quarters, milling facilities, shipyards and any other conceivable military or economic targets are fair game in his endless war against the marauding forces of Penance. While acts of sabotage and guerilla attacks occur throughout Odreck's kingdom, most of his group's clandestine missions take place in the northernmost sections of his kingdom. Surprisingly, Vaam rarely sets foot in his self-proclaimed territory and instead spends most of his time nomadically wandering through the deciduous forest and small settlements adjacent to the foreign monarch's realm. He also steers well clear of the Charred Woods separating the southern portion of Sevenil from the thorns' sacred grove of Edanne.

Lair: The increasingly paranoid and suspicious leader of Forever Green never spends more than one day in the same location and remains constantly on the move. He spends roughly half of his time in the primeval forest and the other half in a multitude of safe houses scattered throughout the neighboring villages. Regardless of his ultimate destination for the evening, Vaam and his small entourage always travel incognito, usually donning the guise of a hunting party. With the exception of his inner circle of companions, none of the group's smaller units know of his whereabouts as all communication between the organization's splintered factions and its central command is accomplished via magical means. Furthermore, all surveillance activity is also conducted in a similar manner; therefore Vaam's locale for the night is typically located in close proximity to a natural pool of water, the divine focus for the spell *scrying*.

Favorite Prey: Vaam prefers striking large, spectacular targets closest to Odreck's seat of power such as milling facilities, merchants' guilds and other business establishments in the city of Sevenil proper, but he is willing to settle for less significant but more feasible sites outside of the bustling hub of activity. The destruction of merchant vessels carrying timber back to Decree and affiliated docking and shipbuilding facilities rank high on his list of priorities. The acts of sabotage committed under his direction seem to indicate that the destruction of property is his most important goal, but this is nothing more than a veiled effort to conceal his actual agenda. He considers the elimination of Sevenil's wealthiest citizens and political hierarchy as his most critical task, and since many of these individuals are closely affiliated with the kingdom's maritime industries, the decimation of

its merchant marine fleet proverbially kills two birds with one stone.

Allies and Enemies: Needless to say, numerous private citizens and Sevenil's king greatly desire Vaam's apprehension or death. There are dozens of bounties on his head with the cumulative rewards totaling more than 200,000 gold pieces. At any given time, at least three adventuring parties are busy scouring the surrounding forest and villages looking for their elusive quarry. He continues to elude capture largely because of his extensive knowledge of the treacherous terrain and the widespread ideological support that he enjoys throughout the rustic settlements that he typically frequents. However, in a few isolated circles, a growing minority of his adherents are beginning to question not only his sanity, but also the group's methodology and advocacy of death and destruction on a grand scale. Although the opposition is still small and scattered, the escalating clamor greatly troubles his closest advisors and staunchest supporters. The increased security measures put into place by his inner circle only fuel Vaam's unease and paranoia.

Forever Green

Since its founding more than two decades ago, this deadly organization has rapidly evolved from a micromanaged, ragtag band of fanatical devotees into a highly sophisticated but widely scattered instrument of destruction. Naturally, the prevailing opinions surrounding this group vary wildly depending upon individual perspectives. In the eyes of Odreck Viminth and Sevenil's business interests, Forever Green is nothing more than a band of murderers and thieves conveniently using a political agenda as a guise to justify their horrific crimes to their fervent supporters. On the other hand, the majority of the area's native humanoids view them as liberators of the wilderness waging a justifiable war against the unwanted forces of progress and civilization. As a result of this outlook, Forever Green enjoys widespread ideological, logistical and economic support in the towns and villages bordering Sevenil, while also providing the group with a fertile breeding ground for new members. Like many clandestine institutions, those aspiring to join the cause must come to the attention of the group's leadership through actions rather than impassioned words. Self-initiated acts of sabotage and violence committed against Sevenil's economic interests and elite citizenry are the resumes of prospective recruits. A successful attack inflicting tremendous monetary damages or loss of life virtually guarantees entry into Forever Green, whereas a botched assault typically earmarks the individual for death. Once someone accepts the invitation to enter into this secretive world, there is no turning back to a life of normalcy. They must leave everything they once knew behind in exchange for a nomadic lifestyle replete with hardship, danger and death meted out on a grand scale. Despite the aforementioned sacrifices, the group does not suffer from any shortages of manpower.

Although the overwhelming majority of the populace believes that Forever Green is constantly expanding, the truth is that its numbers have remained relatively static for the past ten years. Initiates are brought in as replacements rather than reinforcements. The organization consists of roughly twelve to fourteen semi-autonomous units comprised of anywhere from eight to fourteen members depending upon the entity's longevity and location. Cells operating near important commerce centers are generally larger and far more experienced than those in peripheral areas. To accommodate this organization structure, raw recruits are almost always sent to these remote locales until they prove that they are ready for more important assignments.

Regardless of one's stature within Forever Green, Vaam Ranasyr is universally considered as the entity's ideological mentor and spiritual guide. He is virtually a deity amongst the rank and file; however in actuality, his authority is slowly waning as his mental status becomes more and more unstable. Of course, no one outside of his insular inner circle is aware of these developments, but there is a general feeling within many of the cells that change is in the air. A tense political struggle for defacto control of Forever Green is now being waged between his two strongest advisors, Allamus Yzen (male human, Rgr 10, NE) and Karymuth Swiftrow (male wood elf, Drd 11, N). Allamus represents the most extremist elements within the organization. He espouses violence as the only means of eradicating Sevenil and its citizens from Wildwood, and his proposed means of achieving this end is frightening even amongst Vaam's most loyal constituents. In his mind everyone, including women and children, are fair game for his diabolical plans. He has already set into motion the groundwork for dumping vast quantities of arsenic, mercury, lead and other toxins into Sevenil's water and food supplies as part of an effort to slowly poison the humanoid residents. He also has designs of introducing diseased livestock to the loggers and their families, hoping that the contaminated meat would spread the deadly contagion throughout the populace. Karymuth, on the other hand, believes that these drastic measures are not only unconscionable but also dangerous to the wilderness that the organization is striving to protect. Although he does not shy away from violence, he firmly believes that sabotage and death must serve as a means of bringing Odreck Viminith to the bargaining table with the intention of negotiating a settlement forcing the city and its residents to move back across the border and into Penance. The ultimate outcome of this internal battle remains uncertain, but for now, Vaam still wields enough influence to keep these two bitter rivals under his control.

Diamestress

Totem symbol: Two crossed black talons

In the spacious confines of a subterranean cavern complex beneath the swamp's vast network of murky waterways, the sinister black dragon,

Diamestress blissfully contemplates her next meal from her lofty perch atop a humongous pile of gold, silver and platinum coins. Although typically overshadowed by her much older and more powerful green rival to the west, Diamestress is the undisputed monarch of the marsh's black dragon population and an extremely formidable opponent in her own right. More than twelve hundred years old, she only recently attained the status of great wyrm, making her the only one of her kind in Wildwood to reach such a venerable age. Over the span of her extensive lifetime, she gave birth to forty-three offspring. Hardly a prolific reproducer by draconic standards, her prodigy compensate for their numerical shortcomings through individual strength. By and large, her bloodline is slightly stronger and hardier than typical members of the species, generally accounting for Strength and Constitution scores two, four or even six points higher than most black dragons. Despite these evolutionary achievements, she still suffers from the cosmetic failings of her ilk. Over the course of a millennium, her lustrous black scales lost all of their former sheen and are now larger but duller than their former selves. Furthermore, they are deteriorating in many parts, especially around her cheekbones and horns, enhancing the gaunt, skeletal appearance of her head.

Diamestress, Female great wyrm black dragon: CR 22; gargantuan dragon (water); HD 37d12+296; hp 548; Init + 0; Spd 60 ft., swim 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (clumsy); AC 44 (+38 natural, -4 size) touch 6, flatfooted 44; BAB +37; Grapple +62; Atk Bite +48 melee (4d6+14); Full Atk Bite +48 melee (4d6+14), 2 Claws +46 melee (2d8+7), 2 wings +45 melee (2d6+8), and tail slap +45 melee (2d8+21); Space/Reach 20 ft./15 ft. (20 ft. with bite); SA breath weapon, *corrupt water, charm reptiles,* crush, frightful presence, rend, spell-like abilities, spells, tail sweep; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 20/ magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to acid, low-light vision, spell resistance 28, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +28, Ref +20, Will +25; Str 37, Dex 10, Con 27, Int 20, Wis 21, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +38, Diplomacy +25, Escape Artist +10, Hide +40, Intimidate +40, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (geography) (Wildwood) +30, knowledge (local) (Wildwood) +25, Knowledge (nature) +20, Listen +47, Move Silently +40, Search +45, Sense Motive +20, Spot +47, Swim +53, Use Magic Device +20; Alertness, Awesome Blow, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Armor x2, Power Attack, Snatch, Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Focus (bite), Wingover.

Languages: Aquan, Canine, Common, Draconic, Elven, Feline, Green.

Possessions: *+4 ghost touch chain shirt, +4 flaming burst halberd, +3 scimitar of speed, ring of major energy resistance (sonic), rod of cancellation, staff of size alteration (33), cloak of resistance +3, periapt of wound closure, strand of prayer beads, boots of teleportation, darkskull,* 13,239 gp, 23,998 sp, pouch of 6 2,500 gp diamonds, sapphire and diamond necklace (1,500 gp), emerald brooch (250 gp), ruby ring (200 gp), 7 ½ ft. high bronze statue of Haiel (7,750 gp) and a weathered map of the area around her lair (50 gp).

Gifts: Wary, Stalker (earned)

Spell-like abilities: 3/day – *darkness, insect plague*; 1/day – *plant growth.*

Sorcerer Spells Known (*Sorcerer Spells per Day:* 6/8/7/7/7/7/6/4); (Save DC 15+spell level): 0 – *acid splash, daze, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, ray of frost, mending, message, touch of fatigue*; 1st – *mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, summon monster I, true strike*; 2nd – *daze monster, gust of wind, invisibility, mirror image, web*; 3rd – *fireball, nondetection, rage, vampiric touch*; 4th – *black tentacles, ice storm, phantasmal killer, wall of fire*; 5th – *feeblemind, hold monster, nightmare, transmute mud to rock*; 6th – *greater heroism, guards and wards, mass suggestion*; 7th – *insanity, limited wish.*

Hunting Grounds

Diamestress' territory abuts the dominion of Kansu Asammel to the south and the tract of forbidden wilderness known as the Witch's Marsh to the north while stretching approximately twenty-five miles inland. She is clearly the dominant force on the land, but she is also the unchallenged master of the sea, trolling through the stagnant, brackish rivers and estuaries in an endless search for fish, mollusks and other tasty marine animals. In fact, she spends most of her time completely submerged or within dense patches of vegetation just above the water's surface in an attempt to ambush passing prey. The voracious reptile typically consumes anything smaller than a huge-sized creature during a single sitting before bequeathing the remnants of the carcass to opportunistic scavengers, but she is downright miserly when it comes to her quarry's possessions. After a kill, she thoroughly searches the corpse of her unfortunate victim as well as the immediate vicinity for monetary treasures. Her enemies claim that the covetous dragon once spent three hours painstakingly looking for a lost copper coin in a morass of filthy mud. The veracity of the tale remains unproved, but the few individuals possessing firsthand knowledge of the fable's subject are unwilling to relegate the seemingly outlandish tale to the status of folklore.

Lair: The entrance to Diamestress' underground abode lies thirty feet below the surface near the conjunction of three rivers at the center of her dominion. A dense growth of greenish-brown kelp completely obscures the opening. Inside, a long, winding passageway slowly descends deep into the earth before culminating in an expansive antechamber resembling an oversized honeycomb with twenty divergent tunnels leading out of it. One of the rough hewn stone corridors heads toward the greedy dragon's domicile and treasure hoard, whereas the others end in almost certain death at the clawed hands of some foul monster or within the machinery of a wickedly ingenious trap. Macabre mementoes picked from the seared remains of her countless victims adorn an immense hallway along the way to her personal quarters, simultaneously inflating her gigantic ego while also serving as an ominous warning. A disgusting aroma resembling a combination of sewer gas and decaying plants wafts through the malodorous air approaching and within

her lair. The gargantuan chamber where she resides is a damp, subterranean gallery highlighted by a nine foot high mound of coins worth an estimated 100,000 gold pieces. In addition to its monetary value, numerous ceramic vials, bone scroll cases and a diverse assortment of armor, weaponry and other magic items are clearly visible amidst the pile of currency. Nine small pools of putrid, salty water surround her treasure; each containing a bloated dead body with shriveled skin.

Favorite Prey: Fortunately for the land-based creatures dwelling within her hunting grounds, Diamestress prefers the taste of aquatic prey. She displays a fondness for crustaceans, with armamens topping her list of favorite foods. The ravenous dragon also fancies the fatty flesh of the trusks, occasionally prompting her to venture into the Central Ocean in search of the corpulent walrus-like race. When she opts to hunt on the surface, she generally sets her sights on humanoids and monstrous humanoids. Elves and humans are her most popular choice, but she also savors the harpy's sinewy meat. Whenever the hungry dragon slays these types of creatures, she does not immediately devour them. Instead, she returns them to her lair and soaks them for upwards of a week in the briny ponds surrounding her treasure hoard to give them a saltier flavor.

Allies and Enemies: All twenty-two of her surviving children, ranging in age categories from wyrmling to old, live within a 100 mile radius of their insidious mother. The youngest members of her brood demonstrate incredible loyalty to their parent; however as the selfish creatures age, their allegiance to her declines proportionately. By the time they reach adult status, their contact with her is extremely limited and infrequent. Nonetheless, she can count on their aid under exigent circumstances, although her prodigies cannot expect the same from their egotistic mother during a dire emergency. Fear not love is the motivating factor responsible for their differing reactions.

Naturally, armamens despise the voracious dragon and her kin, although they lack the numerical strength to retaliate against her. As a result they often beseech the aid of passing adventurers, using the allure of the dragon's immense wealth or deception to recruit them to their cause. Similarly, aboleths, medusas and hags also view Diamestress with contempt, causing them to employ the same methods to eradicate her and her foul offspring. Despite these diabolical machinations, Diamestress' might proves too great for these creatures' overmatched pawns to overcome.

Pimbattu

Totem Symbol: A shark's tooth

Pimbattu is a rogue armamen who hunts throughout the lakes and rivers dominating central Wildwood. The armamen are generally solitary hunters, but Pimbattu is even more so than most. Originally belonging to the clan Claktu, Pimbattu angered the clan elders and was exiled. Since then he has become a loner and a hunter, though one who is available to help out the populations of local civilizations when they become threatened by the beasts that ravage Wildwood.

Within Clan Claktu, Pimbattu was a hunter and an explorer who would often take to the sea for weeks at a time when news reached him of sunken ships. He reasoned that the dead would no longer need their treasure, so he and two of his armamen allies would sail a catamaran with coral hulls to the location of the wreckage and dive for buried treasure. Pimbattu was a capable fighter, fending off hostile sea creatures as well as an adept rogue who could help his small company bypass locked doors and treasure chests.

Upon his return from a particularly lucrative haul cleaning out a sunken ship from the city of Penance, the elders of the Claktu clan decided that they were entitled to a liberal share of his hard earned treasure. Pimbattu had always managed to avoid paying more than a very small amount of his wealth into the clan taxes; therefore he blatantly refused to acknowledge the clan's authority over his wealth. The clan responded by sending five of their guards to Pimbattu's dwelling to collect, but he had already stashed his treasure in the forest fifteen miles to the south. Pimbattu objected to their presence in his domicile on principle. When his words failed to deter them from invading his home, violence erupted resulting in one death and the remainder of the armamen returning to their elders bearing grievous wounds. It was then that Pimbattu packed his belongings and left his clan, departing before he could inform his allies of his intended destination.

Pimbattu retrieved his treasure and then traveled north to colder waters, over five hundred miles from his former clan. Despite this, a party of Claktu fighters followed him, tracking his progress as he fled from his former homeland. Despite the previous incident, he no longer desired to see any more of his clan mates killed, so he staged his own death. He sought out the dwelling of a kraken, waited for it to leave on a hunting expedition, and then left a ring signifying his family at the entrance to the lair along with a few other pieces of treasure he had brought with him. Upon tracking him to this location, his former clan mates found the discarded treasure, searched for any further tracks, which Pimbattu had meticulously eliminated, and then returned to the Claktu with news of his demise.

Without a clan Pimbattu has assumed the life of a predator, claiming several small rivers and lakes in Wildwood as his dominion. Totally self-sufficient, he trolls the waters and river banks for prey, hunting his quarry for sustenance and for sport. He has crafted another catamaran from enormous shelled creatures that he has slain, but in this isolated location he seldom learns of any crashed ships until they have already been well picked over.

The local communities of ceptu and trusk know of his presence and have thus far seen no reason to deliver news of his survival to his home clan. In fact, because of his status as a predator, they regard him with both fear and admiration. When monstrous denizens threaten civilizations, Pimbattu is often willing to hear their pleas for help and aid them by challenging the creatures they

fear. This has earned him a valued niche in the area, which serves as a great deterrent from any duplicity from those who would turn him in to clan Claktu.

Pimbattu, Armamen Fighter 14: CR 19, Medium Monstrous Humanoid (aquatic); HD 14d10+70 plus 2d8+10; hp 194 ; Init +6; Spd 25 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 25 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +7 natural, +2 deflection) touch 14, flatfooted 23; BAB +16; Grapple +23; Atk Claw +24 melee (1d10+7/17-20); Full Atk 2 claws +24 melee (1d10+7/17-20) and tail +21 melee (1d12+3/19-20); SQ amphibious, resistance to acid 5, darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +17, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 25, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 16.



Skills and Feats: Climb +15, Handle Animal +11, Hide +4, Intimidate +13, Jump +12, Knowledge (local)(Wildwood) +7, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +5, Survival +5, Swim +20; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Cornered, Diehard, Endurance, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor x2, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (claw).

Languages: Aquan, Ceptu, Common, Draconic.

Possessions: *Bracers of armor +4, ring of protection +2, necklace of fireballs type VI, figurine of wondrous power-bronze griffin, medallion of thoughts, horn of the tritons, portable hole, mask of the skull.*

Gifts: Scent, Trailblazer.

Hunting Grounds

The bodies of water straddling the border between the deciduous forest of central Wildwood and the coniferous forest of northern Wildwood serve as the hunting grounds for Pimbattu. Occasionally he ventures into the Northern Ocean in search of a shipwreck or fresh prey, but he usually remains with the secure confines of his hunting grounds. He is given free rein to pass through the waters under the control of the Ceptu Nation; however his acrimonious relationship with the trusks residing in the Central Ocean has prevented him from venturing to its distant shores for nearly a decade.

Lair: Pimbattu makes his home in a small cluster of caves that are open to the sea. Within is a water-filled chute that leads to a second set of caves. Pimbattu spends the majority of his time in the outer caves, though he stashes his treasure in the lower caves. Both sets of caves are protected with a series of traps that Pimbattu has constructed to keep intruders out. Decorations within are sparse, consisting mainly of coral, shells, and his weapons.

Favorite Prey: Pimbattu enjoys the thrill of the hunt against a range of creatures, but the prey that he derives the greatest degree of challenge and excitement from are dire sharks. These great gray creatures are few and far between in the interior sections of Wildwood, only rarely venturing into the waters that Pimbattu calls home. Nevertheless, whenever he encounters them, he never passes up the chance to claim them for his own. Even for Pimbattu, it takes a great deal of perseverance and skill to slay one of these great creatures. Once he has triumphed, he brings the carcass back to his lair and harvests it for the usable portions. He feasts upon the meat, the fat is easily converted to oil for lamps, the teeth are used for the traps that protect his lair, and the scaly hide is dried and crafted into a leather-like material that Pimbattu uses for netting to catch fish.

Allies and Enemies: Pimbattu has few enemies other than his former clan, which believes he is dead. He counts the oceanic ceptu groups as allies, and he made them aware of his history. Fortunately, the ceptu seem uninterested in reporting his status to his kin. Should Claktu learn that he is alive and send a group to bring him back to the clan or kill him, he is willing to defend himself and his belongings, though he will probably not be as merciful as he was during their previous two encounters.

Razorclaw

Totem Symbol: The imprint of a cat's paw with claws extended.

Razorclaw is perhaps the strangest of the predators of Widwood given that his actual hunting grounds and his claimed hunting grounds bear little resemblance to one another. In central Wildwood, Razorclaw has an approximately two square mile region staked off, though he spends almost no time there. In fact, his totems are merely there as a curiosity. Although other predators are familiar with the region and Razorclaw's totems, none of them have challenged his claim to the territory, though they have never encountered him, at least not knowingly. Rather than spend his time in his own hunting grounds, Razorclaw wanders throughout central Wildwood, though he spends a great deal of

Illustrated by Christopher Pickrell

time in Mastuu Dargus' hunting grounds as well as the outskirts around the city of Vertumnus.

Mastuu Dargus has encountered Razorclaw countless times in the past, though even she is not aware of this fact. She has tried hunting him, but because of his relatively diminutive size, he is able to elude the green dragon much to her annoyance. Mastuu Dargas, like the rest of the predators of Wildwood, is confused by the fact that she has never knowingly encountered Razorclaw. Were it not for the fresh kills that he occasionally leaves at the foot of his totems, she would have long since claimed his hunting grounds for her own and removed his totems entirely. Instead she regards him with suspicion and a bit of awe.

When seen in the vicinity of Vertumnus, the majority of the inhabitants assume that Razorclaw is little more than an enormous wildcat. The elves of Vertumnus have little fear of nature, so at worst he is regarded as a beautiful part of the local scenery. Occasionally the elves toss him scraps of food or try to entice him with a batch of aromatic catnip.

Razorclaw is a ferocious hunter and a legend among his own kind. He delights in hunting and eating large bird species, dire rats, and other creatures. Because they presumably share a common ancestor several generations back, he generally avoids combat with other large cats whenever possible.

Despite appearances, Razorclaw's wanderings are not as random as they first appear. Within central Wildwood, the wild frey maintain an extensive communication network, spreading news more quickly than most would think possible. In addition to that, there are several elves within Vertumnus who recognize him as a predator and are staking many of their hopes on him. Many elves sense the growing power of the malevolent green dragon Mastuu Dargus and secretly believe that Sadranial is incapable of besting her draconic adversary without outside intervention. Razorclaw often meets with these elves and trades intelligence about the dragon's activities. Though he is no match for his reptilian foe, he is considered an important ally in the struggle against the evil predator. Razorclaw wanders openly through Mastuu's territory, conducting surveillance and hunting as he travels. He relays his information to his fellow wild frey who in turn communicate his findings to their elders as well as the elves. Negoiations between the elves and the wild frey have been ongoing for over a year, but their plans are moving slowly and steadily towards the ultimate goal of freeing the region of the fearsome dragon.

Razorclaw, Wild frey Barbarian 14: CR 14, Medium Humanoid (feline); HD 14d12+56; hp 164; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., 40 ft. if hands are free, climb 20 ft.; AC 22 (+5 armor, +6 Dex, +1 insight) touch 17, flatfooted 16; BAB +14; Grapple +18; Atk Claw +22 melee (1d6+7/19-20) or Full Atk 2 claws +22 melee (1d6+7/19-20) and bite +20 melee (1d8+5/x3); SA Rage 4/day, greater rage; SQ fast movement, illiteracy, uncanny dodge, trap sense +4, improved uncanny dodge, indomitable will, damage reduction 3/-, land on feet, low light vision, scent; AL CN; SV Fort +14, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 19, Dex 23, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 21, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Climb +21, Craft (sculpting) +7, Disguise +11, Escape Artist +10, Handle Animal +10, Heal +8, Hide +9, Intimidate +6, Jump +13, Listen +13, Move Silently +11, Spot +8, Survival +15; Die-hard, Dodge, Endurance, Mobility, Multiattack.

Languages: Common, Elven, Feline.

Possessions: *+3 leather armor of moderate fortification, ring of evasion, ring of chameleon power, dust of disappearance, amulet of mighty fists +3,ioun stones-dusty rose and pale green.*

Gifts: Cat and Mouse, Feral (earned).

Hunting Grounds

A roughly two square mile area is sectioned off from the wilderness of Wildwood by Razorclaw. He seldom goes there, but when he does, it is usually to spend some time relaxing and eating any recent kills, though he rarely hunts within his own hunting grounds. Since the other predators have chosen to respect his boundaries despite having not seen him, or at least knowing that they had seen him, Razorclaw has decided to convert his hunting grounds into a nature preserve. Creatures that come to this place have no need to fear outside predators, only the other predatory animals that have taken up residence here. Instead Razorclaw normally hunts creatures throughout central Wildwood.

Lair: Razorclaw doesn't have a lair in the traditional sense of the word. Instead he calls a massive tree in the center of his hunting grounds as his home. While he occasionally sleeps in the branches of the tree, he hides the treasure he has accumulated within its extensive underground root system. He stays here during the rare occasions that he is actually in his hunting grounds, but for the most part Razorclaw's home is wherever he decides to rest.

Favorite Prey: Despite his activities to unseat Mastuu Dargus, Razorclaw is a hunter in every sense of the word. True to his feline heritage, his favored prey is dire rats and other vermin. Despite this, he is also willing to take on larger prey when the opportunity presents itself. He does recognize when he sees something that is beyond his ability to effectively fight, and he does not try to tempt fate in such cases.

Allies and Enemies: Razorclaw's most notable enemy is Mastuu Dargus, who has absolutely no awareness that the predator has targeted her for removal. In many ways, the green dragon is the largest prey he has ever hunted, and he continues with his hunt despite the fact that he has very little vested interest in ridding Vertumnos of the draconic menace. Razorclaw's allies are the elves in Vertumnos as well as the other wild frey in the surrounding region. Because of his status as a predator, he is regarded as a hero among his people, and many of them are motivated to take action based on his words.

Ishiraccan

Totem Symbol: Five vertical scratch marks

Dire animals are relatively common throughout Wildwood, but fortunately for the feral domain's humanoid population the overwhelming majority of these fearsome animals lack sentience. However, on some rare occasions druids awaken the bestial minds of these terrifying monsters, granting them intelligence along with the power of speech. In most cases, the suddenly cognizant creatures perform a task designated by the druid and then blend back into the wilderness and lead a more enlightened yet largely anonymous life. Despite the predominance of this pattern, an elite handful is not content to simply slink back into the woodlands and resume their banal, predatory ways. For these select few, the sudden spark of intellect ignites more than their communicative and reasoning abilities. Previously dormant personality traits such as arrogance, hatred and a will to dominate other forms of life surge to the forefront. At the present time, the huge dire tiger known as Ishiraccan leads the pack in terms of sheer power and infamy. The enormous, haughty feline measures roughly twenty-five feet in length from snout to tail, towers approximately twelve feet above the ground and weighs in excess of ten tons. As the self-proclaimed king of the jungle, the egotistic cat saunters through his abode with the demeaning swagger and high-browed attitude of an aristocratic gentleman. Likewise he speaks in a deliberate, condescending tone, frequently sprinkling in an assortment of obscure words and archaic phrases to show off his verbal prowess. His outwardly carefree demeanor and noble bearing obscure the fact that behind his upstanding appearance lurks the savage mind of a ruthless, calculating killer.

Ishiraccan, Dire Tiger: CR 18; Huge Magical Beast (Augmented Animal); HD 44d10+220; hp 489; Init +5; Spd 40 ft.; AC 19 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +10 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 18; BAB +44; Grapple +64; Atk Claw +55 melee (2d6+12); Full Atk 2 claws +55 melee (2d6+12) and bite +52 melee (3d6+6); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab, pounce, rake 2d6+12; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +29, Ref +25, Will +25; Str 35, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Climb +28, Diplomacy +7, Hide +28*, Jump +32, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Listen +32, Move Silently +35*, Search +8, Sense Motive +7, Spot +29, Survival +8, Swim +35; Alertness, Awesome Blow, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Improved Natural Attack (bite), Multiattack, Power Attack, Run, Sprinter, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (claw).

* Ishiraccan receives a +4 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks. This bonus increases to +8 in areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth.

Languages: Canine, Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant.

Possessions: None.

Gifts: Savage, Stalker (earned).

Hunting Grounds

Unconcerned with protecting any hidden caches of treasure or a cherished domicile, Ishiraccan claims one of the largest hunting grounds in Wildwood. He dominates a roughly 20,000 square mile circular area deep within the jungle's interior. The sweltering landscape is the home to countless carnivorous plants, vicious beasts and a fair number of bizarre aberrations. Nine green dragons also cohabitate the area along with a few isolated humanoid settlements. In addition to its inhabitants, the dire tiger's realm also boasts one of the most interesting geographical features. Because of the copious amounts of rainfall in the locale, there are more lakes and small rivers per square mile than in any other part of Wildwood. Extremely skilled at moving through water, the crafty hunter employs these waterways to his maximum benefit by steering his quarry toward them. Because he is almost always a much better swimmer than his prey, the clever and agile Ishiraccan makes short work of the fleeing creature once it hits the water.

In addition to the aforementioned tactical advantage that he enjoys in his native environment, the wily tiger also selected this region for another reason, its preponderance of abandoned cities and hidden ruins. The immense volume of myths and legends surrounding these fabled, lost civilizations draws a constant stream of humanoid adventurers to his realm. None of them rank amongst the greatest archaeological finds, but what they lack in significance, they make up for in sheer numbers. Twenty-seven failed societies dot the landscape in varying states of decay. Three are virtually intact, an equal number are stripped thoroughly clean, while the condition of the rest of them lies somewhere in the middle. Ishiraccan frequents these sites more often than any other location in his realm in the hopes of encountering sentient prey for his next meal.

Lair: When the need for rest overcomes the enormous predator, Ishiraccan sleeps in a difficult to reach, sheltered area within one of his dominion's many ancient structures. Blessed with astounding climbing skills, he prefers resting on a secure perch high atop one of the structurally sound buildings. From this dizzying height, the voracious predator carefully surveys the immediate vicinity, meticulously looking for any signs of humanoid exploration such as deserted campsites or lost equipment. After making note of his findings, he retires for several hours before commencing the chase. Like other members of his species, Ishiraccan is most active at night; however he still spends roughly twenty hours a day slumbering, grooming or relaxing in one of his many cubby holes scattered throughout his territory.

Favorite Prey: When hungry, Ishiraccan settles for practically any type of meat, but he exhibits a firm preference for the taste of sentient humanoids, monstrous humanoids and giants. After cornering and subduing these foes, the pompous snob spends as much as several hours gloating over his victory while simultaneously demeaning his prey. He typically questions his quarry at length about trivial matters including ponderous inquiries about their upbringing,

homeland and their candid opinions about their eventual killer. During this interrogation, Ishiraccan rhythmically taps his paw on the ground, unfurling and retracting his gigantic, dagger-like claws with musical precision. Once he wearies of the repartee, the enormous feline pounces on and kills his hapless victims before devouring them at his own leisure.

Allies and Enemies: Ishiraccan's condescending attitude, haughty demeanor and taste for humanoid and giant blood make him extremely unpopular within these communities. Over the years, these beings have mounted several organized efforts to hunt down and slay the vicious dire tiger, yet none of these campaigns succeeded. Animals and non-intelligent monsters avoid him whenever possible. The only creatures that enjoy at least some deference from the arrogant big cat are its nine resident green dragons. Although stronger and hardier than these youthful reptiles, the earthbound Ishiraccan realizes that their supernatural and flight abilities give them a decided tactical advantage against him if they ever came to blows.

Shatch Palinaggon

Totem Symbol: A wheeled wagon cart.

Shatch is a nightling, a race renowned to be notorious swindlers and braggarts. He is also an exile from his own people; a difficult thing to accomplish in nightling society. He dwells in the cavernous regions along the northern border with Eclipse where he trades in various commodities, including goddust. Generally respected by the surrounding communities, he often prowls the nearby settlements where he involves himself in some of their local problems, helping to solve them in his lawless and unsanctioned way.

Shatch was once a trader from Penance, traveling from one bloodhold to another, deriving profits as he unloaded some goods here, bought some there, and helped provide the various bloodholds with items that could only be found in remote and isolated regions. It was a lucrative business and he was well respected in many circles. Ultimately his undoing came about by accumulating too many friends.

While visiting Utopia, Shatch fell in with a group of traders who agreed to cut him in on a share of their profits if he could show them the trade and make introductions. While he was skeptical that anything good could come out of Utopia, he was as always intrigued by new business opportunities. After considering the proposal for a short time, he signed contracts with these merchants, traveled with them throughout the Alliance, The Golden Shore, and introduced them to several contacts at the Hub Tavern. Initially trade began to flow from Utopia, filling his pockets with gold, and the arrangement appeared to be bearing fruit while he continued to run his own highly successful mercantile business.

Ultimately it became apparent that this business venture was actually a front that was being used to move troops from Utopia into the Alliance. One of the merchants made a grab for power in one of the outlying bloodholds in the name of Lord Abbydon. While the attempt proved unsuccessful, they struck in a canton with a large nightling population. This resulted in the deaths of numerous nightlings, some of which Shatch knew personally. A well documented paper trail linked Shatch to the faux merchants, and he was quickly ostracized from his own community.

With a heavy sense of personal guilt and regret, Shatch wandered the plains of Penance, spent some time roaming through Arena, and eventually traveled to Wildwood. It was in Wildwood that he was able to engage in the hunt where he was able to channel many of his negative emotions into a non-stop battle against the hordes of savage animals that would eat him. For a long period he recklessly engaged in the hunt hoping that one of his hunts would result in his death, where he would finally be at peace with his guilt. Over time Shatch bested every creature he faced and accumulated a reputation for being one of the most savage hunters of the domain.

His travels took him to the extreme north to an established trade route where he once again began to dabble in local commerce. While he was establishing his hunting grounds, he was also making numerous trade contacts and making frequent trips north to Eclipse. Again, he began to specialize in bringing common items crafted in the forests of Wildwood to Eclipse where he would sell them and load up on items that are not manufactured in Wildwood. He has developed a good reputation among the communities that he services, though none of them suspect that he is also responsible for a fair amount of vigilantism happening in their communities.

As a trader and a hunter, Shatch frequently sees firsthand many of the crimes committed by the corrupt merchants and notable personalities of the towns he passes through. When he comes across injustices that lead to the suffering of the people in those places, he and Fleshshredder, his wolf animal companion, stalk their movements either exposing their corruption or, if the crimes against the people are serious enough, he kills the offenders and tries to leave their bodies in locations where their very presence suggests their guilt. Doing this helps assuage his guilt, which accompanies him wherever he goes.

Shatch Palinaggon, Nightling Fighter 5/Rogue 5/ Ranger 4: CR 16, Medium Humanoid (reptilian); HD 5d10+25 plus 5d6+25 plus 4d8+20; hp 143 ; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (+7 armor, +2 natural, +3 Dex, +2 shield) touch 15, flatfooted 21; BAB +12; Grapple +20; Atk +3 *keen flaming short sword* +22 melee (1d6+13 plus 1d6 fire/17-20, x3); Full Atk +3 *keen flaming short sword* +22/+17/+12 melee (1d6+13 plus 1d6 fire/17-20) and +2 *hand axe* +20 melee (1d6+6/x3); SA favored enemies (magical beast +4, giant +2), sneak attack +2d6, spell-like abilities; SQ animal companion, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, light sensitivity, trapfinding, trap sense +1, wild empathy; AL CN; SV Fort +17, Ref +15, Will +8; Str 26, Dex 17, Con 21, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 19.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +6, Balance +5, Bluff +17, Diplomacy +9, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +8, Hide +17, Knowledge (local) (Wildwood) +9,

Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +14, Move Silently +16, Open Lock +5, Search +14, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +7, Survival +9, Tumble +10; Endurance, Iron Will, Killer Instinct, Quick Draw, Run, Skill Focus (Bluff), Stalk, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword).

Languages: Common, Draconic, Giant.

Possessions: *+3 keen flaming short sword, +2 hand axe,+3 chain shirt, ring of force shield, rod of splendor, cloak of resistance +3,chime of opening, stone salve, wings of flying,* 3 potions-*cure moderate wounds, blur, rage.*

Typically Prepared Ranger Spells: (1; base save DC 12 + spell level): 1st—*longstrider*.

Hunting Grounds

Shatch's hunting grounds are located in the foothills of the mountains of Eclipse, barely within the boundaries of Wildwood. He lives near a major trade route, yet far enough away that his lands are filled with creatures to hunt. The ground is rocky and barren compared to the verdant forests to the south. Also within are caves inhabited by a diverse variety of subterranean creatures.

Lair: At the center of his hunting grounds is an abandoned sunken tower that once belonged to a civilization that was pulled to Wildwood and shortly thereafter faltered and died. The bottom of the tower leads to a portion of the ruins that have all sunk beneath the surface. Many buildings constructed from basalt can be accessed through numerous passageways. Despite the interesting locations beneath, Shatch spends relatively little time exploring the ruins, instead focusing his attentions on his mercantile business.

Favorite Prey: Here in the frigid north, his major prey consists of cold based monsters, such as the remorhaz and the frost worm along with a few members of the extremely small white dragon population. Aside from the more challenging monsters, Shatch hunts polar bears and other furred animals that he can eat, harvest the skins and sell them as rugs.

Allies and Enemies: Shatch maintains many trading contacts, though few personal friends. He holds tightly to the secret of his failure in Penance, refusing to speak of it. Occasionally he encounters a merchant from Penance who recognizes him and brings him information from the city. Most are surprised that he is still alive and managed to make his way to a corner of the Forge almost as far away from Penance as possible. Other than the families of the nightlings killed in the attack in Penance, Shatch has no enemies to speak of. Despite the passage of time since the unintentional slaughter of his kindred, the paranoid trader maintains a vigilant lookout for bereaved family members seeking vengeance.

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Chapter 7: Lost Civilizations

"As a mob of terrified humanoids attempted to flee through the congested streets, hordes of bloodthirsty beasts relentlessly nipped at their heels. Their efforts proved futile as the savage predators tore their hapless prey to shreds. It was a horrific sight. The scene still haunts my darkest dreams."

-- Uranga, a human pathfinder to a group of adventurers searching for abandoned ruins.

Wildwood is an archaeologist's dream. Countless ruined or abandoned cities lie hidden beneath dense layers of overgrown vegetation, yielding their secrets to anyone capable of finding and unearthing them. Monumental architectural and cultural discoveries along with wondrous treasures await intrepid explorers willing to brave the perils and make the arduous trek into the untamed wilderness in search of adventure, enlightenment and riches. Because of the preponderance of these sites throughout Haiel's feral kingdom, newly arrived seeds often jump to the conclusion that the once majestic buildings of these dead metropolises represent the only surviving vestiges of the untamed domain's former inhabitants. The supposition's fallacy rests in the inaccurate assumption that the structures are historically authentic. There is no doubt that they and their contents are physically real; however they are actually precise replicas created by Wildwood's manipulative overlord to set the stage for one of his grand experiments. In an effort to test the adaptability of a specific race, Haiel constructs an exacting duplicate of the beings' settlement amidst the wild and unruly wilderness. After completing this painstaking task he carefully hides marvelous treasures and potent artifacts within the buildings and their confines, while he populates the surrounding area with voracious predators and aggressive plants. With the preparation complete, Haiel's dubious research commences.

Without warning, the callous master of Wildwood instantaneously pulls thousands of bewildered sentient creatures from their native world onto his playground. What ensues is a bloody, primeval battle for survival as the startled residents struggle to fend off the encroaching forces of nature. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority perishes in this effort, refusing to relinquish the trappings and ideologies of civilization even in the face of insurmountable opposition from hordes of bestial monsters. In short time the prolific foliage transforms the crumbling edifices and rotting corpses spawned by the senseless carnage into amorphous mounds of greenery, effectively camouflaging them from view and in the process relegating the failed civilization to the scrapheap of myth. Yet, in spite of the long odds against success, a few hardy and resourceful races quickly adjust to their alien setting and eventually thrive in the harsh environment, although they usually remain in close proximity to the neglected facsimile of their former city. Regardless of the outcome of Haiel's cold-hearted trial, these legendary locales garner the interest of curious explorers and greedy fortune hunters alike.

Adventurers venturing into the primordial forests, jungles and swamps of Wildwood in search of these elusive prizes soon realize that courage, ingenuity and combat prowess are insufficient to accomplish their stated goal. The feral domain keeps a close guard on its hidden mysteries, and those unprepared to meet the challenges of this unforgiving realm become hopelessly lost amongst the repetitious thickets or even worse fall prey to one of its vicious denizens. As a result, guides are a virtual necessity for anyone looking for one of these lost civilizations. Intimately familiar with the lay of the land as well as the habits and territories of its indigenous residents, these enterprising chaperons lead the way through the hostile terrain and provide a wellspring of information about the intended destination. Naturally, their abilities vary dependent upon their specialty and experience. Most generally enable their clients to avoid well-known hazards and the lairs of powerful predators along the way to a general area, but are unable to provide specific details or directions to a precise location. Serious adventurers with abundant financial and magical resources wisely avoid these novices and instead enlist the aid of a pathfinder. (This prestige class appears in the appendix of this supplement). A unique combination of outdoorsman, historian and fighter, they stand head and shoulders above their competition and are almost universally considered the foremost authorities on a particular ruined city, providing extensive details about its history, hidden treasures and its past and present occupants. Commensurate with their level of expertise, they are typically ten times more expensive than their less astute counterparts. Despite their hefty fees, their services are highly sought after by prudent, seasoned explorers.

Peohautilan

In its heyday, the fabled metropolis of Peohautilan rivaled any of the world's greatest cities including the Forge's spectacular representative, the cosmopolitan hub known as Penance. Massive step pyramids adorned with gold and precious gems soared into the heavens. From these lofty perches high atop their architectural masterpieces, Peohautilan's ruler and his retinue of priests looked down upon a vast jungle empire stretching hundreds of miles in every direction. In the streets below them, columns of ferocious warriors armed with spears and bedecked with skins and feathers obtained from a myriad of colorful, exotic animals triumphantly paraded past their jubilant countrymen dragging their thoroughly beaten and humiliated foes in tow. Yet, behind this veneer of breathtaking beauty and remarkable pageantry lay a cruel civilization

obsessed with ritualistic murder and humanoid sacrifice all in the name of sating the voracious appetite of its bloodthirsty deities. The barbarous gods of Peohautilan continuously demanded fresh victims, and the city's religious and political establishment, eager to maintain their abundant treasures and social status, willingly acquiesced to their sickening command. They dispatched their battle-hardened armies to every corner of their empire for the primary purpose of capturing prisoners for their grotesque ceremonial killings. As a result of their tireless efforts, murder became an industry. Everyday in Peohautilan alone, roughly 100 people met their gruesome end on cold, stone slabs at the top of many of its pyramids. Day and night, horrific wails and anguished cries emanating from these unfortunate souls coupled with the revolting thuds created when their broken, lifeless bodies rolled down the pyramids' steps and forcibly struck the unyielding street below resonated throughout the entire metropolis. Despite these hideous and unspeakable practices, Peohautilan's military might and economic power steadily increased, piquing the interest of Wildwood's aloof overlord, Haiel.

Intrigued by the cruel society nourished by the spilt blood of its enemies, the curious blade of the green decided to test the mettle of these warmongers by pulling thousands of the metropolis' residents into his feral domain and then watch their brutal struggle for survival unfold. After constructing an exacting duplicate of the city, he instantaneously transported almost 3,000 bewildered urban dwellers into the primordial heart of the jungle. Only moments after arriving, streams of blood rolled across the earth as fearsome, bestial predators tore through the streets in a mad frenzy, devouring hapless victims along the route of their wild stampede. Panic swept through the populace, scattering the frightened humanoids in a hundred different directions. Irrespective of their attempts to escape, by early evening the relentless onslaught claimed 2,500 lives. Yet, a small minority weathered the initial assault and quickly adapted to their new environment. Over the course of the next thirty generations, they gradually rebuilt their culture and society; however they never returned to the facsimile of Peohautilan or even its immediate outskirts. These people known as the musai chose to live a life of exile rather than resume their former ways. (The musai appear in Chapter 10 as a new race.)

History: Nine hundred years ago, the musai and their native world stood on the brink of extinction. For more than a decade, severe drought and famine gripped the land. During these lean years, the resourceful nomads always scrounged up enough food and water to survive; however their fortunes steadily worsened and in time starvation became an inevitable reality. All seemed lost, but one man, the legendary warrior and chieftain, Manatezama refused to concede to this apparently unavoidable fate. Possessing no food or water and armed with nothing but his spear, the headstrong ruler set out from his people's ramshackle camp and headed into the barren wasteland in search of sustenance and a new source of potable water. For three days and nights, he stumbled across the dusty terrain without any luck. Hungry, thirsty and thoroughly exhausted, the emaciated humanoid collapsed onto the ground and longed for death to relieve him of his suffering. As he lay motionless on the dirt awaiting his demise, three radiant figures suddenly appeared to him. Although an inexplicable luminescence and an unearthly aura accompanied the trio of beings, physically they looked no different than him. Clad in luxurious animal skins and wearing ornate headdresses adorned with a colorful assortment of feathers, the magnificently attired entities resembled any other member of his race with one eerie and notable exception. In lieu of a heart, each had a diamond-shaped crystal of a different hue in the middle of his chest. One was yellow, another was black and the third was red.

In unison the triad glanced down at the prostrate Manatezama and asked, "Why do you scratch the ground searching for sustenance?" The startled chieftain slowly recoiled from them as he frantically stammered for a reply.

The being with the crimson substitute for a heart angrily strode toward the prone humanoid. Beneath his splendid accoutrements and regal bearing, numerous ugly scars and festering wounds marred his muscular body. "The soil cried for nourishment too, but you ignored its pleas and instead fattened your own bellies," he venomously hissed.

"I know not of what you speak," Manatezama tentatively replied.

"No, you say," he rhetorically responded. "Quench the parched earth with the blood and tears of your enemies. Trample them underfoot and grind their bones into dust. The land yearns for renewal. Listen to its call."

With these words, they slowly ascended into the heavens and disappeared. Despite the disturbing undertone of the revelation, the divine proclamation rejuvenated Manatezama's sagging spirit and limp body. Two days later, he arrived back at the encampment and shared his prophetic vision with his people. Without hesitation, his ragtag band of ill-equipped and largely untrained soldiers followed their charismatic leader and marched out into the wilderness in search of an enemy to conquer. At dawn on the following day, a nomadic band of six unarmed humans provided the ideal opportunity to put Manatezama's declaration to the test. The chieftain and his bloodthirsty throng of devotees rushed toward the defenseless travelers and savagely beat them into bloody pulps. As soon as the carnage ended, a peal of thunder ripped through the overcast sky, and torrential rains pummeled the dry soil, bringing the drought to a dramatic end. To a man, the awestruck musai stared unwaveringly into the heavens and venerated the three omnipotent beings responsible for their deliverance, giving birth to the musai's pantheon of deities. Shortly afterward, Manatezama led his people back to the scene of his earth shattering revelation, and there they founded the majestic city of Peohautilan.

Originally, the settlement consisted of a packed cluster of mud-brick homes highlighted by a humble step pyramid commemorating the musai's divine benefactors. However, as their military power and

political influence grew, the citizens believed that they deserved a city befitting their exalted status in the region. Utilizing captured prisoners of war as slave laborers, the ambitious construction plans for Peohautilan began in earnest. Driven by the wicked barbs of their cruel masters, ten thousand malnourished and neglected humanoids toiled day and night to complete the architectural jewel of the musai's continually expanding empire. After thirty years of incessant work and at an incalculable cost in spent lives, the completed city assumed its rightful position as the epicenter of musai politics, religion and culture. For the next century, Peohautilan enjoyed unparalleled prosperity and good fortune, prompting the metropolis' population to swell to a nearly unmanageable level of 100,000 individuals. An aura of complacency enveloped the residents and their leaders as they collectively basked in the glow of unprecedented economic and military success. Gold poured into the city from the conquered provinces, as inhabitants greeted news of glorious, martial triumphs with an air of indifference. Worst of all, the veneration of their deities became nothing more than a perfunctory task led by a caste of apathetic priests more concerned with attaining their earthly desires than achieving spiritual enlightenment. The combination of these ingredients became a recipe for disaster.

Without warning, Peohautilan's omnipotent deities descended from the heavens to violently confront their wayward worshippers. Hovering a few feet above the city's central pyramid, the stone-faced beings stoically surveyed the sprawling metropolis before raining a horrific barrage of roaring columns of flame and crackling bolts of lightning down upon the terrified disbelievers. Pandemonium swept through the streets as the frightened musai scrambled for cover from the retributive pillars of fire, desperately pleading for mercy and forgiveness from their vengeful gods. Only a minute after it began, the onslaught abruptly ended and Peohautilan's pantheon ascended back into the clouds, apparently satisfied with the impact of their grim lesson. In their wake, 15,000 musai lay dead and billowing plumes of smoke cloaked even the summits of their mighty pyramids in a black pall. Not surprisingly, the devastating attack served its intended purpose. The musai sated the appetite of their bloodthirsty deities with numerous humanoid sacrifices culled from their subjugated enemies. This gruesome practice coupled with the race's inherent affinity for prognostication inspired Haiel to pull three thousand inhabitants into his exacting replica in Wildwood as part of his grand experiment. Once again, the musai demonstrated their remarkable adaptability and resourcefulness, succeeding where so many others had failed miserably.

Overview: Haiel's precise duplicate of Peohautilan stands in an isolated section of jungle in southern Wildwood. Far removed from any significant humanoid settlements other than those of the musai, very few treasure seekers are aware of Peohautilan's checkered past or even its very existence. Although its impressive stone pyramids tower high above the ground, massive trees and rampant vegetation choking its streets along with a dense coating of moss draping these mighty structures effectively camouflages the entire metropolis. The spectacular illusion is even more astounding considering the vast size of the sprawling settlement. Encompassing an area slightly less than ten square miles, Peohautilan is an architectural and civic marvel. Its showpieces are undoubtedly the three grand step pyramids dedicated to the triad of deities responsible for its founding and survival. Deliberately arranged on the city's grid to form the points of a triangle, the gargantuan structures reach a dizzying height of 480 feet while each side of their square bases measures 400 feet in length. There are no obvious entrances to the buildings; however the faint outline of a steep set of stairs carved into the face of each outer wall is barely visible. The steps lead up to a simple slab of cold stone engulfed by foliage at the apex of each pyramid. In the actual city of Peohautilan, priests performed their barbarous human sacrifices on this lofty precipice and then hurled the victim's flaccid and battered corpse down the rocky side of the building where it finally hit the hard earth nearly 500 feet below. Fortunately, the musai teleported into Haiel's facsimile never received the opportunity to emulate their forebears and continue the repulsive ritual.

These three buildings form the focal point of the city and serve as the starting point for its twelve streets. The innermost circle around this area contains an assortment of substantially smaller, but uniformly placed pyramids presumably dedicated to renowned heroes or lesser gods. As the avenues branch out and their make their way through the metropolis, the conformity evident in the temple precincts cedes dominance to practicality. Expensive shops and opulent residences occupy the outer circle closest to Peohautilan's religious and political hub, followed by its commercial and manufacturing districts before culminating in a diverse array of inexpensive homes and smaller businesses in the outermost sections of the city. Because many of these buildings are relatively small and shoddily built in comparison to the other portions of the city, the encroaching blanket of plants makes it nearly impossible to distinguish them from the surrounding wilderness. In many respects, Peohautilan physically resembles an immense wheel with its elongated spokes spanning a distance slightly more than 3 miles in length. However, because of the abundance and proliferation of greenery in the region, the city actual proportions are difficult to discern even from an aerial perspective.

Inhabitants: Obviously, no race is more closely affiliated with Peohautilan than the musai; however with only a few extremely rare exceptions, none of them ever set foot or even venture near the lost civilization. Unfortunately for adventurers and treasure seekers endeavoring to explore or plunder the ruined settlement, the musai extend this policy to them as well. Their villages are deliberately arranged in a large perimeter around Peohautilan, making it

virtually impossible for prospective trespassers to slip past their vigilant defenses and approach the metropolis unnoticed. If they spot intruders, the enraged humanoids immediately marshal their forces and mercilessly attack the trespasser. The musai's actions depend upon their foe's strength and abilities. If the interloper poses a serious threat, the musai mercilessly pommel him to death; otherwise they relentlessly beat him into submission for consumption at a more opportune time.

Despite the pervasiveness of this attitude within their society, unanimity proves impossible to achieve. A tiny minority of these almost universally repugnant humanoids guide outsiders into and out of Peohautilan using a variety of covert methods. Some utilize secret tunnels bypassing the outlying settlements and guards, while others employ magical means to disguise their group as innocuous animals or plants. Regardless of their methodology, these jungle entrepreneurs earn a handsome living plying their knowledge and services to avaricious fortune hunters. Unlike typical members of this industry, musai guides base their fees on the size of the expeditionary party rather than the distance traveled. Costs typically range from 100 gold pieces per person for the least experienced guides to 1,000 gold pieces per person for the most accomplished expert in the field.

Although circumventing the musai patrols eliminates an important obstacle on the route to the city, other fearsome denizens closely allied with the cannibalistic humanoids dwell within the confines of Peohautilan proper. Carnivorous plants abound throughout the vicinity with assassin vines, evil treants and tendriculouses constituting the overwhelming majority of their ranks in the area. Dire animals, particularly apes and tigers roam the cluttered streets in search of prey, while trolls and owlbears find shelter beneath the ominous shadows of the great pyramids. In addition to these natural inhabitants, the malevolent spirits and shambling cadavers of the musai slaughtered during the ancient carnage haunt the dark alleyways and hidden recesses of Peohautilan looking to exact vengeance on any unlucky souls that cross their spiteful paths. In the eyes of most jungle adventurers, it is better to die at the hands of their living descendents than to fall prey to these evil, undead abominations.

Secrets: Despite the cultural importance and magnitude of the three imposing pyramids at the center of the metropolis, the real treasures lie in Haiel's reconstruction of the elaborate tombs that are hidden beneath the foundations of some of the smaller pyramids outside of the central triangle. These final resting places for chieftains and high priests reputedly contain vast stores of gold and gems along with the decedent's personal accoutrements including magical staves, armor, weapons, jewelry and other articles of clothing. The body's actual repository lies at the heart of an intricate complex of corridors and antechambers patrolled by eternal guardians and warded by a diverse collection of insidious traps.

In addition to the civilization's monetary riches, musai astrologers also claim that their race's greatest scientific achievement, the world's most accurate calendar is buried somewhere within the city. In addition to its archaeological value and cultural significance, it is also rumored that the relic enables its owner to foresee future events. The validity of this assertion remains in doubt; however over the last six centuries, musai fortune tellers have secretly hired at least a dozen adventurers to search for the elusive stone almanac without avail. Despite the lack of success or proof of its very existence, the potent device remains the object of intense speculation within astrological circles.

Anawal

The legend of Anawal is distinguished in the annals of Wildwood as a society of knowledge, war, culture, and technology unlike any other found in the Forge. Their society, which fell eight thousand years ago, was comprised entirely of humans. They were orderly, militaristic, and obsessed with conquest. Horrible machines of war wreaked havoc upon their neighbors, even while every soldier was schooled in literature, art, and poetry. Ultimately their fall was as unusual as it was predictable. Their ancient city is now lost to the thick jungles of southern Wildwood, though treasure hunters seek out this place to unearth whatever technological and magical secrets may be left behind, as has been the case ever since its fall.

History: Anawal was a civilization Haiel had watched for thousands of years before finally deciding to pull it into the Forge. The seat of power in their homeworld, he had watched them conquer numerous weaker civilizations, educate them, bring them up to their level, and then continue to expand their empire to include an ever increasing and diverse collection of peoples. While the steps they took to conquer were brutal, sometimes bordering on genocide, they ultimately made a positive impact upon the society in terms of personal freedoms, access to healing and disease control, and overall quality of life. In many ways Haiel worried that should he bring Anawal to Wildwood, they could unravel the delicate tapestry of civilizations and brute force that is Wildwood. Ultimately he decided to pull in the inhabitants of the great city out of curiosity and the constant desire to introduce new factors to his domain.

Upon their arrival there was the standard period of confusion. Several units of soldiers were sent into the jungle to determine where they were, only to return badly beaten by the ferocious creatures that live in this domain. Following that, the emperor issued a decree that their primary immediate goal was to discover a way to return to their homeworld. Eventually it became clear that a solution to their displacement would not immediately be apparent, so they next turned their attention to conquering the surrounding territory.

For many years Anawal's military machine fought the creatures of the forest for dominance. Various methods were employed including clear cutting the trees from troublesome sections of the forest but none resulted in immediate success. Despite these efforts, the nomadic predators roaming the woods claimed a

heavy toll on the population that lived outside the city walls. Eventually they demanded to be allowed to move within the protection of the city walls in order to escape. This immediately caused an overcrowding problem, and it was decided that the only way to solve this was to locate the other civilizations that existed in Wildwood and conquer them.

In little time other civilizations were located, and Anawal mobilized its military. Because of their military superiority along with their overpowering magical and technological siege engines, the first civilizations they encountered were easily trounced. The individuals from those civilizations were educated and incorporated into the larger society. The fact that the majority of the species of the Forge are not humans initially presented a problem. Non-human species were quickly enslaved, but the potential value of many of the species was quickly recognized, and this slavery lasted for only two years. Following that period, the various former slaves were elevated to citizen status and enlisted into the military, just as any human would be.

Also during this time Anawal learned how to cope with the predators that stalked the jungles of Wildwood. Hunting became a viable alternative to enlisting in the military, and a multitude of hunting techniques became incorporated into their survival strategy. In a few short years those who had fled inside of the city walls were able to retake their homes and buildings outside the walls and they began to grow once again. In short, Anawal's society began to thrive.

Over the next two thousand years, Anawal grew from a city state to a kingdom, and finally to a full empire, at one time controlling the majority of southern Wildwood. During this time numerous species were introduced to Anawal and the demographics changed wildly. The society which at one time consisted mainly of humans began to shift to the point where humans were in the minority. Humans retained powerful positions, including that of emperor, for five hundred years. This trend ended when emperor Ranni Laertes appointed Durse Mattin, a dover, as his successor. Although his decision sparked tremendous controversy, Ranni simply stated that an empire is best led by those properly qualified rather than trying to continue an ages old tradition of species elitism.

The fall of Anawal took place over a two hundred year period. The harvesting of edible foods slowed because of an aggressive and harmful weed species that had been introduced. In addition to this, an incursion of a horde of barbarian asherakes from the north led to the weakening of the control Anawal held over their territory. Many of their smaller satellite cities opted to leave the empire when the imperial soldiers proved an inadequate defense against the invaders. Numerous military defeats took place in bordering regions where the starving troops were unable to hold their own against their savage opponents.

The downward spiral soon spread to the heart of the lands under their control. As food became more and more scarce, many left Anawal to find their fortunes elsewhere. Most, however, withdrew to within the city walls and did their best to provide for the needs of the city. Nevertheless, the asherake barbarians did not halt their brutal advance south, and they eventually came upon the faltering city. The horde was not an organized fighting force, but rather a mass of small and extremely mobile irregular units who evaded the larger units of troops while laying waste to the settlements outside the city walls. Once they claimed the outskirts of the city, they began to attack Anawal proper. Blessed with the natural ability of flight, the city's walls did not deter their entrance. As they invaded, the gates were opened and much of the city's population fled into the surrounding territory. The military within the city engaged in a desperate fight to stop the invaders, but they were ultimately defeated.

The asherake barbarian horde stripped the city of all the valuables that they could find. This included the unusual rudimentary doomstriders the city possessed. (Doomstriders are discussed in Oathbound: *Arena* and *Doomstriders*, both available from Bastion Press.) It is believed that a few of these siege engines were brought to Arena, where the technology was developed, refined, and eventually became the doomstriders employed by numerous warlord's armies. As soon as the asherakes were finished pillaging what remained of Anawal, they moved on, leaving the city in ruins. In the thousands of years since the fall of the great city, the region has become overgrown with trees and foliage, which is now so dense in that region that no one is known to have been able to find Anawal for more than several thousand years.

Overview: The city proper is roughly pentagonal and is five miles from one side to the other. Within were houses and buildings that used a variety of architectural influences. The city was a melting pot of numerous cultures it had assimilated; therefore it lacked any strong stylistic trends. Most of the buildings would be considered upscale by the standards of most cities of the Forge. Surrounding the city proper were several miles of buildings and dwellings unprotected by the city walls where people and businesses had spilled into. Since Anawal had not fallen under attack by enemies for such a long period before its inhabitants were pulled into Wildwood, nobody was concerned about the overall lack of protection of the outer portion of the city.

While walls were not an effective defense against the mechanical and magical engines Anawal used against their enemies, the city did possess walls itself. While it was far beyond being a medieval society, most of their enemies still relied upon the traditional tools of warfare, which made standard twenty foot tall walls an effective defense.

The buildings, the palace, and even the walls used technology in conjunction with magic to create unique features. The keep was surrounded by a piranha infested moat and the bridges that granted access to it raised and lowered by simply throwing a lever. A large portion of the main wall could

withdraw into the ground in order to allow the magical and mechanical weapons of war (described below) to exit the city to do battle while in the midst of a battle.

One of the great treasures of Anawal was the library the size of a keep known as the Vault of Knowledge. This structure housed information on virtually every subject, including theology, magical research and its practical application, history of Anawal's homeworld, works of literature and art. It is also believed that the lower reaches held priceless items made thousands of years before Anawal was brought to Wildwood. Many were statues sculpted from gold, marble, and other valuable materials while others were newer and contained information that would help scholars piece together the ancient past of the Forge.

Combatants were prized above all others in Anawal's society. Nearly every family boasted a soldier, a retired soldier, or children who would one day go one to become soldiers. Women were not required to become soldiers, though many of them chose to embrace that way of life of their own accord and stood beside the men on the fields of battle. The society expected that if you were valuable enough to be a citizen of Anawal, you should be willing to defend it. Sixty five percent of the population served as a warrior in the military for an average of four years of their lives.

Magic was common in Anawal; however its practitioners were considered second class citizens in comparison to its warriors. They were 'those too weak to become warriors,' and despite the awesome powers that the more accomplished wizards held, they suffered numerous indignities from their sword-wielding brethren in the society. While magic on the battlefield was important to the military, wizards and sorcerers also plied their trade in the mid to lower rungs of society, acting as craftsmen, journeymen, and professionals who would peddle their magic to the common man. Because of this, magic items and spells were easier to come by and served a variety of purposes. In many cases they were utilized to give Anawal's warriors the advantage on the battlefield while in other cases it was used to make the lives of everyone more comfortable. Magic devices were common in every home, and would perform relatively mundane tasks such as cooking, providing light, and eliminating household waste.

Clerics and other divine spellcasters commanded a great deal more respect in society than arcane spellcasters. The residents of Anawal worshipped a pantheon of warlike gods, and as their direct link to their deities, clerics were treated with deference. Although various churches existed, clerics were also expected to serve in the massive Anawal military to provide spell support and healing to the warriors. Some were capable warriors and stood side by side with their sword wielding comrades in battle.

Ordinary rogues had no place in Anawal's society, though bards were celebrated for their ability to perform. The only exception to this was the locksmiths, who were highly specialized rogues whose main purpose was to create locks, make keys, and open locks. That is not to say that rogues did not exist in Anawal, only that the few that did exist were poorly organized and severely punished when caught.

The leader of Anawal was an emperor who achieved this rank through years of military service, completing what was known as the warrior's path. They would begin as a common warrior, rising above his or her fellow warriors in combat. Once they had distinguished themselves in battle, they would be put in charge of ever larger units within the military, slowly rising through the ranks, all the while being schooled in advanced military tactics. If they proved to be capable of command, then they would continue on to learn what was known as the *tactics of peace*. The most advanced warriors and commanders would be trained how to negotiate with hostile forces that had been conquered, rebuild shattered lands, and incorporate conquered peoples into Anawal society.

Only a handful of warriors who started at the bottom had the potential to advance this far in society. Once they were here, success became somewhat more difficult to gauge. They reported directly to the emperor, and ultimately it was the emperor who appointed his or her successor. Once an individual had attained the rank of emperor, he was solely in charge of the welfare of the society. He decreed any changes in law, he declared war, and he dictated how the society's money was spent. Once in place, the emperors of Anawal were motivated to make responsible decisions by a past rich in assassinations motivated by malcontents who suffered under an emperor's policies. When the emperor assumed power, a backup was named just in case the emperor was assassinated or otherwise unable to rule. This was usually his or her chief advisor. Typically, after two years of rule, the emperor was expected to name a successor. Being appointed the successor was the greatest honor a warrior could be given, but the emperor retained the right to change his mind, should the successor die or prove unable to make responsible decisions.

Anawal possessed both magical and mechanical machines that they put to use in their awesome military. They were able to take to the air and conquer their enemies from above, or their land vehicles thundered over the terrain, flattening anything that was in their way. Against the flying machines castle walls were useless; siege towers were easily flattened, and enemy ranks would be decimated. They were the most advanced killing machines on their homeworld, and some scholars believe that some of the magical and technological elements from them found their way into the doomstriders that are often used in Arena.

Inhabitants: Currently there are no inhabitants of Anawal other than the creatures that have wandered in and taken up residence here. It is infested with deadly creatures of all types, and would not be an easy place for anyone attempting to explore the ruins.

Secrets: Many individuals seek to find the ruins of Anawal. Part of their reasoning is simply to study the remnants of a dead people and a dead civilization. It is also believed that there may be documents in the Vault of Knowledge that suggest more effective ways of working the metal of armor to make it more light-weight and better at avoiding damage. Also of value are

the schematics for numerous technological items that could lead to a lucrative business for anyone with the intelligence to build them and then distribute them. There were also several caches of their rudimentary doomstriders locked away in hidden vaults that the asherake barbarians did not find, something that would be of use to the warlords of Arena, or anyone wishing to have a bit more personal power.

Thebbylar

Millions of years ago when the lands of the Forge were new, a marvelous city equal in wealth and majesty to the mighty metropolis of Penance proudly stood on the southeastern coast of Wildwood adjacent to the Central Ocean. Blessed with an idyllic natural harbor and a booming shipbuilding industry, this bustling port was the maritime power of its age. Situated on the shore of the great ocean and in close proximity to an extremely wide and relatively calm river that bisected southern Wildwood before branching off into dozens of smaller tributaries winding their way through the interior regions of the neighboring domain of Glimmer, (the realm now known as the Vault), its armada of merchant vessels and potent warships ruled the waves. Thebbylar's traders functioned primarily as brokers importing and exporting valuable goods and exotic commodities from one locale to another. For many centuries, the arrangement worked flawlessly, enriching its citizens' coffers beyond their wildest dreams while enabling Thebbylar's military might and political influence to dominate the lands abutting the Central Ocean as well as the heartlands of Glimmer. However, the dastardly actions of the Forge's most maligned misanthrope eventually led to its utter ruination and loss of countless lives.

History: Ten thousand years after Haiel began populating his untamed realm with innumerable varieties of malicious beasts and carnivorous plants, a motley band of humans pulled into the unruly land from an alien civilization fled from their former city and followed the spacious banks of a mighty river that headed toward the Central Ocean. Constantly harassed by hungry predators and plagued by virulent contagions and other natural hazards along the way, the resourceful troupe made the perilous 600 mile journey to the coastline in forty days while suffering a meager sixteen casualties. Completely famished and thoroughly exhausted after more than a month of hiking through the endless woodlands, the plucky survivors did not rest upon their laurels and instead immediately began the task of finding a suitable location to rebuild their shattered lives and demolished homes. Within a few hours after arriving at their chosen destination, Izamar, the group's leader, spotted a well-protected and lush inlet only a few miles from the mouth of the river. Exhilarated by his astounding discovery, he and his 178 followers sprinted across the beach and collapsed on the future site of the fabled metropolis of Thebbylar.

Under the visionary guidance of Izamar and his descendents, the settlement went from a small village of simple wooden huts and tiny farms to a fortified town populated by 2,000 humanoid residents in less than a century. Refugees from numerous other failed societies steadily poured into the coastal community, adding their diverse customs, languages and talents to the rapidly expanding town. Because of the continuous influx of various races, Thebbylar's buildings and design plans grew more eclectic, incorporating many elements of human, dover, elven and other types of architecture into its grand scheme. However, the seemingly exponential population explosion strained the city's resources and land to the breaking point. Its massive exterior walls now stood only a few hundred yards from the relentlessly encroaching jungle, making expansion into the pristine wilderness a logistical impossibility. Faced with the prospect of overpopulation and all of the social ills accompanied with it, Thebbylar's leaders embarked on a groundbreaking engineering project of epic proportion. Rather than extend the metropolis' boundaries inland, civic planners instead decided to transform the massive lagoon into dry land by building a closely packed chain of manmade islands within the adjacent body of water. Using astronomical volumes of sand dredged from the nearby beach, the ingenious feat took more than a century to complete but it achieved its intended task, increasing the metropolis' physical dimensions and its immense harbor by more than twenty times their original size.

Construction continued at breakneck speed over the next three millenniums as the number of inhabitants soared well over the two million mark. Despite the dramatic spike in Thebbylar's population, the city utilized a proportionally low supply of Wildwood's abundant natural resources to feed, clothe and shelter its swelling ranks. Unable to turn the adjacent jungle or arid beaches into arable farmland, its citizens relied upon trade from neighboring domains for much of its sustenance and manufactured goods. To accommodate the growing demand for these products, Thebbylar utilized its massive stores of timber and strategic location to become the foremost naval power in the Forge. Its expansive fleet of mercantile ships and war galleys crisscrossed the oceans and waterways, bringing commerce to the remotest corners of the world. Hundreds of vessels transported precious metals from Arena, gems from Anvil, exotic natural products from other parts of Wildwood and most importantly, wheat and corn from Glimmer throughout the Forge. Thebbylar thrived thanks largely to the handsome profits it reaped from its lucrative cargo business. However, after nearly 10,000 years of prosperity catastrophic events in the neighboring domain of Glimmer brought the metropolis' heyday to an abrupt end and ultimately sealed its doom.

Pandora, perhaps the most infamous being in all of the Forge's lengthy history, destroyed the circle of mirrors that provided warmth and sunlight to Glimmer. In the absence of light, the land grew dark and a bitter chill enveloped the earth. Its sentient inhabitants along with its fertile crops perished en

masse. Rivers froze solid and arctic winds howled across the desolate landscape transforming the previously vibrant world into the cold, lifeless realm now known as the Vault. Instantaneously deprived of its primary source of food and access to its most important markets, Thebbylar's economy rapidly imploded. Trade came to a virtual standstill, leaving three million humanoids with only a few weeks worth of food and potable water. Facing the bleak prospect of mass starvation, civic authorities turned to the only solution at hand, to forage supplies from the surrounding wilderness. An immense sea of frightened and hungry humanoids armed with axes and heavy logging equipment descended upon the unsuspecting jungle like a voracious swarm of locusts devouring a field of wheat. The biting sound of sharp metal striking wood resonated throughout the woodlands as unrestrained throngs of humanity reduced huge tracts of virgin forest into vast wastelands of rotting tree stumps and smoldering embers.

Not far removed from his role as the Defender of Nature, the sickening carnage infuriated Wildwood's typically impassive overlord. Outraged by the grotesque sight, Haiel repeatedly barraged the sprawling metropolis with towering tsunamis ten miles wide and 500 feet tall. Within less than twenty minutes the relentless walls of water pounded the city into submission, leveling practically all of its buildings before submerging the doomed settlement beneath one hundred feet of salty ocean water. Over the next several weeks, more than two and a half million bloated, waterlogged corpses washed ashore. The few survivors of the apocalyptic event disappeared into the adjacent jungle where many of them succumbed to opportunistic predators; however a small minority lived long enough to pass Thebbylar's cautionary tale down to future generations.

Overview: Covered by grimy silt in a wet tomb at the bottom of the Central Ocean, very little of the fabled city protrudes through the gritty ocean floor. A well-trained eye can perhaps catch a fleeting glimpse of a building's spire or the faint outline of the metropolis' outer walls, but the majority of Thebbylar is buried beneath a nearly contiguous layer of sediment and muck. Lying roughly twenty-five miles off the southeastern coast of Wildwood, the ruined settlement continues to elude explorers endeavoring to unravel its hidden mysteries. Several formidable obstacles account for the city's uncanny ability to evade those hunting for it. The foremost of these barriers is undoubtedly its underwater location. Resting approximately 450 feet below the ocean's surface, land dwelling expeditionaries venturing to these unfathomable depths require specialized equipment to breathe and move under these extremely pressurized conditions. These logistical difficulties alone are usually enough to dissuade the majority of treasure seekers from searching for the lost civilization underneath the waves when there are more accessible sites on dry land. In addition to these challenges, Thebbylar's precise location remains the subject of speculation and conjecture. Sages almost unanimously agree on its general area, but this consensus only narrows the search area to a whopping 10,000 square miles of largely featureless, sandy terrain at the bottom of the ocean. A true testament to Thebbylar's ability to escape detection lies in the fact that the indigenous aquatic races dwelling in the immediate vicinity remain thoroughly unaware of its existence.

Seasoned explorers diving into the murky depths believe that their best chance of disinterring Thebbylar from its damp grave of gooey earth rests in their ability to spot its formidable outer walls, the city's most easily distinguishable physical feature and one of the only structures reputed to have survived the terrifying cataclysm at least marginally intact. During its heyday, the solid stone walls measured nearly four feet thick and stood an impressive sixty feet high. Although meant to withstand a violent hurricane or an amphibious assault by a hostile force, exquisite bas relief sculptures depicting the city's legendary heroes adorn the walls that form an eight mile long perimeter around Thebbylar proper. Four massive archways measuring sixty feet wide and sixty feet tall are the only access points into the metropolis. An elite force of 1,000 soldiers manned these entrances during the pinnacle of Thebbylar's power. In addition to their presence, a mammoth wrought iron gate nearly six inches thick kept invaders at bay. Inside of these stalwart defenses stood a haphazard assembly of mismatched structures representative of a multiple of different architectural styles and traditions ranging from grandiose temples and opulent residences to simple thatch roofed cabins and lean-tos. Needless to say, none of the latter buildings survived the devastation unleashed by Haiel's giant waves, but a surprisingly high percentage of buildings in the former category weathered the storm to some extent. As a result, some portions of the ruins consist entirely of rubble and debris while other sections boast complete foundations, walls, roofs and in some cases entire chambers or levels. In many ways, Thebbylar greatly resembles the wrack of Penance with its multiple layers of construction. Because of the suddenness of the attack, only a fortunate handful of residents managed to escape the disaster with their valuables intact leaving vast fortunes of riches buried beneath the soggy mud of the ocean floor.

Inhabitants: The restless apparitions and animated corpses of those killed in the devastating cataclysm still haunt the passable areas within the ruins. Ghosts and lacedons comprise the vast majority of their ranks; however their overall numbers are quite small when compared to the staggering number of people slain by the killer tsunamis. In addition to its undead inhabitants, marine predators capable of burrowing through the silt accidentally stumble upon the lost civilization. However, these creatures pose no threat to adventurers when compared to Thebbylar's appointed guardian, the colossal kraken Queezog. Shortly after the metropolis' destruction, Haiel delegated this important duty to Queezog's ancient ancestors, and the crucial assignment has remained in the family ever since. The enormous monster frequently patrols the waters above the underground ruins, devouring any curious land-dwelling fortune hunters while simultaneously keeping the inherently nosy trusks away from his

territory, irrespective of the fact that his lair is twelve miles east of the lost civilization. Within the murky confines of his sinister underwater abode, the cruel but cunning beast keeps a retinue of 100 slaves from various aquatic races including locathahs, merfolk and trusks. These creatures unquestioningly attend to their wicked master's every whim, while also breeding at a prolific rate for the purpose of producing more servants and fresh meat for the evil kraken. In addition to his live captives, the wily Queezog is also blessed with immense monetary and magical wealth said to rival the hordes of some of Wildwood's more powerful dragons.

Secrets: Queezog is not immortal; therefore the time for her to give birth to a successor is nearly at hand. As a result, Haiel is scrying a multitude of worlds looking for an exceptionally powerful, young male kraken to pull into the Central Ocean to accomplish this purpose. Once he performs his designated task, Haiel plans to magically transport him to a remote section of the Northern Ocean where he can live out the remainder of his days apart from his prodigy.

Utilizing the malevolent behemoth's preoccupation with procreating as a distraction, an avaricious old black dragon residing in an underground complex near Thebbylar is hurriedly burrowing a tunnel into the metropolis' lower levels. Although he has not reached the city limits yet, the greedy reptile has already discovered several debris fields that yielded hundreds of gold coins, marble sculptures and valuable personal effects.

Lashu Micho

Despite its status as a relative newcomer amongst Wildwood's abundant collection of ancient ruins, its close proximity to the feral domain's seat of power and the surprising success of its former inhabitants make the humble mountainous retreat of mud-brick buildings and primitive technology more significant than many of its more prominent and wealthier counterparts. Perched precariously along the outer rim halfway up the face of the dormant volcano that also houses Haiel's mighty citadel, Lashu Micho overlooks the dense forest canopy blanketing the largest island in the Forge. Now dwelling within this pristine woodland, the descendents of the city's former residents occasionally look toward the sky to gaze upon their abandoned ancestral homeland nearly sixty miles above the surface.

History: Nestled high in the peaks of an immense mountain chain, Lashu Micho served as the spiritual capital of a peaceful race of semi-nomadic humanoids known as the ologatus. Over the course of countless generations, these reclusive hunter-gatherers developed a unique culture rooted in a deep admiration and respect for the omnipotent forces of the natural world. These beliefs coupled with their innate placidity led Haiel to wonder whether these docile people were capable of adapting to life in his hostile domain teeming with murderous plants and savage beasts. Shortly after discovering them, the manipulative overlord of Wildwood built a replica of Lashu Micho midway up the southern slope of the Forge's biggest mountain and then pulled more than 3,500 inhabitants into his feral kingdom. Haiel expected the bitterly cold weather and the hordes of voracious predators to make short work of the timid, technologically impaired humanoids; however much to his surprise, the hardy and resourceful beings quickly adapted to their new habitat. In the brief span of a few weeks, the ologatus abandoned their mountainous hideaway and disseminated throughout the lush forest in the shadow of the impressive volcano. Over the course of the next five millenniums, the ologatus spread throughout the chain of islands stretching across the breadth of the Northern Ocean, while their former refuge stands neglected and all but forgotten.

Overview: Lashu Micho is one of the Forge's most inaccessible and inhospitable locales. Built upon an expansive plateau sixty miles above the ground, the deserted city is virtually bereft of any breathable air despite the fact that bitter, arctic winds constantly buffet its structures, making the already frigid air temperature of ten degrees below zero feel more like sixty degrees below zero. As a result, creatures making the long, arduous trek up the jagged but icy side of the mountain must somehow overcome the extreme cold and altitude sickness in order to survive. (The *DMG* describes the effects of extreme cold and oxygen deprivation.) Much to the surprise of the few explorers that have made the perilous journey to the elusive settlement, the frozen ruins are nearly intact and not covered by dense layers of snow or ice. Nonetheless, a pervasive coating of permafrost makes the ground extremely slippery as well as forming a nearly impenetrable seal around the buildings' closed portals.

Inhabitants: No living creatures dwell within Lashu Micho on a permanent basis; however several noteworthy creatures reside nearby and occasionally scavenge the site for food, temporary shelter or its reputed treasures. The most formidable of these denizens is Varrangiloth, an ancient white dragon making his abode in an ice cavern complex ten miles away from the ruined civilization. Not surprisingly, the greedy dragon considers Lashu Micho part of his territory, a notion that leads to minor skirmishes between the rapacious reptile and a tribe of frost giants that also claims the land as their own. Like their rival, the mighty beings also inhabit a network of frigid caverns; however their home lies on the opposite side of the forsaken settlement.

Secrets: The ologatus left behind a wealth of gems and precious metals when they abandoned their city, yet the prize most coveted by fortune hunters is undoubtedly their storeroom of medicinal potions. Although frozen for more than 5,000 years, few believe that the mystical elixirs have lost any of their potency or effectiveness. According to ologatu legend, as many as 1,000 vials remain unaccounted for and are reputed to lie somewhere within Lashu Micho. The folklore goes on to say that the civilization's riches are only reachable through a treacherous honeycomb

of tunnels, antechambers and galleries that wind their way throughout the side of the mountain. The veracity of this myth is supported by the fact that Lashu Micho's draconic and giant neighbors remain unable to locate the magical liquid despite numerous intensive searches over the last several thousand years.

Hsang-Tao

This crumbling settlement in the middle of northern Wildwood is an oddity in nearly every respect. Once the impromptu capital of a nomadic kingdom of humanoid horse archers, the ruins seem out of place with their former occupants and their current location. Obviously not the handiwork of uneducated barbarians, the walled city of colorful pagodas and exquisite architecture greatly contrasts with the surrounding sea of coniferous trees and its previous inhabitants' uncouth culture. Nevertheless, Hsang-Tao is northern Wildwood's preeminent lost civilization.

History: Fifteen thousand years ago, an aggressive tribe of humans swept across the rolling plains of their native world like a summer squall racing through the flatlands. Practically born and bred in the saddle, the horde of wild horsemen armed with an incredibly strong and deadly accurate longbow decimated every foe that stood in their path. Within less than a decade, they founded a vast empire encompassing roughly twenty million square miles of fertile grasslands. Yet, as their territory rapidly expanded, they learned that it was impossible to effectively govern conquered peoples from the backs of their mighty steeds as they thundered across the steppe. As a result, the tribe's administrators and armed garrisons began settling down in important cities throughout their realm, adopting many of the native customs and traditions in an effort to provide some degree of political familiarity to the subjugated citizens.

The barbarians' remarkable and swift transition from uncivilized warmongers to urbanites greatly impressed Haiel as he watched the drama unfold from the confines of his foreboding citadel. The curious blade of the green wondered if the resourceful humanoids had the mettle to duplicate the same feat albeit within the untamed woodlands of his wild domain. To test his hypothesis, Haiel constructed an exact replica of Hsang-Tao, an ancient metropolis of astrologers and sages that served as their capital. After completing his fabrication, Wildwood's anxious master pulled their entire assembly of civil servants and armed warriors into his unruly realm. Much to Haiel's shock, the cagey humanoids inexplicably floundered in their new environment. Unable to negotiate their mounts through the labyrinth of mighty trees and across the yielding footing, the renowned cavalrymen soon succumbed to a bevy of agile and powerful natural predators. Less than three days after their arrival the horsemen lay dead, and their settlement stood deserted.

Overview: The relatively small city of Hsang-Tao occupies a twenty acre tract of land in the interior section of the narrowest stretch of northern Wildwood. Although separated from the adjacent wilderness by an expertly crafted, twenty-five foot high mortar wall that comprises its entire perimeter, towering pines trees now dominate its spacious courtyards while dense masses of overgrown foliage drape the ornamental, crimson roof tiles of its magnificent pagodas. While the structural damage caused by Wildwood's unchecked vegetation and its temperamental weather is extensive, it pales in comparison to the havoc wreaked by looters over the course of the past fifteen millenniums. Eerie, discolored sections of flooring delineate where magnificent statues once stood, while conspicuous abscesses in the walls, floors, furniture and other decorative surfaces mark the spots where thieves pried inlaid precious stones and gems from their rightful place. Because of the rampant plundering, Hsang-Tao is merely a shadow of its former glory.

Inhabitants: Thoroughly stripped of any monetary treasures, the settlement is now dominated by an assortment of malevolent beasts and lycanthropes. Dire animals, particularly rats and wolves freely roam the streets and buildings along with their sentient cousins, the wererats and werewolves. The more powerful werewolves tend to occupy Hsang-Tao's more opulent residences, temples and administrative buildings, while their weaker rivals are predominately relegated to the more rundown and neglected sections of the city. In addition to these living inhabitants, specific locales scattered throughout the city are still haunted by the vengeful spirits of the fallen barbarians, although their numbers continue to dwindle with the passing millenniums.

Secrets: During its heyday, the cultured metropolis was known as the City of Eyes, a moniker attributable to its significant population of astrologers and learned men. Kings and generals relied upon the prognostic abilities of its seers to foretell future events. Naturally, Hsang-Tao's originators foresaw the emergence of the barbarian hordes; therefore the reigning monarch along with his inner circle of trusted advisors and fortune tellers secretly fled the city the night before the horsemen arrived, taking most of their personal valuables with them. However, logistical difficulties prevented them from absconding with Hsang-Tao's most powerful and revered artifact, Quang-Tse's Censer of Revealing. Covered in cryptic runes, the massive bronze bowl weighs more than 1,000 pounds and lies in a hidden basement within one of pagodas. Legend claims that anyone burning incense within the magical device can see his own future and subsequently alter his own destiny.

Monndant

If Haiel were to rank the events that gave him the most pleasure during his illustrious tenure as the ruler of Wildwood, the destruction of the city of Monndant and its haughty residents would undoubtedly place somewhere near or at the top of his list. An unprecedented level of arrogance and obnoxiousness ran rampant throughout its elitist populace, instilling a condescending attitude amongst its citizenry. They boasted of their inherent superiority in comparison to their fellow humanoids and even went as far as to proclaim their triumph over the forces

of nature. Needless to say, these bold statements incited Haiel's ire and led to the death of thousands of its inhabitants.

History: Monndant emerged in the unlikeliest of places, an uncivilized world ravaged by countless millenniums of senseless violence and perpetual warfare. Amidst this climate of endless carnage, its enlightened founders established the fortified settlement as the last refuge of knowledge in a realm consumed by petty squabbles and widespread ignorance. Learned people from the most distant lands flocked to the oasis of intellect and wisdom in unprecedented numbers, causing the cosmopolitan metropolis' population to meteorically rise from a couple of hundred individuals to well over 20,000 residents in the brief span of twenty years. Unfortunately, the sudden influx of humanoids and their valuables attracted the interest of the warmongering hordes looking for booty, forcing Monndant to implement numerous defensive measures to repel the plundering barbarians from their city. An enormous moat and a series of deep trenches soon sprang up around the exterior wall that also witnessed a startling transformation from a humble wooden palisade into a mighty, reinforced concrete structure forty feet high and two feet thick with hundreds of arrow slits enabling its defenders to rain volleys of arrows down upon their foes from a position of relative safety. These security precautions worked to perfection, allowing Monndant's citizens to devote their energies to more intellectual pursuits. Remarkable advances in the humanities and science led to the rapid development of new philosophies, ideologies and technologies. Emboldened by these groundbreaking discoveries, its overly proud leaders declared that they had not only accomplished a resounding victory against the scourge of ignorance, but that they had also subjugated the natural world to their will. These provocative statements coupled with the cavalier demeanor exhibited by its people prompted Haiel to take action. He hastily constructed a facsimile of the city and then pulled 4,000 startled citizens in his feral domain where a veritable sea of hungry predators awaited their arrival. The ensuing slaughter bordered on the comical as Monndant's stuffy gentlemen and prim ladies inanely attempted to reason with the savage beasts and monstrous humanoids bearing down on them. The almost laughable scene lasted less than an hour, yet despite its brief duration, the debacle brought an elusive smile to Haiel's normally expressionless face.

Overview: Monndant lies 390 miles due west of the dover settlement of Pindara in the heart of central Wildwood. Although its once impressive moat and formidable trenches are now little more than quagmires of mud and loose debris, most of Monndant is largely intact. Despite the passage of ten millenniums since its initial appearance in Wildwood, the two mile long exterior wall and its only accessible entrance, a massive, extended drawbridge, remain unbroken and largely undamaged except for some rot in the wood and several deep fissures in the stone. Primarily constructed from concrete, the buildings inside of Monndant's impressive walls are also in relatively good shape. The city consists predominately of two and three story residences clustered together with some larger buildings such as churches, government offices and fabulous estates interspersed throughout the metropolis. Cobblestone streets prevalent throughout the city prevent the feral domain's encroaching foliage from taking root; therefore vines and other green plants that do not require nourishment from the soil are the only forms of vegetation found within its foreboding walls. Despite the civilization's technological and intellectual advancements, its architectural style appears simplistic and bland.

Inhabitants: Bereft of trees and most varieties of plants, Monndant is an inhospitable environment for the overwhelming majority of the untamed domain's predators. As a result, the massive stronghold provides permanent shelter for some of Wildwood's humanoid inhabitants, most notably its significant population of gnolls and fausts. Both factions possess unrestricted access to Monndant's only entrance; however the gnolls control the majority of the metropolis, while the fausts remain squarely in the minority. Tensions between the two rivals are usually high, leading to frequent skirmishes between the warring factions. Haiel exacts tremendous enjoyment from this strange political arrangement, as he considers the city's habitation by these two relatively ignorant and aggressive races as the ultimate irony in this sad affair.

Secrets: Monndant's residents did not dabble in magic, yet their technological achievements more than compensate for their disdain for the mystical arts. Rumors persist that the gnolls and fausts occupying the city occasionally brandish unusual iron rod-like contraptions that they refer to as "firesticks". Many also claim that massive stockpiles of these weapons as well as an assortment of powerful incendiary devices remain concealed somewhere beneath Monndant. More importantly, it is generally surmised that the more valuable design plans and blueprints for these inventions as well as countless other written works are housed within the city's voluminous library.

Quaymong Monastery

It is rare that a single building and its occupants interest Haiel; however the beautifully crafted abode and martial training center for an unusual order of monks were an exception to the rule. These experts in the study of unarmed combat espoused a philosophy that the harmonious synthesis between mind and body created a force that no opponent could defeat. Never one to let such a boast go unchallenged, the inquisitive blade of the green meticulously recreated the compound within a remote corner of eastern Wildwood and then put its occupants to the ultimate test of survival. Despite waging a valiant struggle, the masters of advanced logic and enlightened reason eventually succumbed to the overwhelming power of primeval instinct and mindless brutality.

History: Few locales have undergone the odd transformation experienced by the Quaymong Monastery. Constructed more than nine millenniums ago, the buildings and grounds originally served as a privately funded sanitarium for the mentally ill. Its gradual transition from mental asylum to sanctuary of inner peace resulted from the actions and beliefs of one courageous man, the legendary cleric/monk, Win Jong Do. Combining his magical curative abilities with his unique perspectives on the hidden powers of the mind, the compassionate administrator brought lasting mental and spiritual healing to his patients. Eternally grateful to their physician for his selfless assistance and unwavering devotion, the overwhelming majority of those cured became his staunch disciples, adopting his doctrines and emulating his simplistic way of life. Over the next two and a half centuries, Win Jong Do's successors continued along the trailblazing path originated by their predecessor until the order's tragic rendezvous with Wildwood's curious overlord brought ruination to the brotherhood.

By the time of their arrival in Haiel's untamed domain, four hundred residents dwelt within the monastery on a permanent basis. One-quarter of this number consisted of former patients, while the remainder was a mix of administrators, instructors and other humanoids longing for a better life within the compound's protective walls. Naturally, the evolution in the complex's social dynamics also gave rise to their fundamental tenet that the harmonious union between mind and body empowered the individual to conquer their surroundings. Unfortunately for Quaymong Monastery's residents, this pervasive belief piqued Haiel's interest. Intent on proving the brotherhood wrong, he fabricated a precise duplicate of Quaymong Monastery in an isolated valley of eastern Wildwood nestled between two tendril-like mountain ranges from Anvil. After completing his architectural masterpiece, Haiel summoned a vast sea of wild beasts and wicked monsters outside of the settlement's walls and then pulled all 400 of its inhabitants into his carefully orchestrated deathtrap. Although grossly outnumbered by their savage opponents, the determined monks repelled the continuous onslaught of vicious predators for four days and nights before the overwhelming force finally broke through their defenses and mercilessly slew every member of the order.

Overview: Wispy clouds of vaporous fog and light mist obscure the monastery's fading burgundy tile roof as it rests peacefully beneath the imposing shadow of the surrounding peaks. Despite the horrific carnage that took place here countless years ago, visitors frequently claim to hear the distant ringing of wind chimes echoing through the lush forest, hypnotically beckoning them to trespass onto its hallowed ground. Irrespective of its outward tranquility, a closer inspection of the remarkable structure clearly conveys its martial intentions. Forty sinister tourmaline statues of serpentine dragons line its perimeter, seemingly intent on dissuading intruders from entering the compound. The stone guardians stand outside of a twenty-foot high concrete wall that surrounds the hexagonal structure inside of it. A barely discernable trail of carefully arranged, carved stones leads from an unmanned gate in the exterior wall through an overgrown courtyard before ending at a barred portal on the south face of the building. Beyond the massive, meticulously carved entrance into the monastery, a series of parallel and perpendicular corridors allow access to its internal chambers. Sliding balsa and silk panels separate the rooms from the hallways, casting eerie silhouettes on the translucent portals, while interlocking sheets of mahogany form the chambers' walls, floor and ceiling. An unnerving silence permeates the entire area, filling adventurers wandering through its corridors and chambers with an inescapable feeling of dread.

Inhabitants: Despite the pervasive quietness, the monastery is not deserted. Spectres bearing a striking resemblance to Quaymong's monks haunt the desolate hallways, rooms and grounds, looking to exact vengeance against all living creatures they encounter. In addition to these incorporeal inhabitants, several clusters of phase spiders also stalk the monastery, stealthily picking off animals and humanoids straying too close to their lairs. Brutish athaches from the hills and mountains of neighboring Anvil frequently roam the unspoiled woodlands outside of the compound's imposing walls, viciously slaying anything crossing their path.

Secrets: Blessed with astute insight into the workings of the human mind and body, the brotherhood of Quaymong is reputed to have transcribed their knowledge into a series of manuals describing their findings. Before their stronghold fell, the monks magically altered the text's appearance and then dispersed the seemingly blank pages in the floor boards, walls and hidden recesses throughout the building. Reading the reassembled books grants the character a permanent inherent bonus to their Constitution, Dexterity, Intelligence or Strength score.

Chapter 8: The Bounty of the Sea

"The elf fisherman cast his net into the pristine waters of the lake and only a few minutes later, his net contained enough fish to feed a small army."

-- A popular story prevalent throughout Vertumnos

Forever overshadowed by the vast expanses of lush, vibrant greenery and boundless forests of ancient trees towering high above the fertile earth, the vital waterways bordering and intersecting the primeval domain also teem with an abundance of life. Immense fields of aquatic plant life thrive in the nutrient rich sediment lining the floor of Wildwood's oceans, rivers and lakes, while blankets of green and blue algae cover the surface of its placid waters. Its depths contain a wondrous array of marine animals ranging from immense schools of small but extremely belligerent species of predatory fish to the mammoth moab, a behemoth whale dwelling within the Forge's Northern Ocean. Two sentient races predominately lord over the underwater domain, the ceptus in the Northern Ocean and the trusks in the Central Ocean. Although these two factions clearly exert the most influence over the affairs of their respective oceans' denizens, they are hardly alone beneath the waves. Indigenous oceanic inhabitants such as dolphins, locathahs and merfolk comprise the majority of the Northern Ocean's population supplemented by rapidly growing communities of aquatic elves and humans colonizing its extensive network of coral reefs. Surprisingly, the ceptus account for a meager five percent of the Northern Ocean's residents, although they compensate for their lack of numbers with superior intellect, organization and sheer magical might. In stark contrast, the trusk attained their supremacy of the Central Ocean as a result of their demanding demeanor and prolific quantity. They make up roughly sixty-five percent of the Central Ocean's sentient population, an amount marginally rivaled by the impassive tribes of locathahs that amazingly co-exist with their clamorous neighbors. Much smaller enclaves of dolphins, sahuagins, ceptus, makkrus, merfolk and various humanoid species also inhabit the Central Ocean, although they typically interact with the trusks on a very infrequent basis.

Unlike its oceans, Wildwood's two largest lakes and its four primary rivers support a rich and diverse assortment of natural predators dominated by the armamen, a bizarre but intelligent race of beings combining the anatomical features of humanoids and crustaceans. These solitary and highly territorial hunters primarily stalk the dark recesses of Lake Amuwatu with a much smaller presence in the vile waters of Lake Lagusa, although they are slowly infiltrating the lakes' coastal regions and the tributary rivers flowing into them. Beyond their domain, the armamen cede their superiority to an eclectic host of familiar and alien aquatic creatures. Vicious man-eating sharks patrol the seemingly tranquil waters in search of fresh prey while frenetic clusters of aggressive fish hungrily devour anything unfortunate enough to cross their path. Life within the crowded rivers abides by the same rule that governs the land, survival of the fittest.

In addition to the hazards posed by the rivers' bloodthirsty killers, their treacherous currents and steep waterfalls also claim their share of victims. Unlike the rivers flowing through the neighboring domain of Penance, Wildwood's rivers are shallow and winding with numerous stretches of perilous rapids and jagged rocks. The harsh conditions restrict most of its waterborne traffic to a small fleet of hardy vessels specifically constructed to deal with the aforementioned natural obstacles. Navigated by expert guides and manned by experienced crews of native humanoids accustomed to the rivers' whimsical temperament, these skiffs offer the only relatively safe passage to anyone daring enough to venture into the heart of the domain's untamed wilderness.

The Northern Ocean

The dominion of the Ceptu Nation encompasses nearly all of the Northern Ocean generally attributed to Wildwood. The cooperative's might reigns supreme as the overwhelming majority of their subordinates willingly accept the ceptus' inclusive philosophy and imposed tranquility, yet a few pockets of insurgents stubbornly hold out against the ceptus' generally benign overtures. The stiffest resistance comes from roving bands of trusk and sahuagin guerillas predominately based around the chain of smaller islands southwest of Haiel's citadel. Hidden strongholds ensconced within the islands' shelves enable the two factions to rapidly launch crippling raids against the ceptu and surface vessels and then quickly disappear without a trace. Although they outwardly ascribe to a political agenda of truskan and sahuagin independence, most oceanic natives perceive them as nothing more than opportunistic pirates and murderers adopting the guise of oppressed rebels. The ceptus exhibit no tolerance for the groups' violent activities, deploying the full brunt of their military and economic resources towards the complete eradication of the insurrectionists. In an affirmation of their political sensitivity and flexibility, the ceptus employ a diplomatic approach to resolve their differences with the wild and barbaric makkru tribes roaming Wildwood's northernmost shores along its border with Eclipse. While relations between them remain cool, the ceptus remain convinced that they can sway their feral rival's outlook through dialogue and reason rather than a display of brute force.

As the ceptus wage an intellectual battle for the devotion of their loyal constituents beneath the waves, the wealthiest inhabitants of Penance engage in a gaudy and ostentatious display of their vast riches on the open waters of the Northern Oceans. Extravagant

cruise ships boasting sprawling accommodations, top-flight entertainment, the finest food and beverages and all the other trappings of unimaginable luxury shuttle the domain's elite citizens from their various bloodholds and settlements to Wildwood's resort destination of Canopus. The pageant of magnificent vessels usually hugs Wildwood's northern coastline, allowing its intelligent residents to gape and marvel at the ultimate exposition of vanity and arrogance, while allowing the passengers an exquisite view of Wildwood's natural beauty. Despite the interest paid to the amazing pleasure crafts sailing through the Northern Ocean's waters, they are slightly outnumbered by the much larger but considerably less attractive commercial vessels carrying timber, fruits, livestock and other commodities from Wildwood to the other domains. The largest percentage of oceanic ships travels between Penance and Wildwood with lesser numbers venturing to Arena and Anvil respectively.

The Northern Ocean is fully detailed in Chapter 6 of Oathbound: *Plains of Penance*.

The Central Ocean

In the minds of the ocean's other sentient races, the trusks believe there is no need to earn respect when they can simply demand it. Benefiting from prolific numbers and their inherent obtrusiveness, the truskan overlords of the Central Ocean rule their domain with their domineering demeanor backed by the implicit threat of military force. While the ceptus aspire to reach a mutually acceptable agreement through reason and gentle persuasion, the trusks obtain resigned acquiescence through incessant badgering and implacable obstinacy. Trusks dwelling close to Wildwood's shores are particularly intrusive and suspicious, traits that their subordinates merely dismiss as another unpleasant facet of their normally abrasive personalities; however an economic motivation provides the impetus for these annoying characteristics. Bereft of the oceangoing traffic generated by the cosmopolitan cities and towns of Penance, the Central Ocean offers the trusks few opportunities to enrich their coffers by levying a tariff on passing vessels. The few mariners navigating through its waters generally remain very close to shore, careful to avoid the trusks and the turbulent waves present off the coast of neighboring Anvil. Deprived of their cherished cash cow, they instead resort to aiding stalwart and intrepid adventurers delving below the surface in a quest to unlock the secrets concealed within the Central Ocean's depths. They sell their newfangled gadgets, rare substances and the most valuable commodity of all, information, to surface dwelling explorers searching for lost humanoid cities and towns buried beneath the thin layer of silt on the ocean floor. The overwhelming majority come to find the fabled city of Datchu, reputedly located a few miles off Wildwood's southern coast. Despite the allure of instant wealth and notoriety, the volume of brave pioneers venturing into the trusks' harsh domain remains very limited. Even if they survive the ordeal and somehow manage to elude the trusks, adventurers exploring the Central Ocean's bottom are painfully aware that the domain's rugged and untamed shoreline of crocodile infested swamps and intensely hot, sandy beaches pose another formidable threat.

The Central Ocean is fully detailed in Chapter 6 of Oathbound: *Arena*.

Lakes

Despite the omnipresence of water, the domain contains only two lakes of any significance, Lake Amuwatu and Lake Lagusa. Situated deep within the heart of the deciduous forest, the two immense bodies of tranquil water flank the breathtaking city of Pindara, the center of dover culture and religion. While Lake Lagusa augments the natural beauty of their astounding settlement, Lake Amuwatu provides the city's residents with an inexhaustible supply of drinking water and fresh seafood. The lakes' waters feed numerous meandering streams and brooks as well as two of the domain's largest and most noteworthy rivers. On the surface, the lakes appear completely docile; however hungry predators and an expansionistic race of intelligent beings lurk within their dark depths.

Lake Amuwatu

Lake Amuwatu is the decisively larger of the two great lakes, encompassing a total area roughly four times greater than its lesser counterpart. Its peaceful southern shore borders the wondrous city of Pindara, allowing the dovers to harvest its bounty of delectable aquatic plants and net a sizeable catch of delicious fish and crustaceans. Along a particular stretch of the lake's southern shore approximately ten miles west of Pindara, a hardy crop of wild umbossa, a gigantic variety of kelp unique to this locale, thrives in the lake's fertile soil. Although occasionally eaten raw, it is predominately used as a flavoring agent, replacing the mundane tastes of salt and sugar with a pungent aroma and a blissful bittersweet taste. Two species of fish, the razor trout and harried crawfish are also highly coveted by the region's indigenous residents. The razor trout appears anatomically similar to its more prevalent and timid cousins, the brook and rainbow trout; however unlike its relatives, the voracious predator attains a maximum weight of fifteen pounds and sports multiple rows of oversized, sharp teeth and a belligerent demeanor. Irrespective of its ill temper, the fish is renowned for the sumptuous taste of its fleshy, ivory meat, making it one of the domain's most valuable aquatic commodities. Because its demand always exceeds its availability, some enterprising entrepreneurs attempted to transplant the fish to other waters in Wildwood and Penance; however all such efforts inexplicably end in failure. Likewise, the harried crawfish also resists any endeavors to forcibly remove it from its native environs. The scavenging crustacean is primarily a bottom feeder, devouring scraps of meat left behind by larger predators. Despite its unappetizing diet of rotting flesh, the frenetic carnivore fetches a hefty price on the Forge's open

market, transforming the humble marine creature into a status symbol among the Forge's elite citizens. Famous for the tenderness and buttery flavor of its supple white meat, the Forge's greatest chefs make a pilgrimage to the remote locale to sample the fresh variety of the tantalizing crustacean. Although these treasures are the most familiar to the Forge's inhabitants, adventurers come to the lake's seemingly placid shores in search of the mysteries concealed below its surface.

Fortunately for these daring explorers, the lake's deepest point lies a meager 220 feet below the surface, while its average depth is 105 feet. While a host of predatory fish and aquatic plants dominate the wildlife along its shores, the lake's central portion remains under the dominion of the armamen, a strange hybrid race combining humanoid and crustacean characteristics. In the distant past the armamen initially inhabited the Northern and Central Oceans, primarily concentrated along Wildwood's coastal regions. The fiercely independent race of solitary, nomadic hunters incessantly clashed with the inclusive philosophies of the ceptus and the unwavering demands of the trusks. As a result, the numerically and magically inferior creatures eventually retreated from the oceans and adjacent rivers before finally settling within the lake's relative security. Explorers diving into Lake Amuwatu's temperate waters are practically certain to encounter the territorial creatures while venturing through their underwater realm.

Lake Lagusa

Although only a quarter of the size of its northern brethren, the smaller lake's marine life is more populous and diverse than its substantially larger neighbor. From the safety of the lake's extensive beach, the water radiates with prismatic hues emanating from an eclectic assortment of plant and animal species residing within the outwardly calm lake. Unfortunately for the dovers and the other indigenous residents dwelling along its shores, practically none of the lake's dense fields of colorful seaweed and its countless schools of ravenous fish is edible. While not toxic, Lake Lagusa's marine plants emit a foul, unpleasant aroma and an incredibly bitter, earthy taste that no flavoring can adequately mask. Druids speculate that the unusual phenomenon results from a high concentration of sulfur interspersed with the lake bottom's loose, granular silt. However, unlike the native plant life, the marine animals' physiology proves incapable of metabolizing the water's toxins, as the poison gradually but inevitably leads to their death. As a result, Lake Lagusa's inhabitants accelerate their growth and propagate their numbers at a prolific rate, producing ten times more offspring than normal. Through this method, the natives ensure their continued survival through mass reproduction.

Adventurers shy away from harvesting the tainted lake's biological resources, and instead focus their efforts on obtaining the precious minerals mixed alongside the sulfuric deposits. Gold and platinum nuggets weighing anywhere from a few grams to several pounds cower a few inches beneath the porous soil invariably attracting the interest of avaricious treasure seekers. The journey to the lake's bottom is logistically easy as the lake's deepest point lies a mere 95 feet below the surface, while its average depth is only 60 feet. However, such disturbances always draw the attention of the fearsome predators skulking within the tangled mess of vibrant kelp. Dire sharks and aggressive dragon turtles occupy the upper echelon of Lake Lagusa's ecosystem, feasting on hapless surface dwellers foolish enough to venture into their realm. Adventurers managing to elude these massive hunters must still contend with the lake's other terrifying denizens including a small population of armamen as well as rogue schools of xill that inexplicably found their way into this alien environment. Despite the inherent perils, the enticement of wealth continues to ignite the vivid imagination of daring fortune hunters.

Rivers

Wildwood hardly lacks for water, yet the abundance of the precious fluid fails to spawn a viable network of watery highways. The primordial domain's gargantuan trees and pervasive greenery absorb incalculable volumes of the life giving liquid from its fertile soil, placing a significant drain on Wildwood's water supply. As a result, shallow streams only spanning a few feet in width comprise the overwhelming majority of its waterways. The meandering creeks invariably follow the path of least resistance, blazing a winding and often treacherous course through the green labyrinth of trees and shrubbery. The aforementioned traits also apply to Wildwood's four major rivers with the one notable exception, their size. Although largely inaccessible to large commercial and passenger ships, these four rivers serve as vital conduits for outsiders seeking entry into its wild and rugged landscape.

River Gawalagos

Of the four major rivers in Wildwood, River Gawalagos is the most dangerous and least traveled. The river begins as a wide delta within the marshy bayous facing the northwestern shore of the Central Ocean. Islands of mangrove trees and dense clusters of reeds transform the otherwise wide and rolling river into a precarious gauntlet of hidden obstacles and dangerous denizens. The malevolent eyes of dire crocodiles occasionally penetrate the surface, scanning the dank, murky waters for any signs of prey while savage packs of bayowulfs, a carnivorous mutation of freshwater seal, stalk the muddy shores. In addition to the visible hazards, the sweltering, humid environment acts as an incubator for virulent diseases and bloodthirsty insects. Navigating through the twisting maze of vegetation proves impossible with any vessel larger than a small rowboat. Complicating matters further, the numerous

tributaries branching off from the main river make it very easy to become hopelessly lost. After negotiating the hairpin turns and narrow straits found throughout the delta, the river heads due north and expands to a width of 100 feet with an average depth of 75 feet. Despite the river's apparent tranquility, gigantic sea snakes quickly ensnare the unwary as the waterway ventures through the surrounding forest. Furthermore, tribes of feral humanoids such as wild elves and the musai also dwell along the river's banks. As it makes its way through the forest, the towering spires of Anvil's westernmost mountain range become visible when the river nears its ultimate destination, the southern shore of Lake Lagusa.



River Hebrus

Originating within the confines of the illustrious city of Penance, the legendary River Hebrus roams across the rolling plains of Penance before bisecting the border between Arena and Wildwood. In contrast to the River Gawalagos, River Hebrus is perhaps the Forge's most congested river as ships laden with gold from Arena and timber from Wildwood shuttle back and forth between these locales and Penance. In addition to providing a vital conduit for trade and exploitation for the neighboring domains, the expansive river serves a natural bulwark against the ambitious plans of Arena's covetous warlords. Measuring more than 200 feet across with an average depth of 150 feet, the River Hebrus proves too daunting an obstacle even for the avaricious warlords. Unfortunately for Wildwood's indigenous inhabitants and their resources, the River Hebrus only stretches a few hundred miles into its territory before dissipating into dozens of smaller and predominately insignificant rivers.

Wildwood's more radical elements, such as the members of Stalwart Green and some isolated circles of vengeful druids, realize that the river is a vital link between their two rivals. In an effort to disrupt river traffic through Wildwood, adherents to the aforementioned philosophies rain down volleys of arrows and cast spells such as *warp wood* at passing vessels. In addition, druids summon fearsome natural allies to their cause, populating the river with whales, dire sharks and giant varieties of squids and octopi and directing them to attack ships cruising through the Hebrus River. Although their efforts to date remain unsuccessful, an air of uneasiness and trepidation accompanies every vessel making the dangerous trip through the untamed wilderness.

River Malamba

While River Hebrus holds the unenviable distinction as the most congested river, River Malamba lays undisputed claim to the title of most picturesque river. Thrill seekers and naturalists from neighboring domains endure the hazards of the arduous trip to the remote river for the once in a lifetime opportunity to indulge their senses in an orgy of wondrous beauty and heart racing excitement. The river's meandering journey begins at the northeastern shore of Lake Amuwatu and culminates on Wildwood's eastern coast roughly adjacent to the chain of islands situated just offshore. Along the way, hardy and daring explorers experience a multitude of astounding sights and moments of bloodcurdling terror. Native guides offer tourists an unprecedented glimpse of the domain's diverse wildlife within the confines of their natural habitat. The cruise also features stops at the Arch of the Woods, a natural archway formed by interconnected trees that spans the width of the river, and the Castle of Stone, an unusual rock formation of four massive obelisks resembling the spires of a castle. On the other hand, the party's more adventurous members generally partake in the exhilarating but extremely dangerous whitewater rapids ride. In all,

Illustrated by Jeff Ward

River Malamba boasts six waterfalls, including Haiel's Drop, a breathtaking precipice with a vertical descent of 450 feet and Crescent Falls, fifty-five miles of rapids and nearly a week of amazing views and wondrous sounds. Needless to say, guides typically charge a minimum of 1,000 gp per person, leaving this recreational endeavor strictly in the domain of the Forge's wealthiest citizens.

River Tanais

Although the inhabitants of Penance typically distinguish the river's divergent branches with the names Upper Tanais and Lower Tanais, Wildwood's denizens apply the name River Tanais to the latter waterway only. The extremely broad but winding river begins its trek into the heart of the wooded domain at the border city of Sevenil, where the town's undisputed master King Odreck Viminth assesses a 5 gp per mast or engine toll on all ships passing through his dominion. The city is well known for its logging industry, yet it also provides essential services for adventurers partaking in dangerous expeditions into Wildwood's unexplored underbelly. The availability of supplies and equipment as well as the river's ability to support large passenger vessels makes it the most frequently traveled path for rashers seeking fame and fortune in the untamed wilderness. Despite boasting an average width and depth of 200 and 150 feet respectively, its meandering, illogical course riddled with stretches of jagged rocks and invisible underwater obstacles makes it relatively difficult to navigate even for a journeyman sailor. As a result, most explorers wisely commission a vessel skippered by an experienced captain and manned by a crew of seasoned mariners. The ultimate destination for the vast majority of passengers is the bustling port town of Tanastadt more than 300 miles away. A few miles after this vital settlement, the river divides into a host of much smaller tributaries that eventually find their way to the banks of Wildwood's two great lakes. Contrary to popular belief, the volume of waterborne traffic fails to civilize the river's feral banks and depths. Gluttonous schools of xill and several horngills from neighboring Penance lurk beneath the surface while savage humanoids and vicious predators lie in wait along the river's seemingly tranquil shores.

Chapter 9: The Thrill of the Hunt

"Even the mightiest predators shall one day become the prey."

-- Vagramore, an adult green dragon s hortly before his demise.

Throughout Wildwood's vast, primordial expanses, a savage and mortal drama endlessly unfolds as the lives of the unwitting characters in Haiel's theatrical masterwork constantly hang in the balance. The grand spectacle depicting the terrifying struggle between life and death serves as a grisly and self-gratifying form of entertainment for the feral domain's observant overlord. For initiates to the wild and unruly landscape, the supreme hunter's interest in the primeval contest of strength and speed reinforces their perception of him as nothing more than a cruel manipulator with an insatiable thirst for blood. While Wildwood's indigenous inhabitants generally agree with the viewpoint's basic premise; they are also quick to add that their master's motives and personality are not as bestial or simplistic as the preceding assertion implies. The first portion of the axiom certainly holds true as Haiel clearly displays no concern for his subjects' ultimate wellbeing, intentionally placing them in precarious situations and then callously watching the barbaric combat progress with exuberant delight. The difficulties arise with the latter part of the assumption that a lust for carnage serves as the primary impetus for Haiel's actions. Although Haiel demonstrates no aversion to the copious spilling of blood, an almost childlike curiosity and his love of power rather than a salacious taste for gore predominately accounts for his motivation. In his mind, he merely acts as the author and director of a tragic play, pitting his protagonists and antagonists against one another as he passionately awaits the outcome of his exhilarating production. To him, Wildwood is the stage, and he is its willingly captive audience.

Haiel's voyeuristic attitude toward the hunt slowly evolved over the span of countless centuries. Prior to his incarceration on the Forge, he was the Defender of Nature on a distant world and the trusted friend of the forest's native residents and druids. However, nothing in his demeanor or background prepared him for the dire prospect of spending an eternity confined to a stark wasteland entirely devoid of life and natural beauty. Like his comrades, his domain initially consisted of nothing more than a citadel until he and the other Feathered Fowl discovered their ability to pull creatures, places and even entire worlds onto the dreary prison planet. Anxious to reshape his realm into the likeness of his former home, Haiel created a lush, vibrant world teeming with life. Verdant forests, dense jungles and watery swamps quickly covered the barren landscape, once again bestowing a sense of purpose to the previously downtrodden sentinel of the divine penitentiary. Exhilarated by the sudden appearance of wildlife, he actively partook in the domain's hunting festivities, eagerly pursuing his quarry throughout the remote recesses of the boundless wilderness, even though his avatar did not require earthly sustenance. Although initially content with this endless cycle of life and death, the accomplished hunter eventually realized that his virtually godlike abilities deprived him of the thrill of the chase because he always came out on top. In response to this dilemma and his rapidly escalating ennui, he incessantly scanned other worlds searching for the fiercest and deadliest predators imaginable to populate his increasingly violent domain as well as occasionally adopting the role of impassioned observer rather than active participant. Haiel's monumental decision irreparably changed the face of Wildwood as the recently imported fearsome beasts and ravenous plants quickly eliminated their weaker competitors, transforming the placid marvel of unparalleled natural beauty into a deadly and feral environment. Haiel excitedly tested the mettle of the domain's upstart residents, resulting in a number of brushes with defeat and the destruction of his avatar in three separate incidents. Invigorated by his challengers but also frightful of his own mortality, Haiel decided to temper the realm's bestial nature by pulling previously unknown sentient races and civilizations into the mix, watching the ensuing fray through the eyes of his spies or from a reasonably safe distance. The interaction between the disoriented humanoids and the vicious wildlife intrigued him, prompting him to construct exacting replicas of their cities and settlements before transplanting the unsuspecting individuals into his grand experiment. Over time, his role evolved from that of an involved member in the ecosystem into that of a detached onlooker using Wildwood and the lives of its inhabitants as an immense laboratory for his personal amusement.

Nonetheless, Haiel's primal urge to hunt never completely wanes, and on rare occasions the domain's greatest predator takes to the field in search of prey. Not surprisingly, he takes little pleasure slaying a wild beast predominately motivated to kill by hunger and instinct, and he instead sets his sights on intelligent beings spurred to slaughter by more complex reasons. As a result of his predilection for sentient prey, humanoids, especially dovers and wild elves comprise the majority of his quarry, although he also displays an appetite for dragon flesh as well. As a special treat he particularly enjoys pulling braggarts from alien lands onto his untamed playground, relentlessly taunting them with their own words as he doggedly hounds the terrified foe before rending his hapless adversary into pieces with his mighty spear. Haiel relishes a challenge; therefore whenever he is on the prowl, he relies exclusively upon his inherent tracking ability and land-based movement to locate and corner his intended victim. Once he traps his opponent Haiel's trusty spear finishes his handiwork as it tears through its target's flesh and bone with remarkable precision and terrifying power.

In addition to sating his instinctual desires, Haiel infrequently partakes in a hunt for a more cerebral purpose. Unlike the other Feathered Fowl, he freely

Illustrated by Terry Pavlet



accepts his fate and endeavors to maintain his lofty position for the remainder of eternity. While his counterparts consciously groom successors from the ranks of heroes pulled into their domains, the magical shackles of the Great Oath simultaneously compels them to defend their citadel against all challengers, creating a perpetual and irresolvable internal conflict. Unfettered by this futile quandary and his goal to retain his mastery over his dominion, he deliberately attempts to destroy any intelligent creature that poses a challenge to his reign. Incredibly powerful but stupid monsters pose no threat to him because they lack the wherewithal to usurp his role as Wildwood's supreme guardian. As a result of his attitude toward these horrific beasts, their population and potency continues to grow largely unabated. When forced to take action, Haiel prefers to undertake the endeavor indirectly, utilizing the aforementioned, indigenous denizens to perform his dirty work as he avidly watches his carefully deliberated plan come to fruition. In the rare instances that his schemes fail, he hunts the creature personally, although he employs all of his abilities, including his flight capability and magical powers to utterly destroy his quarry.

Life and the Hunt

No economic, social or political activity even comes close to rivaling the importance of the hunt in the lives of Wildwood's inhabitants. While the bloodlords of Penance and the warlords of Arena gauge their accomplishments based upon the furtherance of their political and militaristic ambitions respectively, survival is the only measure of success applicable to Wildwood's predators. The hunt serves as the focal point for all forms of life from its tiniest insects to its most advanced civilizations. The need for sustenance provides the primary motivation for hunting; however the activity also serves as an important cultural event for many of the domain's sentient races. Instinct and hunger drive wild animals and beasts to remorselessly kill other creatures for food, but among intelligent beings, the decision to slay another living entity for a meal presents a moral dilemma for some of its practitioners. Wildwood's evil denizens such as the various goblinoid races and its wicked dragons express no qualms about devouring other forms of life, but for others such as the dovers, elves and the domain's druids and rangers, the hunt is an unfortunate but necessary part of nature. Their need to reconcile their noble values with the reality of hunger transforms the act of hunting from a savage and primeval chase into a pseudo-religious ceremony pleading for communal forgiveness from the fallen prey and the entire natural world.

For these conscientious races, absolution is a spiritual necessity and not just a moral luxury. Cruel monsters and voracious animals see nothing wrong with leaving a half-eaten carcass to slowly rot in the wilderness, but to beings closely attuned to nature, such a travesty is nothing short of a disrespectful, tragic waste of life. In accordance with this belief, every part of the slain creature is put to good use. Meat provides sustenance, whereas skin, fur and bones serve as composite materials for armor, clothing, tools, weaponry and other valuable commodities. Within these cultures, only a few, specifically designated individuals partake in the hunt, granting them a coveted position as de facto religious figures within the community. Naturally, druids and rangers, experts in wilderness survival and tracking, typically assume this role especially within the dover, elf and human settlements scattered throughout the untamed hinterland. Amongst these advanced cultures, the hunters abide by ancient, well-defined traditions and customs handed down for countless generations. While the gnawing pangs of starvation spur voracious animals to stalk their prey, the more civilized version of the hunt commences according to a preordained timeframe usually coinciding with particular celestial events. In most locales in Wildwood, the ceremony begins on Glory at the hour of Stir when the hunters leave the village in search of prey and does not end until they return with their quarry or by the hour of Repast on Linger if their endeavor fails. Their sedentary counterparts greet success with tremendous jubilation as spontaneous celebrations and scenes of unbridled enthusiasm and irreverent debauchery permeate the entire settlement. Surprisingly, the hunters rarely join their brethren in the raucous festivities, preferring to lament the unfortunate loss of life through solemn contemplation and introspection. Eventually, the revelry slowly subsides and the hunters' spirits steadily return, allowing the entire group to partake in a communal feast giving thanks to the prey for sacrificing its individual life for the sustenance of the many. In stark contrast, the depressing sight of the beleaguered hunting party returning empty-handed generates an aura of sadness and contrition. Rather than blaming the failure on the efforts of the hunters, the community universally adheres to the belief that their real or imaginary transgressions resulted in nature withholding its bounty from them. Silence envelopes the village for the balance of the day as its citizens internally reflect on their individual failings and seek reconciliation from the natural world for their faults. Eventually the melancholy breaks, and life returns to normal when the incidents remain isolated occurrences. If failure happens with alarming regularity, political upheaval usually ensues, although in most instances the changing of the guard remains bloodless and surprisingly amicable. Violent revolts are extremely infrequent and only take place when an obstinate individual vehemently refuses to relinquish his position or during periods of prolonged famine.

However, a sizeable portion of Wildwood's sentient predators do not abide by the preceding code of conduct. Humanoid races particularly Wildwood's large population of gnolls and the cannibalistic musai gleefully slay and consume other sentient races primarily to humiliate their victims with sustenance serving merely as a distant afterthought. Other intelligent creatures, most notably dragons, stalk their quarry not only to devour their flesh but also to glean

their material wealth from their battered corpses and add their absconded riches to their voluminous treasure hoards. For a small minority of the domain's resident hunters, food is not even an aside for them as they engage in the thrill of the chase strictly for sport. After securing an apropos trophy from their fallen quarry, usually the prey's lifeless head, the callous beings leave the remainder of the dead carcass for the domain's abundant scavengers. Although Wildwood's dovers and elves greatly dislike the cruel and malicious practices of these less scrupulous races, they intensely loathe the last category of sentient beings. Most of its thrill seeking hunters originates from other domains in search of excitement, viewing the uncharted, expansive wilderness as an immense jungle gym for their personal recreation. The largest percentage undoubtedly hails from the city of Penance, typically beginning their lives as bored, wealthy aristocrats lacking the diplomatic skills necessary to rise through the ranks of its rigid socioeconomic hierarchy. Imbued from birth with an irrepressible desire to dominate and a burning craving for excitement, these erstwhile explorers test their mettle against the unforgiving and harsh woodlands as they search for adventure. The native predators usually turn the tables on these tenderfoot woodsmen, transforming their wistful dream into a horrifying nightmare of terrible carnage. A select few survive their initial foray into the unspoiled wilderness and claim a hunting ground of their own. Often dwelling within a sprawling compound deep in the woods, they live a life of magnificent luxury amidst the constantly encroaching forces of nature, staunchly defending their territory against all unwanted interlopers.



Illustrated by Jeff Ward

Although Wildwood lacks the political boundaries endemic throughout the civilized world, the domain's sentient predators nonetheless acquiesce to an unwritten set of rules that formulate its chain of command. The predators occupying the top rungs of its intricate food chain lord over an expansive hunting ground frequently delineated by carved totems placed intermittently along the borders of its territories. Rival predators from neighboring dominions generally respect the boundaries of their equals, only intruding onto another's stomping grounds in the pursuit of prey. Naturally, lesser predators also populate the locale; however in the presence of the area's master they normally cede the kill to the superior predator. Of course, the distinction between competing predators is not always clear cut. In these instances, some form of confrontation ranging from an open show of force to mortal combat quickly settles the matter. This unofficial rule permeates every facet of Wildwood's ecosystem, creating a political structure resembling the biological equivalent of feudalism. The pecking order provides an effective means of adjudicating hunting rights for every creature from the tiniest insects to the mightiest dragons.

The Mechanics of Hunting

A number of divergent factors spell the difference between bagging an intended kill and failing miserably. Three aspects in particular, speed, stealth and strength, play an incredibly important role in determining the outcome of the pursuit. Predators endowed with amazing speed possess the desirable ability to simply outrun their quarry and attack it. Likewise, stealth enables the hunter to invisibly and silently close the gap between himself and the often surprised victim. Once he moves into range, strength determines his ability to land a lethal blow and quickly slay the target. In addition to these crucial aspects, other factors such as surface conditions, the surrounding terrain and weather also greatly impact the ultimate result of the predator's efforts. The following subsections provide guidance on adjudicating the outcome of wilderness pursuits taking all of the aforementioned elements into consideration.

Stalking

The hunt commences at the exact moment when the predator first sees or hears his intended prey. The Wilderness Adventures section in the *DMG* provides the typical initial spotting distance for most outdoor encounters. (The chart at the end of this paragraph describes how to treat each of Wildwood's terrains as well as a few

more common varieties.) As soon as the predator enters visual or auditory range of its potential prey, the stalker must make a Listen and a Spot skill check to notice its potential victim. The Difficulty Class for both checks is usually DC 20, provided that the prey is not actively employing its Hide or Move Silently skills; otherwise the predator's Listen and Spot skill checks are opposed skill checks. Conversely, the prey also receives the opportunity to utilize its Listen and Spot checks to ascertain the presence of its stalker. Each round, the predator attempts to move closer to its target, relying upon its abilities to remain unseen and move quietly as it approaches its mark. The hunter and its prey continue to make opposed Listen and Spot skill checks until the intended victim ascertains the predator's presence or the hunter moves in close enough to assault its quarry. Naturally, the surrounding terrain and the current weather conditions substantially alter the chances for success. The subsequent charts provide the modifiers to the aforementioned skill checks.

Terrain Effects

The Wilderness Adventures section in the *DMG* provides the effects of terrain upon Listen and Spot skill checks. This chart provides a guideline for applying Wildwood's specific features to the landscapes described in the *DMG*.

Type of Terrain	Treat as
Coniferous forest	Sparse forest
Deciduous forest	Medium forest
Desert	Desert
Jungle	Dense forest
Northern caverns	Rugged mountain
Plains	Plains
Swamp	Swamp
Woods	Moor

Seasonal/Weather Effects

Season	Listen Mod.	Spot Mod.
Blooming	-2	-4
Wasting	0	-2
Seething	+2	0
Sleeping	0	+2

Weather	Listen Mod.	Spot Mod.
Clear day	0	0
Hail	-4	0
Hurricane	(a)	-4
Rain	-4	-4
Snow	-4	-4
Tornado	(a)	0
Wind (21-30 mph)	-2	0
Wind (31-50 mph)	-4	0
Wind (51-75 mph)	-8	0

(a) automatic failure

The Chase

With a quick glance or a sudden perking of its ears, the quarry suddenly becomes aware of the hunter's presence and reacts accordingly, usually fleeing for its life. The desperate chase is more than just a battle of pure speed; it thoroughly tests the competitors' agility, determination, endurance, guile and intuition. While it is relatively easy to run at full speed in a straight line on vast tracts of open plains, the same maneuver proves impossible to perform through dense underbrush or a mass of tangled vines. Similarly, small, nimble creatures experience much less difficulty weaving a meandering path around the landscape's intervening obstacles than a hulking monstrosity. Once again, the season and the weather play an important role, especially under hazardous surface conditions such as when a thick layer of wet leaves or numerous, cylindrical pine cones cover the ground.

While all creatures move according to their base speed, this figure functions as a broad average rather than an exact measurement. For instance, the speed of an unencumbered human is 30 feet; but in reality some humans obviously run faster than 30 feet while others move at a slower pace. Likewise, the same principle applies to all creatures, allowing for a moderate amount of variation among members of the same race or species. The following system is not intended to replace tactical movement as described in the *PHB*, but instead it provides enhanced realism and greater accuracy when adjudicating the outcome of pursuits. GM's are strongly advised not to incorporate this method as a replacement for tactical movement during normal combat situations.

Pursuit

Creatures engaged in a high speed chase elude or capture their opponent by utilizing one of three special move actions, outrun, outmaneuver or outwit. All three actions depend upon an ability score, in this instance Strength, Dexterity and Wisdom respectively. Creatures without an ability score in any of the aforementioned abilities cannot employ the corresponding action. For example, an incorporeal creature does not possess a Strength score; therefore it is impossible for it to outrun a foe. Similarly beings without an Intelligence score, such as a construct, are incapable of employing any of these special move actions. The formula for each creature's pursuit check is as follows.

d20 + ability modifier + special size modifier + other modifiers

Prior to moving, the initiator must declare whether he is attempting to outrun, outmaneuver or outwit his foe. If the character decides that he is going to use one of these special move actions, his adversary may also attempt one of these special move actions if he so desires. The opponents then make opposed pursuit checks to determine the effects resulting from their decision. If the opponent is unable to undertake or decides not to attempt one of the special move actions, then the initiator makes a pursuit check against DC 10 to determine the outcome of his attempt. Pursuit checks are required for each move action the character

undertakes during his turn. Therefore, if the character utilizes his standard action and his move action to move, the opponents make two opposed pursuit checks, one for each action. If he takes a full round action to withdraw or run, the number of pursuit checks is the same as his speed multiple, i.e. a creature running at four times his normal speed must make four pursuit checks during the round. The winner of each opposed pursuit check receives additional square(s) of movement determined by his base speed and the difference between the opposed pursuit checks as described in the following chart. The additional movement is taken immediately, even if it is not the winning creature's turn.

Creature's Base Speed	Difference between opposed pursuit checks			
	1-5	6-10	11-15	16+
Less than 15 ft.	0	+1	+1	+2
16-30 ft.	+1	+1	+2	+2
31-45 ft.	+1	+2	+2	+3
46-60 ft.	+2	+2	+3	+3
61-75 ft.	+2	+3	+3	+4
75 ft. +	+3	+3	+4	+4

A pursuer who gains additional square(s) of movement must move closer to the creature that he is pursuing, while a creature attempting to elude his pursuer must move to the square furtherest from his pursuer. Additional squares of movement acquired in this manner must still conform to the rules governing diagonal movement and difficult terrain as discussed in the *Player's Handbook*. The creature's base speed, as depicted in the preceding chart refers to his current speed including magical augmentation gained from sources such as the spells *expeditious retreat* and *haste*, although there are exceptions to this rule (see the special move action Outrun below). Examples appearing at the end of this section provide additional clarification regarding the adjudication of these three special move actions.

Size and other modifiers: The participants' size plays an important role in determining the hunt's success as huge creatures find it much more difficult to pursue their quarry through a maze of trees than to chase them down on an open plain. The following charts describe the modifiers applicable to the hunter and its prey as a result of their size, the type of terrain and the participants' abilities and skills. Medium-sized creatures do not suffer any penalties or gain any bonuses regardless of the terrain type. These modifiers are added or subtracted from each creature's pursuit check as detailed in **Table 9.1: Hunt Modifiers**.

Other modifiers	
Character has Run feat	+2 (a)
More than two legs	+2 (a) (b)
Creature has tail	+1 (a) (b)
Desperation (see New Feats)	+½ dmg (a)(b)(c)
Moving in an unfamiliar manner*	-2 (a)(b)(c)
5 or more ranks in Balance	+1 (b)
10 or more ranks in Balance	+2 (b)
15 or more ranks in Balance	+3 (b)
20 or more ranks in Balance	+4 (b)
Clumsy flight maneuverability	-4 (b)
Poor flight maneuverability	-2 (b)
Good flight maneuverability	+2 (b)
Perfect flight maneuverability	+4 (b)
5 or more ranks in Survival	+1 (c)
10 or more ranks in Survival	+2 (c)
15 or more ranks in Survival	+3 (c)
20 or more ranks in Survival	+4 (c)

* This category includes creatures moving in a manner other than their listed speed, such as a humanoid wizard employing a *fly* spell or standing atop a *carpet of flying*.

(a) Outrun attempts only
(b) Outmaneuver attempts only
(c) Outwit attempts only

Special Move Actions

As previously mentioned, characters can use three special move actions to evade or gain ground on their foes during a pursuit. Each time a creature uses one of these special move actions, the creature must make a Constitution check (DC 10 + 1 per previous check during the pursuit) or take 1 point of nonlethal damage per round. Once he fails this check, the creature continues taking 1 point of nonlethal damage every round until he is caught or escapes as described in the subsequent subheading Escape.

Outrun: Outrun is most effective on flat, open surfaces with relatively sure footing and a lack of large, imposing obstacles. The character deploying this tactic simply attempts to increase his speed by exerting more energy. When consulting the preceding chart, the creature's base speed is its normal speed without the benefit of any magical or supernatural abilities. For instance, an unencumbered human

Table 9.1: Hunt Modifiers

	Creature's Size								
Terrain Type	**F**	**D**	**T**	**S**	**M**	**L**	**H**	**G**	**C**
Coniferous forest	+2	+1	0	0	0	0	0	-1	-2
Deciduous forest	+4	+2	+1	0	0	0	-1	-2	-4
Desert	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jungle	+8	+4	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-4	-8
Northern caverns	+4	+2	+1	0	0	0	-1	-2	-4
Plains	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swamp	+8	+4	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-4	-8
Woods	+2	+1	0	0	0	0	0	-1	-2

with a normal base speed of 30 ft. receives a *haste* spell that increases his movement by an additional 30 ft. Although the character now moves at a speed of 60 ft., his base speed for purposes of adjudicating the results of an outrun is still 30 ft. In addition, a creature moving by a means other than his own locomotion with the exception of a mounted character cannot attempt to outrun an opponent. This restriction applies to creatures relying upon magical or supernatural abilities as their primary means of locomotion, such as a *carpet of flying* or a *fly* spell. A mounted character uses the mount's Strength check for the pursuit check but the rider cannot use the Ride skill check to spur his mount in conjunction with outrun. The creature determines the outcome of this special move action by making opposed pursuit checks using the following formula.

d20 + Str modifier + special size modifier + other modifiers

Outmaneuver: Outmaneuver is best suited for environments with extremely sure footing and a reasonable amount of intervening impediments. The character quickly changes speed and direction in a deliberate effort to make additional headway against his opponent. A mounted character uses the mount's Dexterity for the pursuit check but the rider can not use the Ride skill check to spur his mount in conjunction with this strategy. The initiator determines the outcome of this special move action by making opposed pursuit checks using the following formula.

d20 + Dex modifier + special size modifier + other modifiers

Outwit: Outwit works to its maximum potential in most types of difficult terrain. The character calls upon his intuition and instinct to anticipate his foe's next move and effectively navigate the terrain by selecting the most direct route. The initiator determines the outcome of this special move action by making an opposed pursuit check against his adversary. If he loses the pursuit check, the character guesses incorrectly, and his opponent immediately moves closer or further away from his adversary (opponent's choice) even though it is not his turn. The foe determines the number of additional squares of movement based upon his current speed and the difference between his check and the initiator's check. Unlike the preceding strategies, a mounted character uses the rider's Wisdom for the pursuit check and the rider can use the Ride skill check to spur his mount in conjunction with this special move action. The initiator determines the outcome of this special move action by making opposed pursuit checks using the following formula.

d20 + Wis modifier + special size modifier + other modifiers

Examples

Example 1: A Medium-sized barbarian hunter under the influence of a *haste* spell moves within 50 feet of a solitary bison before the bison detects the humanoid's presence. The barbarian's base speed is 40 feet, (its normal 30 ft. +10 ft. for its fast movement extraordinary ability), but its current speed is actually 70 feet because of the spell. The bison gets the jump on the hunter and immediately attempts to outrun him by thundering its way through the flat expanses of the rolling grasslands. The bison's base speed is 40 ft. and it adds +9 to its pursuit check because of its +6 Strength modifier, a +2 modifier for having more than two legs and a +1 modifier for its tail. It does not suffer a size penalty because the pursuit is taking place on the open plains. The hunter tries to outmaneuver the bison; therefore he adds his +4, (+3 for his Dex modifier and +1 for 6 ranks of Balance), to his pursuit check. During the bison's move action, it generates a modified result of 23 opposed by the hunter's meager 9. The bison moves an additional 2 squares, allowing it to travel 50 feet. As its standard action, the bison attempts to increase the distance between itself and its pursuer, and this time its modified result exceeds the hunter's figure by 7. The result enables the bison to move an additional two squares again. The bison is now 155 feet from the hunter. Because both parties opted to use these special move actions, each must make a DC 10 Constitution check or suffer one point of nonlethal damage.

Example 2: A gnoll ranger searching for prey on a clear day in a deciduous forest spots a recently transplanted human gathering wild berries from a nearby shrub. At this point, the human is unaware of the hungry predator's gaze as it devours the delicious meal. The gnoll quietly stalks its potential victim, using opposed Hide and Move Silently skill checks to slowly inch closer to the voracious omnivore. When the gnoll closes within 20 feet of its target, it takes a bad step, snapping a dry twig in half that alerts the human to its presence. At this point, the two combatants make initiative rolls, and fortunately for the human, it gets to act first. Unbeknownst to the gnoll, the unencumbered human wears a pair of *winged boots* and opts to activate the boots as his standard action and move 60 feet as his move action, while attempting to outwit the pursuing gnoll. (He cannot outrun the gnoll because a spell or spell-like effect is responsible for his locomotion, i.e. his pair of *winged boots*.) Unfortunately for the human, the gnoll ranger is a wily adversary. Not to be outdone, the gnoll also tries to outwit his human quarry. They make opposed pursuit checks, and the gnoll's result exceeds the human's by six. The human still moves 60 feet, but because he lost the opposed check, the gnoll with a base speed of 30 feet immediately moves one square closer to his target. He now stands 75 feet, instead of 80 feet, away from his quarry. Because they both opted to use one of the special move actions, they must make DC 10 Constitution checks or take 1 point of nonlethal damage.

Escape

Creatures escape from the grasp of their pursuers whenever the distance between the predator and its prey equals or exceeds the terrain's spotting distance at the end of any given round. For instance, the GM determines at the start of the pursuit that the spotting distance within this section of coniferous forest is 120 feet. At the beginning of the chase, the predator stood 50 feet from his intended quarry. Both participants roll initiative checks, and the prey moves first. It utilizes its

move and standard actions to flee the area, moving a total of 80 feet away from the predator. At this point, the creatures are 130 feet apart, but the prey did not escape yet because the predator did not receive its opportunity to act. The predator also uses its move and standard actions to close the gap, but it only manages to move 60 feet closer, shortening the distance between the two parties to 70 feet. The round is now over, and the two participants continue this process until its ultimate resolution.

Similarly fatigue also plays an important role in adjudicating the outcome of any hunt as the prolonged usage of these special move actions deals nonlethal damage. However, physical exertion comprises only one component of fatigue. The predator's frustration exponentially expounds as its intended victim constantly eludes its grasp. When the pursuer starts taking nonlethal damage, it must a Will save (DC 10 + 1 per previous check) at the beginning of each round that it continues the chase. These saving throws apply to all participants including player characters.

Kill

Once the predator catches up to its designated prey, the deadly hunter moves in for the kill. Kill is a special full-round action that allows the creature to move up to double its speed, plus any additional squares of movement gained from outrunning, outmaneuvering or outwitting its opponent, and still make one single melee attack. Although similar to a charge attack, the initiator's movement is not limited to a straight line, and he suffers a -1 penalty to his attack roll for each square of movement that he expended in excess of his speed. For instance, if an elf ranger with a base speed of 30 feet (or six squares) moves 40 feet (or 8 squares) in a single round to attack a fleeing gnoll warrior, the elf suffers a -2 penalty to his melee attack roll. [Eight squares of movement minus six squares of movement (his normal speed) equals two. He suffers a -1 penalty for each square of movement in excess of his normal speed; therefore the total penalty is -2.] It is important to note that the number of squares of movement needed to reach the target determines the penalty rather than the actual distance traveled. Therefore, a pursuer that runs through 10 feet of heavy undergrowth after utilizing his initial move action suffers a -4 penalty to his attack roll instead of a -1 penalty because he needs to spend four squares of movement to pass through a single square of heavy undergrowth. In addition, a character cannot use a kill attack against an opponent that did not move in excess of its base speed during its preceding turn. For instance, a human warrior clad in plate mail armor has a base speed of 20 feet. If the warrior moved 20 feet or less during its preceding turn, an opponent cannot use a kill attack to hit him. However, if the warrior utilized his standard and move action to travel a distance of 40 feet, he is subject to a kill attack because his movement for the round exceeded his base speed. Because of the prerequisites necessary to make this attack, a kill attack is rarely utilized except in pursuit situations.

A Sample Encounter

Artimos, an accomplished elf ranger finally tracks down his hated nemesis, Grogar the wicked orc barbarian in a remote section of Wildwood's deciduous forest. Because the deciduous forest is considered a medium forest, the GM rolls 2d8 and multiplies the result by ten to determine the maximum distance for Spot skill checks. Based upon his roll, he determines that Artimos first spots Grogar standing 60 feet away, and he decides to quietly move forward using the light undergrowth for concealment. Artimos' base speed is normally 30 feet; however earlier in the day, he cast *longstrider* on himself thus increasing his land based speed to 40 feet. Artimos decides not to take any chances, so he only moves at half-speed, allowing him to make opposed Hide and Move Silently checks without any penalties. He opts to use both his move and standard actions to inch closer to his unsuspecting foe, and he wins all of his skill checks, enabling him to move a total of 20 feet closer to Grogar while remaining undetected. (Each square of light undergrowth requires the expenditure of two squares of movement.) On the following round, Artimos decides to launch his assault. He leaps out from the underbrush and uses a full-round action to charge 40 feet straight ahead at the startled Grogar. Artimos makes his attack roll and scores a hit on his bewildered adversary, dealing 8 points of damage.

After the initial surprise round, the combatants now make initiative checks and Grogar wins. The lightly armored but cowardly barbarian decides to flee the encounter by attempting to outrun the swift elf. He employs the outrun strategy in conjunction with the full-round action of withdrawing; therefore his action does not provoke an attack of opportunity from Artimos. The frightened orc desperately tries to outrun the determined elf, who responds by trying to outwit him. The two parties now make opposed pursuit checks. Grogar's possesses a base speed of 40 ft., a Strength modifier of +5, and the Run feat; therefore his total bonus is +7. Artimos possesses a base speed of 40 ft., a Wisdom modifier of +4 and 6 ranks in Survival; therefore his total bonus is +6. They make their opposed pursuit checks, and Grogar beats Artimos by 9, entitling him to 2 additional squares of movement. Because they are moving through light undergrowth, Grogar can only move 25 feet this round. Grogar also uses his standard action to increase the distance between him and Artimos, but his check is only 3 higher than Artimos giving him just one additional square of movement. Unfortunately, it costs two squares of movement to travel through light undergrowth; therefore Grogar only moves 20 feet, leaving him just 45 feet away.

A tree standing between him and Grogar prevents Artimos from charging; therefore he opts to use a kill action in lieu of a charge. Unable to outmuscle his burly adversary, the wily elf again resorts to outwitting the fleeing orc. Although the additional

10 feet of movement gained from the *longstrider* spell does not count towards his base speed for outrun attempts, it is considered part of his base speed for his outwit attempt. They make their opposed pursuit checks, and Artimos beats Grogar by 8, entitling him to 2 additional squares of movement. Because they are moving through light undergrowth, Artimos only moves 25 feet during his move action. Artimos now stands 20 feet away from Grogar, and he decides to use his standard action to bridge the gap between him and his foe. He must utilize eight squares of movement to reach the orc barbarian; therefore he suffers a -8 penalty to his kill attack. Fortunately, Artimos' gamble pays off as he rolls a "20", felling the orc with his kill attack and ending the pursuit.

Feats and Skills

Like virtually all other endeavors, the domain's native inhabitants intentionally specialize in some aspect of the hunt in an effort to attain superiority over their adversaries. In furtherance of this ambitious goal, predators and their prey continually hone new abilities to augment their chances for survival in Wildwood's unforgiving ecosystem. The following sections describe several new feats and innovative usages of previously existing skills designed to give their proponents a decided tactical advantage against their rivals.

Naturally, many new feats directly correlate to hunting by either increasing the hunter's chance of success or enhancing the prey's ability to elude pursuers. The new feats presented in the section frequently appear in the repertoire of Wildwood's most renowned residents, although newcomers often try to emulate these inventive powers as well.

Anticipation [General]

You are adept at outwitting foes.

Prerequisite: Wis 17

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus to your pursuit check whenever you attempt to outwit your opponent.

Special: You cannot gain Anticipation multiple times.

Contort [General]

Your nimbleness allows you to squeeze through tight spaces with relative ease.

Prerequisites: Dex 16+, Escape Artist 5 ranks

Benefit: Whenever you make a pursuit check, you reduce any terrain-based penalties attributable to size by 2. In addition, whenever you squeeze into a space at least half your width but less than your normal width, you take a -2 penalty to your attack roll and AC. However, this feat does not reduce the amount of movement that you must spend to pass through the tight space. For example, an ogre (a Large-sized creature taking up a 10-foot space) attempts to outrun an opponent in a jungle. Normally, the ogre suffers a -1 penalty to his pursuit check; however this feat negates the penalty. Likewise, if the ogre moved through a 5-foot wide corridor, it only suffers a -2 penalty to its attack rolls and AC.

Normal: Creatures suffer penalties to their pursuit checks based upon their size and the type of terrain. Creatures squeezing through spaces at least half their width suffer -4 penalties to their attacks rolls and AC.

Special: You cannot gain Contort multiple times.

Cornered [General]

You fight with greater ferocity when cornered.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to melee attack and damage rolls whenever you can not disengage from melee combat without provoking an attack of opportunity from a creature or creatures that threaten you at the beginning of your turn. To determine whether you satisfy the preceding requirements, treat your current position as not being threatened by any visible opponent. If there are no adjacent squares that your opponents do not threaten, then you meet the conditions entitling you to the aforementioned attack and damage roll bonus.

Special: You can not gain Cornered multiple times.

A fighter can select Cornered as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Desperation [General]

You can immediately retaliate against a creature hitting you with a kill attack.

Prerequisite: Anticipation, Evasive Actions or Sprinter feat

Benefit: Whenever an opponent hits you with a kill attack, you immediately receive an attack of opportunity against that creature, albeit with an attack roll penalty equal to the amount of damage sustained from the kill attack. If your attack hits your opponent, you may add half the damage dealt to your next pursuit check to elude that particular opponent. You add this bonus to the pursuit check corresponding to one of the prerequisite feats that you possess. In addition, you must use the bonus on your next turn; otherwise it is lost. For example, a hungry bayowulf uses a kill attack against you, sinking its teeth into your flesh causing 10 points of damage. Since you suffered damage from your foe's kill attack, you receive an attack of opportunity with a -10 penalty to the attack roll. Fortunately, your desperate attack finds its mark, inflicting 8 points to the voracious predator. During your turn, you opt to use a standard action to attack the bayowulf and your move action to outrun it, adding a +4 bonus to your pursuit check. (You have the Sprinter feat but not the other two feats; therefore you can only apply the +4 bonus to outrun pursuit checks.)

Special: You cannot gain Desperation multiple times.

A fighter can select Desperation as his fighter bonus feat.

Evasive Actions [General]

You are an expert at outmaneuvering enemies.

Prerequisite: Dex 17

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus whenever you attempt to outmaneuver your opponent in a pursuit.

Special: You cannot gain Evasive Actions multiple times.

Evolve [General]

You can perform an enchantment of the flesh anywhere in the Forge.

Benefit: You no longer have to venture to one of the Forge's seven sacred sites to undergo an enchantment of the flesh. You can gain prestige racial levels anywhere on the Forge.

Normal: Enchantments of the flesh can only be performed at one of the Forge's seven sacred sites.

Killer Instinct [General]

You are highly trained at making kill attacks.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +6, base speed 30 ft. or faster.

Benefit: Whenever you make a kill attack, you reduce the attack roll penalty by half. For example, if your base speed is 40 feet, and you move 80 feet and utilize a kill attack to hit your opponent, your penalty is normally -8. This feat decreases that penalty to -4. Regardless of the circumstances, this feat cannot turn the attack roll penalty into a positive number.

Special: You cannot gain Killer Instinct multiple times.

A fighter can select Killer Instinct as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Natural Surroundings [General]

You can ready discern the precise location of concealed opponents hiding in the wilderness.

Prerequisites: 10 ranks in Spot and Survival.

Benefit: Your acute senses and knowledge of natural terrain enables you to ignore miss chances attributable to concealment gained from a natural source, such as those gained from hiding in heavy undergrowth. In addition, whenever you encounter creatures in a wilderness setting utilizing a spell, spell-like effect or supernatural ability that grants concealment, you lower the miss chance by 20%. This even applies to invisible opponents, although you must still detect its presence and general location through normally available means. A wilderness setting is any environment where construction and settlement did not replace the natural surroundings. For example, when you make a melee attack against a foe in heavy undergrowth, you ignore the 30% miss chance and attack normally.

Special: You cannot gain Natural Surroundings multiple times.

Relentless Pursuer [General]

You are very reluctant to break off a pursuit.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to your Will saving throw to continue pursuing your quarry.

Special: You cannot gain Relentless Pursuer multiple times.

Sprinter [General]

You outrun your opponents with remarkable ease.

Prerequisite: Str 17

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus whenever you attempt to outrun your opponent in a pursuit.

Special: You cannot gain Sprinter multiple times.

Stalk [General]

You can use the outrun, outmaneuver and outwit special move actions more often than normal.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to your Constitution checks to avoid taking nonlethal damage when using one of the aforementioned special move actions.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times, and its effects stack.

Skills

In addition to developing new feats, Wildwood's residents also devised ingenious applications for several existing skills for a myriad of diverse purposes. The next section describes the exact details regarding the creative usages of these frequently underutilized skills.

Knowledge

Similar to Craft and Profession, Knowledge is also comprised of multiple broad-based areas of information and expertise. In addition to the categories provided under the Knowledge skill's entry in the Skills chapter of the *Player's Handbook*, the subsequent categories are also tremendously useful throughout the Forge.

- Earth (earthquakes, geology, minerals, mining, volcanoes, water tables). This is a class skill for bards, druids, rangers and wizards.
- Water (lakes, oceans, rivers, tides, aquatic creatures). This is a class skill for bards, druids, rangers and wizards.

The Knowledge (Earth) skill replaces the skills Find Water and Knowledge (mining) that appeared in Oathbound: *Mysteries of Arena* and *Arena* respectively. The Knowledge (Water) skill replaces the skill Knowledge (*deepflow*) that appeared in the latter product.

The skills Knowledge (geography), (history) and (local) pertain to a specific domain; therefore a character with Knowledge (local) (Penance) is versed in the customs, laws and traditions found throughout the entire domain.

Speak Languages

In addition to the list of tongues provided under this skill's entry in the Skills chapter of the *Player's Handbook*, an eclectic collection of new languages are also spoken on the Forge. They include the following entries.

Language	Typical Speakers	Alphabet
Avian	Asherakes, vogels, birds	Draconic
Battlespeak	Soldiers	None (a)
Canine	Dovers, worgs, dogs	Elven
Ceptu	Ceptu, dolphins	Draconic
Feline	Frey, knuk, cats	Elven
Green	Thorns, plants	Elven
Metallic	Ferrin, silvers	Draconic

(a) Battlespeak is exclusively used to communicate simple military commands through sign language and body gestures. A character cannot express complex thoughts or expressions with this language. Its usage is restricted to Arena and its border regions.

Craft (gemcutting): Throughout the civilized world, skilled jewelers ply their trade by sculpting uncut stones into magnificent gems. However, in Wildwood these adroit craftsmen employ their expertise to create telescopic sights that powerful hunters affix to their crossbows. (The subsequent section, Wilderness Equipment, provides the exact details regarding the sighted crossbow.) The device requires an expenditure of 10 gp for the raw materials and another 1,350 gp for its masterwork components. Like all masterwork items, the construction of a sighted crossbow necessitates a Craft (gemcutting) DC of 20 to create the sight and a Craft (weaponsmithing) DC of 20 to build and attach it to the crossbow.

Survival: While Wildwood's bestial predators rely upon their strength, speed and intuition to capture and kill their prey, a relatively small minority of the domain's sentient residents deploy less intrusive means of accomplishing the same goal. To achieve this desired end, the practitioners of this hunting style typically construct mechanical traps designed to blend into the surrounding natural environment such as concealed pits and snares. However, while these insidious devices are normally employed to deter or kill intruders willingly trespassing into an intentionally warded area, such as the inner sanctum of an evil temple or a monarch's treasure vault, the designers of these makeshift contraptions need to persuade their quarry to unwittingly step into the trap. The builders achieve this task by enticing the victim to fall for the elaborate ruse by baiting the trap with a coveted item such as food. The *DMG* provides all of the necessary details needed to fabricate the wicked device but without a proper lure, the trap is basically worthless. Correctly baiting the trap requires the procurement of the necessary materials, such as fresh meat or some other important commodity and a Survival skill check. Creatures with an Intelligence score of 2 or less that notice the bait must make a Will save using the result from the designer's Survival check as the Difficulty Class. Creatures without an Intelligence score, such as constructs, completely ignore the bait, while beings with an Intelligence score of 3 or greater are free to act according to their own judgment. The GM must exercise some discretion when determining whether the particular type of lure influences the creature's action. While a hungry bear displays tremendous interest in a chunk of fresh meat, it is implausible to imagine the voracious animal falling prey to a trap baited with a pile of gold coins. Despite the effectiveness of these deadly machines, most sentient races refrain from building them. Longtime residents attribute the cause to the bountiful myths and legends that explicitly describe the horrific fate of the clever craftsmen whose inventions denied Haiel the titillating pleasure of watching an exhilarating chase unfold.

Wilderness Equipment

Experienced adventurers delving deep into Wildwood's dense maze of massive trees and wild vegetation are always accompanied by a well stocked arsenal of herbal concoctions, versatile implements and specialized tools. Much of the equipment, materials, substances and weaponry described in the supplements *Into the Black*, *Into the Blue* and *Into the Green* (all available from Bastion Press) frequently comprise a substantial portion of the typical woodsman's catalog of useful items. In addition to the supplies present in the aforementioned sources, Wildwood proudly boasts its own line of clever inventions and handy gadgets to aid its bold explorers on their travails through the feral landscape. Unfortunately, the domain lacks the commercial and economic infrastructure endemic throughout civilized societies; therefore the products are only available in extremely limited quantities at incredibly exorbitant prices. Its few large settlements provide the best opportunity to purchase these incredibly elusive creations, although a handful of native druids and rangers reportedly barter these coveted instruments in exchange for valuable commodities imported from other worlds or domains.

Armor, Shields and Weapons

Not surprisingly, this broad category of offensive and defensive armaments ranks as the most common

Table 9.2: Armor and Shields

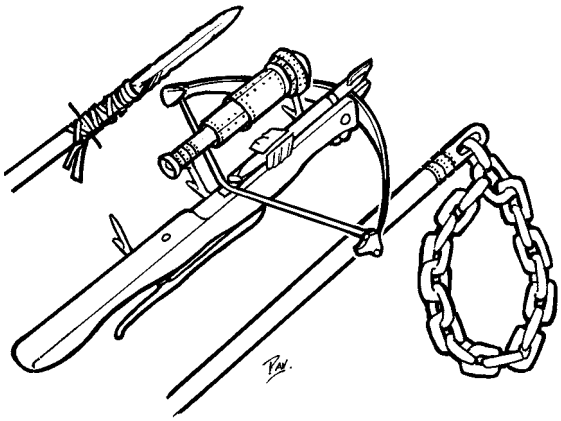
Armor	Cost gp	Armor/ Shield Bonus	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure Chance	----Speed---- (30 ft.)	(20 ft.)	Weight
Exoskeleton	1,000	+7	+1	-5	35%	20 ft.	15 ft.	35 lb.
Layered	100	+4	+3	-4	25%	20 ft.	15 ft.	25 lb.
Petrified	500	+3	---	-2	20%	---	---	20 lb.

items bought and sold within the confines of the feral domain. The following listing provides a representative sample of Wildwood's expansive inventory of martial equipment (more options are available in *Arms & Armor v3.5* from Bastion Press).

Exoskeleton armor: Commensurate with its name, the composite material for this uncommon variety of armor is a rigid exoskeleton gleaned from a medium-size insect or occasionally from the dead body of an armamen warrior. Because of the precision involved in the manufacture of this type of armor, exoskeleton armor is always considered a masterwork item. The armor consists of large plates of hard, bony material held together by incredibly adhesive glues and strong leather straps. The natural product affords the protection of plate armor without the use of metal, making it an extremely desirable item from Wildwood's druids and some of its humanoid warriors.

Layered Armor: At first glance, layered armor looks like nothing more than an oddly bloated suit of padded armor; however closer scrutiny dispels the notion. In actuality, layered armor is a combination of leather and padded armor with some unique and innovative modifications. Leather serves as the composite material for the suit's outer layer, yet in contrast to typical examples of padded armor, its inner layer consists entirely of alternating layers of fibrous materials such as hemp and the husk of a coconut and inexplicably moist pulp. The armor contains no metal, making it a popular choice among Wildwood's large druid population, but its bulkiness and weight deter most rangers from wearing it. Layered armor is most commonly found in the domain's southern jungle regions as well as some coastal areas.

Shield, Petrified: Under the right conditions and over the course of thousands of years, some dead trees undergo an extremely rare biological process known as fossilization. In most circumstances, wood rots over time, consumed by various microorganisms or cellulose eating creatures such as termites. In contrast, petrified wood acts like solid stone, enabling expert armorsmiths to craft incredibly sturdy shields from the durable material. Shields fabricated from the elusive source are considered masterwork items. A one inch thick piece of petrified wood possesses the same hardness and hit points of a 4 inch piece of stone, i.e. a hardness of 8 and 60 hit points. Unlike typical shields, petrified shields only come in one size.



Illustrated by Terry Pavlet

Weapons

Bloodstaff: A remarkable triumph of ingenuity and simplicity, the bloodstaff is a clever creation employed by many of Wildwood's indigenous residents whenever they pass through areas with dense populations of wild beasts and carnivorous plants. The bloodstaff looks and functions exactly like a quarterstaff with a notable exception, the presence of a long, sharp spike on one end of the weapon. Although the wielder can hurl the bloodstaff like a javelin or use it to pierce foes in combat, the skewered end is actually used to hold a hunk of meat as bait for a hungry predator. Utilizing the weapon in this manner necessitates a Survival skill check as described under the previous subheading Skills. Whenever a creature that meets the prerequisites detailed in the preceding section attacks the weapon's owner, it must roll a Will save before it attacks; otherwise the presence of the easy meal distracts the creature imposing a -2 penalty to its attack and damage rolls. Once the creature makes a successful Will save, it is no longer required to make additional Will saves for the remainder of the encounter. If the creature rolls a natural "1", it attacks the bait instead of the wielder. This attack is treated as a sunder attack against a worn or carried object. (The *PHB* provides the details of this action under the Special Attacks heading.) The bait possesses a hardness of 1 and 5 hp before it is torn to shreds. Baiting the bloodstaff is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Crossbow, sighted: The sighted crossbow appears as a well-built and meticulously crafted light crossbow with a modified spyglass mounted on top of the weapon several inches above the trigger mechanism. Unlike typical light crossbows, the

Table 9.3: Weapons

Weapon	Cost gp	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Type
Bloodstaff (a)(b)	50	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	x2	30 ft.	4 lb.	Piercing and Bludgeoning
Stick, Tamer's	50	1d2(c)	1d3 (c)	x2	5 ft.	6 lb.	----
Crossbow, sighted	4,250	1d6	1d8	18-20/x2	160 ft. (d)	5 lb.	Piercing

(a) Reach weapon
(b) Double weapon
(c) The weapon deals non-lethal damage rather than lethal damage
(d) The weapon's maximum range is 5 range increments rather than 10 range increments.

weapon requires the use of both hands to properly aim and fire the weapon. The spyglass affixed to the top of the weapon actually consists of a finely constructed concave lens with a crosshair attached to the far end. The device enhances the wielder's accuracy when firing at his target's more vulnerable spots. The sighted crossbow grants its user the ability to make ranged sneak attacks as per the rogue ability described in the *PHB*. If the wielder also possesses the aforementioned ability, the sighted crossbow increases the damage resulting from such an attack by +1d6. Needless to say, hunters especially prize these extremely rare weapons.

Stick, Tamer's: This unusual device actually traces its origins to the opulent menageries located on the sprawling estates within the wondrous city of Penance. In a ceaseless effort to locate new and previously unknown beasts, exotic animal trainers in the employ of the city's bloodlords and wealthiest citizens ventured into the foreboding heart of neighboring Wildwood to search for and capture suitable additions to their masters' growing collections. Unable to deploy conventional weapons to subdue the wild creatures, they devised the tamer's stick, a 6 to 8 foot long sturdy wooden pole ending in a chain noose. The goal is to slip the noose around the target's head, preventing it from approaching any closer without injuring the victim. The stick's wielder can then tighten the rope, making it more difficult for the opponent to escape. The weapon only works on creatures with a discernable neck that are within one size categories of the wielder; therefore a medium-sized creature can use the tamer's stick on a large creature or a small creature, but it proves ineffective against a tiny creature. Unlike other melee weapons, attacking with the tamer's stick is a two-step process that closely resembles a grapple attack. The first stage requires a ranged touch attack. If the weapon misses, the attack ends. A hit moves the process into the second stage where the two combatants make opposed grapple checks as a free action. If the wielder wins the grapple check, the chain is wrapped around the creature's neck but it does not deal any immediate damage. Although the tamer's stick keeps the captive foe ten feet away from the wielder, the combat abides by all of the rules for grappling as described in the *PHB* with the exception that neither party can attack their opponent. The wielder also receives a +4 circumstances bonus to all grapple checks while his foe remains ensnared by the lasso. The adversary can use an unarmed strike, natural weapon or light weapon to attack the weapon's shaft or the rope, but it is prohibited from using a bite attack in any manner. Although its exterior is fabricated from wood, thin bands of steel interwoven beneath the outer layer of wood give the weapon added strength to resist damage. The staff possesses a hardness of 10 and 20 hp while the chain possesses a hardness of 5 and 10 hp. Attacking the weapon is treated as making a sunder attack against it. When this weapon is used in the wild, the wielder tries to pin the creature or deal enough nonlethaldamage to knock it unconscious while his assistants hurl darts filled with sleep poison at the struggling beast in a concerted effort to tranquilize it. As the device's availability became more widespread, some of Wildwood's less scrupulous humanoid races utilize the alien contraption to subdue other humanoids for a myriad of unsavory reasons.

Miscellaneous Items

Although a large percentage of its inventory of useful inventions originate or commonly appear in other domains and worlds, Wildwood still holds the proverbial patent for a few implements not encountered elsewhere. The following section details a representative handful of these creations.

Item	Cost	Weight
Belt, Climbing	300 gp	5 lb.
Greensuit	200 gp	1 lb.
Ladder, grappling	50 gp	10 lb.

Belt, Climbing: Worn around the individual's waist, the climbing belt consists of a strong girdle affixed to a steel reinforced leather belt and an accompanying buckle assembly. The wearer wraps the belt around the trunk of the tree and then secures it in place with the attached buckle. The device is built to easily support its user's weight and grants him a +5 circumstance bonus to his Climb skill checks whenever he uses it to climb up a tree. Most importantly, the belt allows him to use both hands while remaining securely fastened to the tree. Unfortunately, the process of releasing and refastening the belt is incredibly painstaking and tedious. Initially fastening the device to the trunk of a tree requires a full-round action, while the wearer's vertical climb speed is reduced in half whenever he uses the belt. The wearer can voluntarily release the belt as a move action. The belt is considered a masterwork item.

Greensuit: Numerous preserved leaves and vibrant branches are sewn into the lining of this green cloak. The greensuit enhances its wearer's ability to blend into the surrounding environment, granting him a +2 circumstance bonus to all Hide checks whenever encountered in a wilderness setting with an abundance of greenery. The GM must exercise his discretion when determining whether the greensuit functions in a particular terrain. While the greensuit proves highly effective in a forest, jungle, plain or swamp, it provides no benefit when employed in a desert or underground cavern.

Ladder, Grappling: Capable of easily folding into a backpack, the grappling ladder is a versatile tool in the arsenal of the experienced woodsman. The device usually measures 25 feet in length and is little more than a rope ladder with a grappling hook attached to one end. Securing the grappling hook requires a Use Rope skill check; however the ladder's added weight increases the Difficulty Class of the Use Rope check by 2 for every 5 feet that the hook is thrown rather than the normal 10-foot increment.

Chapter 10: The Breadth of Life

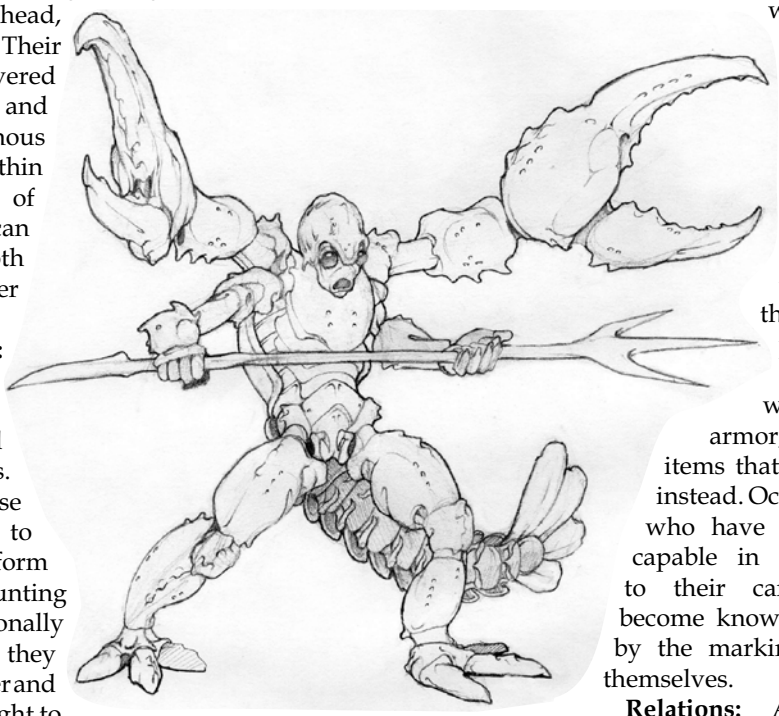
"The diversity of life is not limited to its flora and fauna. Many unique sentient beings also dwell within its forests."

-- Magnolia, a thorn druid speaking to his sapling apprentices

Although the number of plant and animal species found in Wildwood greatly exceeds the variety of sentient beings dwelling within the feral domain, these creatures exert a tremendous influence on the domain's ecosystems despite their inferior numbers. Not surprisingly, humanoids are the most prevalent of these new races; however they are far from being the domain's only new representatives. Intelligent crustaceans and insects also inhabit the dark recesses of the primeval wilderness in addition to their humanoid counterparts.

Armamen

Armamen are a race of crustaceous humanoids whose bodies bear a passing resemblance to lobsters. They are strong, savage, and posses a vaguely humanoid head, upper torso and legs. Their entire body is covered by a thick carapace, and they have an enormous tail. They thrive within the lakes and rivers of Wildwood and can easily adapt to both warm and cold water environments.



Personality: Armamen are solitary hunters though they are loosely organized into tribes or clans. The purpose of these ruling entities is to settle disputes, perform weddings, assign hunting territories, and occasionally levy taxes, though they possess little real power and rarely exercise their right to collect taxes since a large majority of armamen would simply find another clan to join if those fees become exorbitant. Despite the existence of their governing bodies, they barely respect authority and are likely to rebel against it if it is imposed upon them.

Armemen are likely to be standoffish with strangers. They may not be openly rude, but they offer little conversation until they have deemed that the individual they are speaking to is worthy of their trust and attention. Even when one does become a friendly acquaintance, it often takes years for someone to work their way into a position of friendship, let alone absolute trust. Because of their caution in allowing others into their inner fold, if a betrayal occurs, they rarely, if ever, forgive the offender. Depending on the severity of the betrayal, such instances may lead to physical conflicts with mortal consequences, though they sometimes agree to go their separate ways and never speak to the offending party again.

Armamen are not comfortable in large groups. They prefer to meet with others in small-scale meetings with only a handful of others. When forced into a social situation with numerous other people, they generally tend to remain quiet and reserved unless something is said that raises their ire, in which case they become overly boisterous and combative. They occasionally join adventuring groups with other races, and in these cases they are usually quiet but loyal fighters who try to protect the rest of the group.

Physical Description: Armamen appear to be a hybrid between human and lobster. Their heads are hairless, but appear humanoid. Their entire body is covered in a dark carapace that comes in many colors, including black, blue, and red. They have enormous claws that can be used as natural weapons. In addition to this they have a smaller pair of arms with carapace covered humanoid hands that are able to manipulate tools, weapons, and other objects. They walk upright on two powerful legs, and an enormous flat, wide tail trails behind them, which they use to propel themselves through the water and for attack.

Armamen are medium-sized creatures, standing on average seven feet tall and weighing three hundred pounds. Armamen normally do not wear clothing or armor, preferring magic items that provide protection instead. Occasionally armamen who have proven themselves capable in combat add paint to their carapace, and they become known by their enemies by the markings that they give themselves.

Relations: Armamen attempt to be as indifferent to the other races as possible. This is largely a failed attempt since they have managed to make enemies of the trusks and the ceptu. This enmity is usually handled as a general disdain for their fellow aquatic races, but occasionally this translates into raids against nearby settlements, as well as greeting members of the other races with hostility when they are encountered. Once in a great while an individual is able to put their cultural programming behind them and make friends with the local creatures, but armamen find

Illustrated by Christopher Pickrell

this difficult, especially when they belong to a larger community. Most armamen know little about the creatures that dwell on the land, so they normally treat them with a measure of caution.

Armamen Lands: All of the known armamen holdings are within the lakes and rivers of Wildwood; however they are slowly branching out into the oceans and the waterways of neighboring domains. Their domain includes the beaches, and approximately one to three miles away from the shore. Rarely do they go any further out to sea. They realize that other creatures use the shores often, and rarely take note when a ship passes through their territory, or other individuals from the land decide to use their territory as a recreation area. As long as they are not bothered, their territories are free for others to use.

Religion: Armamen religion consists of the worship of a pantheon of sea creatures that they call *the circle*. This is an organization of divine beings that include a god that represents virtually every main type of sea creature, including the shard, the kraken, and shellfish, etc. An individual may worship any one of these gods, though they may also choose to worship the entire pantheon as well.

Although each of their gods plays an important role in their pantheon, their god Illiknarkhar is the primary figure in their religion. The father of the pantheon, he is a colossal shellfish that appears identical to a standard lobster. He is a dark, brooding god who is hard to please because of his apathy, which is said to be of epic proportions. It is said that he disdains most things, including his own creation and the armamen themselves. The only way for an armaman to gain his approval is to dedicate himself to slaying others in battle. By the same token, Illiknarkhar does not support random killings, but prefers for them to be either for the purpose of gathering food or slaying an aggressor. All sea creatures except for those that are poisonous and other armamen are considered a potential source of food.

When a creature is killed, an armaman may dedicate a portion of his kill to Illiknarkhar. To do this a sacrificial fire is built upon the shore under the guise of darkness and the armamen begins to chant prayers to the father god in hopes that he will listen. Once he has done this long enough, and he believes that he has gained the attention of his deity, a portion of the food is placed on a shell and inserted into the fire. The armamen continues to offer prayers as the food is consumed by flame. Once the food is reduced to ashes, the armamen waits for a sign. A gust of wind, the appearance of a cloud overhead, or a falling star is considered an omen that Illiknarkhar has enjoyed his food and will reward the armamen in the afterlife. Other signs, such as the fire sputtering, smoke following the armamen around the fire, or the appearance of another creature indicates that Illiknarkhar is not pleased with his offering. In such cases the armamen may attempt to make it up to his deity by repeating this process on the following evening.

The worship of the other deities in the pantheon is not viewed as any less valid, though the other gods tend to have a more kind and understanding approach to dealing with their followers. Rather than demand a sacrifice of meat, they simply listen to the prayers of their followers. Many armamen find it more rigorous to worship Illiknarkhar, which they believe result in greater rewards in the afterlife.

Clerics that worship any of the gods in *the circle* may pick one of the following domains: chaos, protection, strength, war, and water.

Language: Armamen have their own language that consists of various clicking sounds. These clicks are made when they bring the chitin of their upper and lower lips together with varying intensity, which results in a wide range of different sounds. Words are formed both by the intensity of the click and their cadence. This language works both in and out of water, though an individual can only be understood outside of water at a distance of 10 feet or less.

Armamen have something resembling a written language. Rather than attempting to carve into a surface or leave ink on paper, they instead glue different types of seashells on various surfaces to form words, which make up their written histories.

In addition to this, armamen may speak other languages, such as common, but because their normal mode of communication is with clicking sounds, they have a distinct dialect that is rather slow and sounds like a low pitched whining sound. Most native speakers find the armamen approximation of their language to be annoying at best, but most agree that it beats trying to comprehend the native armamen language.

Names: Like the language itself, armamen names are difficult for outsiders to pronounce. Most consist of a series of clicks, though they are given a phonetic translation at birth so that they may more easily interact with other species. Even in a simpler form, their names generally consist of a number of letters that don't go easily together, and still cause non-armamen difficulty when referring to them by name. Unlike individual names, clan and tribe names tend to be descriptive and honor things found in their surroundings.

Male Names: Bilaninsikumsort, Dukwillinininilisunvis, Mklanirewstilinis, Pimbattu, Werskilingowshistil.

Female Names: Ahailehenif, Newilos, Silnnodli, Kzuhoskituee.

Clan Names: Blue Waters, Crawling Crab, Orange Fish, Striped Oyster.

Adventurers: Armamen make excellent fighters. Their personality suits the life of the barbarian. A few become rangers and are able to follow trails of creatures moving along the sea bottom as well as land-bound rangers can track a creature over land. Though *the Circle* does not lend itself to any one alignment, there are a few paladins, who seek to transcend their solitary ways and protect all species who are threatened by evil.

The few armamen who leave the water to lead the life of an adventurer tend to be more accepting of other species and cultures than the common armamen. They often go out of their way to make friends with the ceptu and the trusk since it is well known that their species ordinarily has difficulty dealing with them. They are usually intrigued to meet the land dwelling races since

they are only exposed to a limited number in their native environment.

Armamen do not join adventuring groups lightly. Once they have committed themselves to a larger adventuring party, they usually put the safety of the group's members before their own. While they seldom trust those whom they join, they consider the very fact that they have agreed to journey with them a matter of honor. They are highly protective over the other party members, even to the point of jumping into a seemingly hopeless situation with an opponent if it means that their ally is able to benefit from their efforts.

Armamen Racial Traits

- Armamen gain +4 bonus to Strength and +2 bonus to Constitution, but suffer a –4 penalty to Dexterity.
- Armamen are Medium creatures; therefore their AC and attack rolls are unaffected by size their size. They have a base speed of 25 feet on land and a swim speed of 50 feet. Armamen gain a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform a special action or avoid a hazard. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered when swimming. They can use the run action while swimming, provided that they swim in a straight line.
- Armamen are monstrous humanoids (aquatic).
- +5 natural armor bonus
- Resistance to acid 5
- Darkvision 60 ft.
- Amphibious
- The armamen's enormous claws deal 1d10 points of damage, while their tail inflicts 1d12 points of damage. Both attacks have a critical threat range of 19-20 and are treated as natural weapons. The claws are the primary slashing and piercing weapons, while the tail is a secondary, bludgeoning weapon. Armamen can use their claws to attack opponents facing them; however it can only employ its tail against enemies attacking from the rear.
- Armamen reach middle age at 80, old age at 120 and venerable at 160.
- *Racial Hit Dice*: Armamen start with two levels of monstrous humanoid giving them 2d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +2 and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +0, Ref +3 and Will +3.
- *Racial Skills*: An armamen's monstrous humanoid levels bestow 5 x (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) skill points. Its class skills are Intimidate, Listen, Spot and Survival.
- *Racial Feats*: The armamen's two monstrous humanoid levels give it one feat.
- *Automatic Languages*: Aquan; Bonus languages: select from Canine, Ceptu, Common, Draconic, Feline, Gnoll and Sylvan.
- Level adjustment +2
- *Favored Class*: Fighter

Bern

At the intersection of Arena, Penance and Wildwood, in a remote locale known as The Throne, Barbello, Israfel and Haiel, the respective masters of the aforementioned domains regularly meet for a lively exchange of new ideas and information. Potential avenues of escape and particularly promising seeds are generally the dominant topics of conversation at these summits with the arrival of the berns serving as a typical case in point albeit with an unusual twist. More than two centuries ago, Barbello pulled a fearsome looking race of expansionistic, sentient beings resembling upright hornets onto the burning red desert of her dominion. Much to her disappointment, the swirling grains of crimson sand and the scarlet hue of Arena's sky irritated and overwhelmed the creatures' sensitive compound eyes, literally blinding them within seconds after their ballyhooed appearance. Normally the impetuous, warmongering mistress of Arena simply chalks up such failures to experience and continues with her daily agenda, leaving the hapless creatures to perish in her unforgiving environment, but fortunately for the berns' sake, she mentioned the unsuccessful experiment to her feathered counterparts at their gathering later in the day. Some unknown trait in the berns' character sparked Israfel's imagination, and she beseeched Haiel to offer the struggling race sanctuary in a secluded area of Wildwood. Although taken aback by the Queen of Penance's odd request, he acquiesced to her enlightened judgment and transplanted the dying berns to their new home in the southern jungles straddling the border with Arena and The Vault. Removed from the harsh conditions of the neighboring domain, the rejuvenated race of sentient insects quickly thrived and established the flourishing settlement, Oppulammel.

Personality: Despite their adherence with many of the characteristics normally associated with the socialized insects that they closely resemble, berns are fiercely competitive, constantly jostling for upward mobility in the hive's hierarchal chain of command. Gender offers no advantage to rival berns as males and females are numerically equal and generally share the collective's leadership roles with a king and queen lording over the hive's affairs. Monarchs acquire their lofty position through merit rather than lineage. Because their strict laws only permit the king and queen to participate in the act of procreation, all berns technically descend from royalty making birthright an inconsequential factor. Instead, the berns determine each individual's status within the hive based upon their hunting prowess as measured by an esteemed judging panel comprised of the hive's eleven eldest members. The discriminating committee usually favors the slaughter of sentient victims over brutish beasts; however they make

exceptions in the case of an especially fearsome monster. The group gathers on the 28th day of each month, meticulously grading the quality of each kill while each bern processes past the distinguished jury bearing the mounted and decapitated head of its most prized quarry. The male and female with the highest score assume the title of king and queen, while the remainder of the hive receives a specific, numerical rank. As a result of this unique system, the monarchs' grasp of temporal power typically proves fleeting and tenuous.

The berns' emphasis on hunting leads other sentient races to believe that they are accomplished warriors with a voracious appetite for flesh. Surprisingly both assumptions belie the truth. Although blessed with formidable natural defenses including a rigid exoskeleton and a potent stinger, the berns' frightful appearance masks their inherent weakness as fighters. They compensate for their lack of physical strength with their keen intellect and their uncanny affinity for magical power. Furthermore, the berns' diet consists solely of plant matter, particularly flowering plants supplemented by the occasional indulgence in the consumption of intelligent plants, particularly young thorns. While the berns' relatively weak upper body inhibits their ability to effectively wield weapons, it does not hamper their skill in manipulating small objects. Endowed with four arms and incredibly precise vision, the naturally inquisitive and innately intelligent berns create an array of technological marvels widely coveted throughout the Forge. The xenophobic berns never willingly part with their wondrous devices; therefore the available supply remains limited to the miniscule inventory plied from the dead hands and bodies of their rapacious owners.

Despite the fallacy of the aforementioned presumptions, the overwhelming majority of berns are paranoid and incredibly distrustful, personality traits undoubtedly spurred by the race's highly competitive nature. They normally attack strangers immediately on sight with a ferocious barrage of spells and venomous stings, and only flee when faced with an obviously superior foe. Their unique relationship to Haiel imbues them with a haughty demeanor and an air of superiority that manifests itself in a palpable aura of utter disdain for other sentient beings. Berns truly believe that greatness and complete dominion over the entire Forge surely awaits them.

Physical Description: Berns possess all of the anatomical features of normal insects including a clearly defined head, thorax and abdomen with a few notable exceptions. For the most part, they resemble large, upright hornets sporting a wickedly barbed stinger at the tip of their abdomen and a delicate pair of translucent wings protruding from the back of their thorax. Although a pair of thin, spindly legs affixed to their central abdomen is capable of supporting its weight, berns normally rely upon flight as their primary form of locomotion. Four short, wiry arms ending in three curved claws with an opposable digit extend from their upper thorax, allowing them to grasp and manipulate even minute objects. The berns' head consists of fearsome, jagged mandibles with two tiny nasal orifices situated just above them, a pair of dark black compound eyes and four long and flexible antennae. Because they lack ears, berns are completely deaf, depending exclusively upon their vision and antennae for sensory input. Thick, black concentric rings wrap around their otherwise dark green exoskeleton, enabling them to easily blend into the surrounding foliage. Like other insects, berns progress through three preliminary stages, egg, larva and pupa before emerging from the nest as full grown adults.

Their alien physique prevents them from donning armor; however they can simultaneously wear four rings, wield four weapons or a combination thereof. With the exception of the monarchs' royal accoutrements, berns carry all of their personal possessions in their hands, on their bodies or in a small pouch slung over their backs between the folds of their wings. The race compensates for any physical shortcomings through the ingenious use of its inventive devices. Magical items constructed to enable the normally deaf and mute creatures to verbally converse with other sentient beings comprise the berns' standard adventuring equipment while traveling through the surrounding wilderness.

Alignment: Although it is possible for an individual bern to ascribe to the tenets of any alignment, the race's hive mentality and arrogant demeanor makes it difficult for them to espouse the ideologies of any chaotic or good ethos. Lawful evil is the most prevalent alignment followed closely by lawful neutral and neutral evil.

Relations: No sentient race despoils Wildwood's pristine beauty more than the berns. The ravenous creatures hungrily devour the leaves and flowers of countless plants, transforming sizeable tracts of primeval land into wastelands of withered, dull brown stalks and dry, dusty earth. Animals flee in terror at the mere sight of the berns while carnivorous plants foolish enough to attack the voracious herbivores quickly find the tables turned on them. As long as Haiel honors his promise to Israfel, the berns exploit nature with sheer contempt and complete impunity.

Naturally, the berns' abuse and destruction of the jungle incites the ire of the domain's humanoids, most notably the dovers and elves. Encounters between humanoids and berns always result in a violent confrontation even in the absence of any provocation. Despite the deep-seated hatred for the berns that runs rampant throughout the adjacent humanoid communities, no sentient race despises the loathsome creatures more than the thorns. Barbarous skirmishes between the bitter enemies invariably end in hideous tales of savage atrocities committed by both sides during and after the bloody fray. As part of a deliberate plan to prevent an all-out war from erupting, Haiel populates the outskirts of the berns' territory with some of the domain's most terrifying, monstrous predators in an effort to preoccupy and frighten the potential combatants. Although minor tussles continue with frequent regularity, the preventive measure accomplishes its primary goal of discouraging the outbreak of a large-scale conflict.

Bern Lands: The berns occupy a small quadrant of land in the southwestern corner of the domain

abutted against the borders of Arena to the west and The Vault to the south. The focal point of their realm is the magnificent city of Oppulammel, located approximately fifty miles northeast of the intersection between Arena, The Vault and Wildwood. (Chapter 4 provides complete details on Oppulammel.) The berns' expansive hunting grounds stretch another 60 miles to the north and an additional 100 miles to the east forming a rectangular territory. Despite their well-founded reputation as despoilers of the wilderness, most of their lands with the exception of the immediate vicinity encircling their city remain largely untamed, choked with dense tangles of vegetation and countless, feral predators. The jungle owes its sanctity to the berns' unwillingness to establish permanent settlements beyond the outskirts of the race's subterranean nest.

Religion: Not surprisingly, berns dismiss religion as the panacea of the weak and the ignorant, viewing the idea of faith as the archetypical mechanism designed to provide comfort and a sense of purpose to inferior beings. Despite this prevalent perception, an isolated but slowly growing faction now venerates Haiel as a god, although the group still lacks any clerics or other formal institutions. Although the berns' laws prohibit them from harming any of their own kind, the berns' leadership "volunteers" suspected worshippers of Haiel for suicide missions into the stomping grounds of a particularly fearsome predator or the territory of a hostile enemy. Cognizant of the hopeless foray's desired intention, a few berns arrive at the monumental decision to break away from the collective and try to survive on their own as adventurers or fugitives in a largely hostile world.

Language: Unable to speak or hear, berns communicate with one another through a unique and elaborate combination of body language and scent. They require the aid of magical devices to converse with other sentient creatures.

Names: In an effort to fuel competition, berns possess no first or family names, but are simply known by their rank in the community. Because the individual's standing amongst his colleagues changes on monthly basis, most berns answer to roughly 300 names over the course of their lifetime.

Adventurers: Bern adventurers hail exclusively from the daring few that reject the berns' notion of racial superiority and instead worship Haiel as a deity. Humanoids and other sentient beings regard these renegades with a great deal of suspicion and hostility; however the most stalwart individuals eventually win over the trust of their colleagues, albeit through a long and tedious process. Surprisingly agile, intellectually gifted and imbued with an intrinsic magical affinity, the majority of bern adventurers are wizards.

Bern Racial Traits

- Berns get a +2 bonus to Dexterity and Intelligence while suffering a -2 penalty to Charisma and Strength.
- Berns are Small creatures; therefore they gain a +1 bonus to AC and attack rolls in addition to a +4 bonus to Hide checks. They have a base land speed of 20 ft. and a flight speed of 40 ft. (good).
- Berns are vermin; however they are not mindless thus they are not immune to mind-affecting effects.
- Berns are incapable of donning armor or clothing; however they can simultaneously wear four rings and wield up to four weapons. A bern that meets the prerequisites can take the Multiweapon Fighting feat to reduce his penalties for fighting with multiple weapons.
- +4 natural armor bonus
- Their stinger deals 1d3 points of damage as well as delivering a dose of poison on a successful hit. Opponents struck by its venomous barb must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ bern's HD + Con modifier) or suffer 1d4 points of initial and secondary Constitution damage. Like wasps and hornets, berns can repeatedly strike opponents with their stinger. This attack is treated as a natural weapon.
- Because they are deaf, berns automatically fail all Listen checks.
- Darkvision 60 ft.
- In addition to bestowing darkvision, the bern's compound eyes grant it a +8 racial bonus to Spot checks and a +4 bonus to Search checks. The berns' coloration and use of body language to communicate gives it a +4 bonus to Hide skill checks and a +2 bonus to Sense Motive skill checks. Conversely, its lack of a written or spoken language gives it a -4 penalty to Diplomacy and Gather Information skill checks.
- As a result of their natural affinity for magic, bern spellcasters do not require verbal components to cast spells; therefore they automatically receive the benefits of the Silent Spell feat with no adjustment to spell level.
- Berns reach middle age at 18, old age at 27 and venerable at 36.
- *Automatic Languages*: None; Bonus Languages: None. Berns are incapable of speaking and must communicate with other creatures by magical means. They communicate with members of their own race through body language and odor.
- Level adjustment +2
- *Favored Class*: Wizard.

Musai

In their native world, the great city-states of the Imusai callously lorded over a far-flung jungle empire stretching for hundreds of miles in every direction. Masters of architectural ingenuity, the musai constructed fabulous metropolises of

foreboding step pyramids soaring high above the surrounding canopy, intentionally instilling an aura of wonderment and awe amongst the race's diverse conquered peoples. In addition to their engineering prowess, the musai dabbled in the art of prognostication, interpreting the hidden insights held within the configuration of the multitudinous heavenly bodies. The musai combined the tangible elements of physics and geometry with the theoretical hypotheses of astrology and fortune telling to build the jewel of their mighty dominion, the fabled city of Peohautilan. Adorned with gold and precious stones, its spectacular edifices captivated the imagination of onlookers and visitors; however the dichotomous nature of its proud citizenry intrigued the curious ruler of Wildwood. As a culture, the musai heartlessly reconciled their superior intellect and magnificent civic achievements with their barbarous practices. On the lofty heights of their ominous pyramids, the musai engaged in unspeakable rites of humanoid sacrifice and ritualistic cannibalism, performed all in the name of sating the temperamental land's primordial thirst for blood. In actuality the musai founded an empire not build from stone but rather from the shattered bones and sundered bodies of its vanquished enemies.



Naturally, the musai's predatory inclinations piqued Haiel's interest, prompting him to construct an elaborate replica of the realm's centerpiece within the heart of Wildwood's feral jungle. Upon completing the exacting facsimile, he pulled the startled inhabitants into their newly constructed city, callously watching the disoriented and frightened residents interact with the adjacent untamed wilderness. Completely unprepared for the abrupt transition to their unfamiliar environment, the musai's society quickly fell prey to encroaching predators and rival humanoid races. Within a matter of weeks, the musai completely abandoned all the trappings of civilization and quickly degenerated into fractious bands of wild humanoids. Although far removed from their glorious past, the shattered remnants of the musai forlornly look back upon their storied history and remarkable achievements with regret and unrequited longing.

The great architects that once designed Peohautilan now reside within small towns and villages consisting of a haphazardly built collection of spherical mounds of wood and clay that provide shelter to the downtrodden residents. Musai settlements are comprised entirely of large, extended families, a sociological phenomenon that accounts for the race's practice of another widely held taboo. During the civilization's zenith members of the royal families commonly married distant relatives to cement alliances between rival city-states; however the custom remained confined to the ranks of the nobility. Peohautilan's decline and the dawning of small but highly competitive interrelated communities eventually paved the way for its widespread institutionalization amongst the ranks of the musai. Although relationships between siblings and parents remain extremely infrequent and rarely produce any viable offspring, unions between cousins and other close relatives occur with alarming regularity. Previously recessive genetic traits now rear their ugly heads, burdening an already despondent people with a host of biological frailties and disfiguring physical characteristics. Despite the outside world's overwhelming revulsion to this unhealthy and disgusting practice, the musai are far more infamous among their neighbors for their unsavory taste for the flesh of fellow humanoids.

Originally steeped in religious significance, cannibalism eventually evolved into a macabre ceremony conducted solely as a propaganda tool for the musai's conquering heroes. Feasting upon the raw meat of an enemy commander and his fiercest warriors, the musai's generals partook in the gory meal in an effort to humiliate and humble the defeated masses into utter submission. With Peohautilan's subsequent collapse, cannibalism morphed into an act of vengeance and hatred fueled by the musai's growing frustration and recognition of their inability to adapt to their adopted homeland. The consumption of fellow humanoids provides an outlet for venting their repressed rage and self-loathing, although it also incites tremendous anger amongst the other humanoid races subjected to this nauseating display of unforgivable depravity.

Personality: Frequently the objects of scorn and derision from their fellow humanoids, musai are distrustful and incredibly spiteful, two traits that enable them to harbor bitter lifelong grudges for no apparent reason. They meticulously scrutinize the words and actions of any outsiders coming into contact with them, carefully searching for any perceived insults concealed within the context of their statements or conveyed by

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the speakers' particular body language. Although they clearly apply the aforementioned characteristic more stringently towards other humanoid races, their fellow musai only receive a little more latitude than a complete stranger. Outsiders that survive an encounter with the musai quickly learn that silence is a virtue when dealing with the suspicious race exhibiting a predilection for unmasking fictitious insults. Despite their endless penchant for unveiling perceived slights, in most cases, the musai merely punish the offenders with a stern warning or a veiled threat of retaliation. The penalty for multiple transgressions depends upon the transgressor's relationship with the community. Other humanoids typically suffer a severe beating or even death at the hands of the enraged musai, while banishment is the most extreme disciplinary action levied against one of their own race. The race's uncanny ability to mine imaginary insults undoubtedly results from their collective sense of failure, causing most musai to react in a standoffish and highly defensive manner whenever confronted by anyone questioning their barbarous practices or inherent beliefs.

Physical Description: Musai are generally humanoid in appearance with dark olive skin, disproportionately long arms, a bulbous sloping nose, and dark brown almond-shaped eyes that practically bulge out of their sockets. Although born with a full head of lush, brown hair, all musai inexplicably shave their heads completely bald. In addition to the aforementioned characteristics shared by all musai, each member of the race typically sports one or two other distinguishing features ranging from minor mutations such as a cleft chin or webbed toes to obvious deformities such as polydactylism or misshapen limbs. Rampant inbreeding accounts for the overwhelming majority of the aforementioned disfigurements. Musai are generally lean and wiry, and they usually wear colorful animal skins, preferably those of large, predatory felines with spots or stripes as well as elaborate headdresses crafted from the plucked feathers obtained from fearsome birds of prey.

Relations: Needless to say, the musai's disgusting practices do not endear them to any of their fellow humanoid races. An undeclared state of war perpetually exists between them and their humanoid neighbors, particularly humans and elves. Fortunately for the outnumbered musai, their enemies usually practice a policy of avoidance, preferring to isolate the repugnant creatures rather than wage an all-out battle against them. Other sentient, but non-humanoid races such as thorns merely tolerate the musai, ignoring their presence as much as possible. The musai enjoy a good relationship with the region's natural predators as well as an unwritten understanding with likeminded evil monstrous denizens. Their tangled web of verbal alliances with the region's vicious indigenous inhabitants assuredly accounts for the surprising degree of restraint displayed by rival humanoids.

Alignment: The musai's unsavory cultural practices place good characters at odds with the race's core beliefs; therefore the overwhelming majority of them are neutral or evil. Good musai that reject their race's barbarous activities usually lead a miserable life of perpetual exile, equally loathed by their brethren and other humanoids. However, a few rare individuals transcend the pervasive racial prejudices and stereotypes and attain peaceful coexistence with their former enemies.

Musai Lands: The musai dwell predominately within the jungles that dominate the southern portion of the expansive domain. Although none of them dwells within the ruined city of Peohautilan and its immediate outskirts, nearly all of their settlements are clustered in the general area surrounding the abandoned metropolis. They construct their circular homes from a combination of contorted trees and baked clay; therefore they prefer residing in areas with an abundance of younger, supple trees and a readily available source of water. Musai villages are always lead by the cuwatl, an individual claiming descent from the race's chief deity, Huatzalipca. Naturally, most declarations of divine lineage are treated with skepticism and disbelief by the citizens, but in the interest of maintaining unity, the general populace rarely challenges the veracity of the contention and simply acquiesces to the aspiring leader's ambitions. The Tlaxacala, a council of three to five priests, serves as the cuwatl's spiritual and political advisors, but they wield no real power. The cuwatl's temporal power lies in his command of the community's military force, comprised of every able-bodied male between the ages of 16 and 35. Typically armed with a combination of spears and slings, these lightly armored warriors rely upon speed and stealth for success. Although charged with the vital task of protecting the community from interlopers, hunting remains their primary duty. Despite their cannibalistic rituals, musai prefer a diet of primate and avian meat supplemented by edible wild fruits, berries and vegetables. A steady supply of food and triumphs on the battlefield ensure the cuwatl's longevity, while defeat eventually results in his removal from power.

Religion: Over the course of countless generations, the musai condensed their expansive pantheon of divine beings into a single deity, the entity they refer to as Huatzalipca. The process originally began with the amalgamation of the god of war, Huatlaloc, the god of the sun, Quazal, and the god of the night Xanipca into Huatzalipca. Eventually, the lesser gods drifted into obscurity, leaving Huatzalipca as the musai's sole deity. Although they outwardly perform their cannibalistic rites in the name of their chief deity, only the extremely devout members of the community attribute any profound religious significance to the ceremony. In fact, most musai spend little time contemplating religion, and instead devote their spiritual industry towards the interpretation of various omens and stellar configurations. The popular consensus contends that Huatzalipca deserted them at a crucial turning point in their storied history. Commensurate with their spiteful nature, many of the musai stopped

worshipping their purported deity, replacing him with their homegrown brand of astrology or in some very rare instances, Haiel.

Language: In the annals of their storied history, the musai consider the creation of their language as their second greatest achievement behind the architectural wonders of their great city. Although outsiders find it extremely difficult to properly pronounce the unusual unions of juxtaposed consonants, the language flows with a beauty and inflection that rivals the most lyrical tongues. Musai prefer keeping the nuances of their language a racial secret, prompting most musai to speak Common in the presence of outsiders. Written works consist of roughly 10,000 different pictographs that are used in lieu of a written alphabet.

Names: According to musai tradition, children are typically named after the first animal or plant that the child's mother sees after giving birth to the newborn infant. As a result of this belief, countless musai shared the same name, leading to widespread confusion among the cities' administrators. The civic authorities urged fathers to procure a rare plant or animal prior to the child's birth in an effort to alleviate the growing problem. The innovative solution eventually resolved the crisis. Musai use their first name as their individual name, while their last name is actually the name of their particular settlement.

Musai Male Names: Ewaotl, Hlalac, Iiawan, Quaman, Tlock, Zapota

Musai Female Names: Carammal, Juva, Llaxamma, Mizta, Sangta, Xiva

Musai Last Names: Amuatl, Hualago, Ixor, Quiyna, Zamman

Adventurers: Rarely accepted by members of the outside world, few musai embark upon a career as an adventurer. The brave few that travail this difficult path almost always become rangers, a role that minimizes their contact with humanoid cities and civilizations. In extremely rare circumstances, musai venture into large, cosmopolitan cities, settling into the squalid urban underworld where they ply their nefarious crafts as rogues and occasionally assassins.

Musai Racial Traits

- Musai get a +2 bonus to Dexterity and Wisdom while suffering a -2 penalty to Charisma and Constitution.
- Musai are Medium creatures; therefore their AC and attack rolls are unaffected by their size. They have a base speed of 30 ft.
- Musai are humanoids (musai).
- Musai receive a +2 racial bonus to Knowledge (nature), Profession (astrologer) and Survival skill checks.
- **Genetic Flaws (Ex)**: Musai suffer a -1 penalty to all saving throws against poison and disease.
- **Portend Future (Ex)**: Musai are well schooled in astrology, enabling them to observe the evening sky and obtain some hidden insight on the following day's events. Whenever the character spends one uninterrupted hour carefully observing the Forge's two moons and two suns, the character may roll a Profession (astrologer) check. The outcome of his check determines its effect. If his result equals or exceeds DC 20, the character may add a +1 insight bonus to any one attack roll, saving throw or skill check that the character makes at any time over the course of the next twenty-four hours. He must declare his intention to add this bonus prior to making the die roll. If his result equals or exceeds DC 25, the insight bonus increases to +3 subject to the preceding conditions. A result equaling or exceeding DC 30 increases the insight bonus to +5 subject to the preceding conditions. He can only make one Profession (astrologer) check over the course of any 24-hour period.
- **Destiny (Su)**: When the character is created he adds a permanent +1 luck bonus to either his AC, attack rolls, saving throws or skill checks. Once he makes this decision, he can never change it.
- Musai reach middle age at 35, old age at 52 and venerable at 70.
- *Automatic Languages*: Common; Bonus Languages: select from Avian, Canine, Elven, Feline, Green and Sylvan.
- *Favored Class*: Ranger

Ologatu

No race pulled from another world onto Wildwood's primeval stage fared as well as the reclusive ologatu. They first set foot in the primitive domain approximately 5,000 years ago, when the semi-nomadic tribe of hunter-gatherers sparked Haiel's curious fancy. Convinced that the relatively docile humanoids stood absolutely no chance of survival, he fabricated a replica of their largest settlement, Lashu Michu on a large plateau midway up the face of his dormant volcano, allowing him to watch the barbarous spectacle unfold from the confines of his nearby citadel. Much to his shock and bewilderment, the versatile band of hardy humanoids thrived beyond his wildest expectations. The highly superstitious and spiritual people swiftly abandoned Haiel's construction that they deemed a haunted imitation of their fabled village and instead settled in the island's untamed woodlands. The omnivorous ologatus subsisted on an unusual diet of primates, birds, poisonous serpents and arachnids complemented by berries, fruits and mushrooms, displaying an unexpected ability to harmlessly metabolize the most virulent animal and plant toxins.

Personality: Ologatus are generally shy and introverted, preferring quiet contemplation to social interaction. Outsiders mistake their peaceful demeanor and reluctance to speak as signs of weakness or stupidity; however this assumption frequently leads to fatal consequences. Although ologatus strive to avoid unnecessary confrontations with other sentient beings, they never back down from an imminent threat to the security of their people or the sanctity of their native habitat. If persuasion and diplomacy fail to dissuade

the enemy from undertaking an undesirable course of action, the ologatus immediately mobilize their fierce warriors to neutralize the menace. Retaliation is swift and merciless, as the frenzied ologatus rain down their repressed rage in violent torrents of bloodshed and carnage. However, anger is fleeting among the ologatus, and once the tribe's safety is assured, its ferocious warriors virtually instantaneously reassume their tranquil dispositions.

Ologatus deeply respect nature and display a particular fondness for colorful, precious stones. Blue and red stones including lapis lazuli, garnets and rubies enjoy the most popularity with the ologatus. Although they fashion traditional forms of jewelry from the coveted gems, they also implant them beneath their skin, especially within their lips and earlobes. The size and quality of each individual's decorative accoutrements act as a status symbol among their fellow tribesmen, conveying the person's social ranking and relative wealth to their peers. An ologatu's social station is almost always determined by birthright. To ensure the perpetuation of this system, each local leader arranges all marriages in concert with the parents of the prospective bride and groom. The entire process begins when both children reach the age of 6, starting out with formal introductions and a series of chaperoned meetings before culminating in the couple's wedding when the younger spouse reaches the age of 14. Irrespective of the daunting obstacles, upward mobility into the upper echelons of ologatu society proves very difficult but not impossible. If an ologatu displays exceptional heroism in battle or saves the life of another ologatu of a higher status, the tribe's leader can elect to elevate him to a higher social status. Conversely, demonstrations of cowardice or unbecoming conduct occasionally result in an individual's demotion from their social station. This peculiar social dynamic motivates the ologatu warrior to attain unprecedented heights of courage and savagery.

Physical Description: Ologatus appear as tall, lanky humanoids with long legs, dark red skin and a thick head of braided black hair. Shortly after birth, ologatus affix a plank of wood to the infant's skull as part of a deliberate effort to create an elongated and sloped forehead. In addition, they also implant circular or elliptical objects into the child's lips and earlobes transforming the normally tight fitting skin into loose flaps of flesh. Despite removing all of the aforementioned items when the child turns two years old, the effects are permanent. As a result, ologatus sport an oddly shaped, vaguely conical head along with grotesquely enlarged lips and earlobes. They are typically attired in brightly colored linen tunics and skirts, while adorning their faces, hands and wrists with a diverse manner of jewelry and precious stones.

Despite their seemingly frail build, the ologatus demonstrate incredible stamina and fortitude. They are renowned runners and swimmers, capable of jogging or swimming 50 miles or 30 miles respectively over the course of a single day. They are invulnerable to all types of poison and prove incredibly resistant to disease. While blessed with amazing physical attributes, other humanoid races often find their distorted facial features disturbing and unsettling. The pervasive preoccupation with their strange appearance places ologatus at a significant disadvantage whenever they interact with other humanoids.

Relations: Predominantly confined to the harsh and largely inaccessible chain of islands in the Northern Ocean, ologatus rarely come into contact with other humanoid species. Whenever humanoids from Wildwood's mainland venture into their domain, they carefully observe the trespassers' actions from afar. If their activities do not meet the ologatus' approval, they confront the interlopers and issue a stern rebuke warning them to leave the islands immediately. Most meekly acquiesce to the demand or profusely apologize for the unintentional transgression, yet a small minority, (typically merchants or rashers from other domains such as Penance or Arena) pay no heed to the foreboding threat. In these rare instances, the ologatus resort to violence and forcibly expel the intruders from their lands. Of course, these precautions only apply to races that they deem as a potential threat. Ologatus pay little attention to dovers, elves and freys, races that they consider attuned to the rhythm of the natural world, but they keep a close eye on humans, half-elves and others with a reputation for despoiling the pristine wilderness.

In contrast to humanoid visitors, the ologatus enjoy a cordial relationship with the indigenous vogels; although the latter's irrepressible optimism usually exceeds the ologatus' tolerance level. Nonetheless the anatomically dissimilar sentient races share a love of shiny, ornamental objects, spawning a burgeoning commercial relationship between them. They also view the ceptus as an enlightened race of beings, although their contact with the underwater denizens of the Northern Ocean remains extremely limited. Commensurate with their reverence for nature, the ologatus treat the islands' natural inhabitants with respect, relying only upon a limited number of native species as a food resource.

Alignment: Ologatus prefer detached observance rather than active participation; hence the overwhelming majority of ologatus adheres to some interpretation of neutrality. Warriors always espouse non-lawful ideologies, while the tribe's leadership structure displays a penchant for impassiveness and logic.

Ologatu Lands: Over the span of the last five millenniums, the ologatus' lands spread from the shadow of the great volcano to virtually every island in the Northern Ocean, including some in neighboring Arena. The ologatus accomplished this astounding feat not by constructing oceangoing vessels but by simply swimming to the next island. Despite their proliferation throughout the islands of the Northern Ocean, the majority of ologatus still reside within the natural caves and beneath the outcroppings found along the walls of the great volcano's slopes.

Whenever possible, they make their homes near the islands' highest elevations, enabling them to carefully observe the landscape below them. Regardless of their distance from the ologatu homeland on Haiel's island, their settlements all fall under the nominal rule of their supreme leader, the muqualla, yet in actuality his power is virtually non-existent beyond the shores of their central island. Consistent with the ologatus' societal structure, its spiritual and political leaders acquire their positions through heredity rather than merit. Gender and unfortunately competence are irrelevant according to their perspective. They generally believe that in short time, nature culls the weak and inept like a hungry predator slaying its infirmed prey, a notion that holds true in most instances.

Religion: Ologatus reject the notion of divine beings and instead embrace the tenet that nature is a living entity seeking communion with its inhabitants. Because of this basic doctrine, all of their spiritual leaders are druids, while clerics are non-existent. Ologatus achieve unity with nature by fettering the shackles of reality and indulging the mind and senses in an orgy of transcendental imagery and experience. In an effort to attain this lofty goal, ologatus ritualistically partake in the ingestion and inhalation of hallucinogenic substances concocted from natural components. During this chemically induced trance, the participant, under the careful scrutiny of the presiding druid, escapes the bonds of his earthly body and commences a breathtaking, metaphysical journey in search of inner harmony and self-discovery. Outsiders dismiss the vivid accounts of these voyages as nothing more than the ramblings of a crazed addict, yet the mind-altering visions hold a significant, spiritual importance to the ologatus. The transitory respite from their physical existence provides them with a greater appreciation and an understanding of the natural world's boundless marvels.



Language: Despite their relative isolation from the outside world, the ologatus' native tongue is in a rapid state of decline. Although the entire race understands and speaks the language with fluency, the majority of ologatu conversations take place in Common. The reason for this unusual phenomenon is unknown, but the consensus of scholars believes that the ologatus' lack of a written alphabet is primarily to blame. As the language slowly progresses towards extinction, the ologatus' keepers of oral tradition are now engaged in the laborious task of translating and transcribing their rich history into Common for the benefit of future generations.

Names: All ologatu names consist of the same three components, the child's name and one of the parent's names conjoined by the word, "mula" meaning "child of" in their native language. For names ending in a consonant, the conjunction "amula" is used in lieu of "mula". The gender of the muqualla at the time of the child's birth determines whether to use the father or mother's name. Therefore, the child's given name appears first, followed by "mula" or "amula" and then ending in one of the parent's given names. For instance, the child Chus is the daughter of Lamu (his father) and Soro (his mother). At the time of Chus' birth, a female muqualla was in power; hence her mother's name is used. Hence, the child's name is Chusamulasoro. Not surprisingly, an ologatus' full name is never used in colloquial conversation, and only exists for recordkeeping purposes.

Male Given Names: Banba, Lamu, Micha, Pulgu, Zun

Female Given Names: Arra, Chus, Halu, Nalya, Soro

Adventurers: Closely bonded with the natural world, ologatus prove their worth in the field as barbarians, druids and rangers. A small number of ologatus continue the race's storied oral tradition and become bards. There are no ologatu clerics or paladins, and only a very miniscule population of fighters, rogues, sorcerers and wizards.

Ologatu Racial Traits

- Ologatus get a +4 bonus to Constitution, but suffer a -2 penalty to Charisma and Strength.
- Ologatus are Medium creatures; therefore the AC and attack rolls are unaffected by their size. They have a land speed of 40 ft., and a swim speed of 20 ft. Ologatus gain a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform a special action or avoid a hazard. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered when swimming. They can use the run action while swimming, provided that they swim in a straight line.
- Ologatus are humanoids (ologatu).

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- Ologatus are immune to all poisons and receive a +4 bonus to all saving throws against disease.
- Ologatus receive the feat Endurance.
- Ologatus reach middle age at 40, old age at 60 and venerable at 80.
- *Automatic Languages*: Common; Bonus Languages: select from Avian, Canine, Draconic, Elven, Feline, Gnoll and Sylvan.
- *Favored Class*: Ranger

Urgoda

Urgoda are a race of nomadic hunters that ply the caverns and tunnels between Wildwood and Eclipse, acting as both hunters and guides. They have a natural hatred for drow. Because of their chaotic tendencies, they often ambush passersby that intrude upon their hunting territories. Although they are capable of living aboveground, the majority of the urgoda are encountered in subterranean locations.

None know from where the urgoda came. Most races in the Forge were pulled in from other worlds by the Black Flock, but those who have studied the urgoda believe that they may have began as a native species that was magically manipulated until they assumed their present form. Some believe that they may be a perverted human, while others believe that they may be an ape-like creature that was mixed with some other creature. Because of their physical power, they were likely used as slaves, either for grunt labor, for combat purposes, or both. Because of their stubborn determination and strong sense of individualism, they may have escaped their bondage and taken to the tunnels beneath the surface. None may ever know their true heritage, but all agree that they are an unusual species, even for the Forge.

Personality: Urgoda are savage, preferring to interact with the world through hunting and combat. They value ferocity in others, often watching to see how they perform in a fight before deciding whether or not there is any value in keeping them as a friend. They naturally assume that they will be able to best an enemy in battle, and it is only through their own defeat that they gain enough respect for them to discuss matters with them as an equal. Many of the urgoda, who act as guides for other species, have learned to look beyond this when interacting with individuals they do not know. For them, the value of an individual is measured not in whether or not they are respectable in battle, but whether or not they carry the gold required to get them to their destination.

Urgoda are also known for their sadistic sense of humor, particularly where it concerns the drow. The dark skinned elves often assume that the urgoda are giant oafs if they have not encountered them before. The urgoda often play up this misconception, allowing the drow to score relatively minor strikes against them. At this point the drow often become overconfident in their ability to deal with these creatures and relax their tactics, which is when the urgoda demonstrate exactly how dexterous they truly are; an approach that elicits fear in their hated enemies, which the urgoda find quite humorous. In addition to this, when hunting they make a great spectacle out of their efforts to corner and trap the creatures that they kill as their comrades look on and judge them by their antics.

Physical Description: Urgoda are tall powerful monstrous humanoid creatures. They have bony plates just under the skin from head to toe that are quite noticeable to anyone observing them. These bony plates form ridges over their eyes and cover their noses, chins, and extend over the back of their heads to form what almost appears to be a naturally occurring helmet. Their eyes are deep set with slitted pupils while their mouths are filled with viciously sharp teeth.

Urgoda bodies are covered with bristly fur that ranges in color from brown to gray and red. They walk upright, though their shoulders have a natural slouch to them, allowing them to more easily catch creatures that are smaller than them. Their legs are powerful, but their feet are much like those of a canine or feline; ending with a pad portion that touches the ground and extending upwards to an ankle that is almost always elevated. Located at the ankle is a claw that can be used with their kick attacks. Urgoda possess fingers and toes similar to those of an ape bereft of claws.

When observed at ease, from a distance urgodas appear somewhat awkward. That awkwardness is caused by the fact that they walk upright. When engaging in combat however, they squat down and hunch forward, extending their necks and arms so that they can effectively use their bite attacks and wield their weapons away from their bodies. This strategy, combined with the lankiness of their bodies makes it difficult for an opponent to hit the vital organs in their torso. Because they frequently use their bite attacks, urgoda often sustain blows to their heads. Fortunately the bony plates covering their skulls usually prevent them from sustaining serious cranial injuries, but it is common for adults who have engaged in combat to have noticeably scarred heads.

Relations: The majority of urgoda have no respect for other races unless they are taught respect the hard way. They have a hatred for the drow, and they view most other races as physically inferior to them. The exception to this are the urgoda who act as guides or have left their family hunting units to explore the civilizations that dot the Forge. Such individuals have learned that some races rise up to become as capable in melee combat as them while other races have their own strengths that they use to their advantage. The majority of urgoda live their lives in subterranean caverns, so few other species know of their existence. Those that do, generally view them as dangerous brutes.

Urgoda Lands: Urgoda are nomadic, so it is therefore the exception for them to own land. They typically travel beneath the surface in small family units. Aside from these units, they lack true political power, and there are no organized urgoda governments that preside over urgoda civilization

or culture. Disagreements between urgodas are most commonly settled through violence rather than diplomacy. The most powerful individual in the disagreement is viewed as having a 'correct' point of view at least until another urgoda that is even more powerful challenges that assumption.

Religion: The urgoda believe in an aspect of the Forge called the *Chis*. This is not a deity in the traditional sense, but rather a philosophy that places a high value on advancing individual interests, while taking into account the dark realities of the environment in which they dwell. *Chis* is a magical force, likely a little known fragment of the god's magic that pervades the Forge, that manifests itself in exactly the same way as standard divine magic, though it carries with it a unified belief that is not segmented by polytheism.

The belief in *chis* states that life is a dark and wretched thing. All life must destroy other life in order to survive. A vegetarian seeks to alleviate himself from this guilt by eating only plants, but the plants themselves are alive and just as deserving of life as the animals. Creatures that do not attempt to defy their nature and hunt animals are more true to *chis*, and therefore are closer to the true source of power. If one can accept this power, harness it, and use it to better their lot in life, then they have embraced *chis*. Those who embrace *chis* are naturally destined to live richer, fuller lives, and upon death become part of *chis* themselves.



The practical application of this is that since the majority of urgoda believe in *chis*, they find no fault in bringing death to other animals or weaker beings. Advancing their own will is the heart of the belief of *chis*, though *chis* does not advocate unnecessary cruelty or power mongering. In fact, *chis* promotes a balance between good and evil that can only be accomplished by indiscriminant motivations and a random course of action. An urgoda that follows that call of *chis* may be an ally to a group of good-aligned creatures and then also become aligned with an evil group with opposite motivations as the first group they aligned themselves with.

Clerics of *chis* may choose from the domains of chaos, death, and travel.

Language: Urgodas have their own language, which sounds much like a collection of simian grunts and wails. Their language depends as much upon the body language that accompanies it as it does upon the spoken word. Despite the savage sound of their language, urgodas are capable of conveying complex ideas and descriptions of events. Few scholars who have come to study urgoda language have ever been able to achieve fluency in this language.

Written urgoda language is much like that of other species. Phonetic sounds are represented by various symbols, which come together to from words. Few urgodas have access to paper or the inclination to write down anything, but there are a few who feel the need to chronicle the lives of their families or important historical events that they may have witnessed. In such cases they are more likely to etch their language in stone than they are to muck around with the all too delicate paper. Scholars who are somewhat familiar with urgoda language find it much easier to translate urgoda writings than their spoken language.

Names: Urgoda names tend to be short, consisting of one or two syllables. Each individual has a name, though they do not possess family names. Parents who are vain to the point of wishing their name to continue simply give their offspring their same name. This happens often, even though the urgoda believe that this practice is not advocated by *chis* since it robs urgodas of their individuality. Clerics of *chis* have never been known to do this, and some believe that doing so could result in losing their divine powers.

Male Names: Arum, Duhuk, Omgul, Queel, Wynod.

Female Names: Biora, Gaine, Leren, Oyud, Zull.

Adventurers: Technically every urgoda is an adventurer since they live a nomadic life and rarely deal with any of their own kind outside of their family units. Those who join members of other races in adventuring parties tend to have a more defined sense of purpose than most of their kind and may be somewhat less devoted to *chis*. Many become guides and lead people through the difficult subterranean terrain between Wildwood and Eclipse, accepting whatever company they happen to be escorting. Good, evil, and whatever agenda these individuals may have normally mean nothing to these urgoda, as long as they are paid.

Urgoda Racial Traits

- Urogda get a +4 bonus to Constitution and Strength and a +2 bonus to Dexterity while

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suffering a -2 penalty to Charisma, Intelligence and Wisdom.

- Urgoda are Large creatures; therefore they suffer a -1 penalty to AC and attack rolls as well as a -4 penalty to Hide checks. Their base speed is 40 ft. They have a space/reach of 10 ft./10 ft.
- Urgoda are monstrous humanoids.
- Darkvision 60 ft.
- +4 natural armor bonus
- Urgoda receive a +8 racial bonus to Jump checks.
- Because of an extra claw on the urgoda's heel, its kick attack deals 1d6 points of damage. They can also attack with their bite inflicting 1d4 points of damage. These attacks are treated as natural weapons. The urgoda's kick attacks are considered its primary weapon and its bite functions as its secondary weapon. Because of this unusual anatomical feature, urgoda can only wear specially designed boots and shoes.
- **Pounce (Ex):** Whenever an urgoda charges at any enemy, he can make a full attack with his natural weaponry and any hand-held weapons that he is wielding. The latter category of weaponry is treated as a secondary weapon; therefore the attack rolls with hand-held weapons are made with a -5 penalty and only add ½ the urgoda's Strength modifier to damage. Multiattack does not reduce this penalty to -2.
- Spell resistance 11
- Scent
- Urgodas are extremely skilled navigators and trackers. As a result, they can never get lost and they receive Track as a bonus feat whenever they are underground.
- Urgoda are difficult to surprise; therefore they gain the benefits of the Uncanny Dodge extraordinary ability as if they were a rogue.
- *Racial Hit Dice*: Urgoda start with two levels of monstrous humanoid giving them 2d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +2 and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +0, Ref +3 and Will +3.
- *Racial Skills*: An urgoda's monstrous humanoid levels bestows 5 x (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) skill points. Its class skills are Jump, Knowledge (dungeoneering) and Survival.
- *Racial Feats*: The urgoda's two monstrous humanoid levels give it one feat.
- Urgoda reach middle age at 45, old age at 67 and venerable at 90.
- *Automatic Languages*: Undercommon; Bonus Languages: select from Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome and Terran.
- Level adjustment +3
- *Favored Class*: Barbarian

Urgoda Racial Levels

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+1	+1	+0	Earn Respect
2nd	+2	+1	+1	+1	Hardheaded
3rd	+3	+2	+2	+1	Invulnerable

Skill in battle is first and foremost in the minds of urgodas choosing to embrace the warrior mentality ingrained into their psyches. In addition to accepting the ideological aspects of this particular path, urgodas following in the steps of their ancestors also undergo physiological alterations designed to enhance their abilities in combat.

Hit die: d12

Skill points at each racial level: 2 + Int modifier.

Racial class skills: Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Str), Jump (Str), Knowledge (dungeoneering)(Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Weapon and armor proficiency: Urgodas are proficient with light armor, shields and simple weapons. Urgodas often utilize large two-headed weapons rather than wielding a weapon in each hand or fighting with a weapon and shield.

Earn Respect (Ex): Urgodas gain a +1 morale bonus to AC, attack and damage rolls as well as saving throws against opponents one or more size categories smaller than themselves. These bonuses remain in effect until its smaller opponents reduce the urgoda to less than half of the hit points it had to start the encounter. Once this condition is met, the bonuses are lost for the duration of the encounter.

Hardheaded (Ex): Urgodas are extremely difficult to stun. Whenever an urgoda fails his Fortitude save against a stunning attack caused by a physical blow, he can immediately reroll the saving throw. (In general, any stunning effect that requires a successful attack roll falls into this category.) He is only entitled to one reroll per attack, and his daily usage of this ability cannot exceed his Constitution modifier. Hence, an urgoda with a +4 Constitution modifier can make four rerolls over the course of a single day but not more than once per attack or effect. (An urgoda with a Constitution modifier of 0 or less can employ this ability once per day.)

Invulnerable (Ex): Rigid, cartilaginous tissue found between the bony plates beneath their skin provides added protection to their internal organs. Whenever a foe scores a critical hit or sneak attack against an urgoda, there is a 25% chance of negating the additional damage caused by the critical hit or sneak attack just as if the urgoda were wearing *armor of light fortification*.

Prestige Racial Levels

On most worlds, evolution is a slow, circuitous process more often than not resulting in biological dead-ends and disastrous failures than glorious successes. Most naturally occurring mutations to a creature's genetic profile have little practical value,

frequently adding cosmetic alterations or in some cases physiological changes that do nothing to enhance the creature's chances of survival. Fortunately for the Forge's sentient inhabitants, evolutionary progress no longer depends exclusively on luck or chance. The residents of this inherently magical prison planet can capitalize on the world's omnipresent mystical energy and use it to transform their minds and bodies in ways previously unimaginable. The vastly accelerated process is commonly known throughout the Forge as an "enchantment of the flesh", while the alterations themselves are referred to as prestige racial levels. Like the name suggests, prestige racial levels combine some of the features found in the racial levels discussed in the preceding Races of the Forge chapter and the more familiar prestige classes. The acquisition of prestige racial levels is not a haphazard endeavor allowing characters to pick and choose a random assortment of metamorphoses. Instead, each prestige racial level is part of a greater whole, serving as a specific step in a linked grouping of prestige racial levels known as a focus.

To perform an enchantment of the flesh, the character must have the Evolve feat (presented in the Feats of the Forge chapter), or he must venture to one of the seven sacred places where any creature can perform the ritual. Each of the seven domains has one such locale. They are the waters of the Wellspring in the city of Penance, the waters of the Sea of Tears in Arena, the crater that houses Haiel's citadel in Wildwood, the shadow of the Spike in the Vault, the dark city of Baradume in Eclipse, the glare of Orif'elle's silver citadel in Anvil and the entire domain of the Kiln. Once a character satisfies either of the aforementioned requirements, he can begin the transformation ritual. Each focus is inexorably linked to one of the character's ability scores. Naturally, prestige racial levels that alter the body are tied to one of the physical ability scores like Constitution, Dexterity or Strength; whereas those that affect the mind or personality are affiliated with Charisma, Intelligence or Wisdom.

Converting Existing Oathbound Characters

In the previous edition of Oathbound, prestige racial levels were referred to as prestige races, which characters acquired by spending experience points. The best and easiest method of converting Oathbound characters using the previous system is to add the prestige race(s)' experience point costs to his current experience point total. Therefore if a character that currently has 40,000 xp and previously spent 6,000 xp to purchase a prestige race, he loses the prestige race and now has 46,000 xp. If the character wants to acquire prestige racial levels, he can substitute prestige racial levels for class levels. Players familiar with the earlier edition of Oathbound should notice that many of the prestige races that appeared in the original core rulebook and supplements have been updated, renamed or eliminated. **Table 10.1: Oathbound Prestige Races** lists the changes that were made.

Summary

Some individuals sculpt their bodies and minds according to a predetermined design. They typically focus their efforts on enhancing a specific physical or mental attribute, while others undergo radical physiological changes. As previously discussed, each prestige racial level affects one of the character's six abilities. The ability associated with a particular focus is known as the focus ability. A character can only acquire **one** focus affiliated with each ability score; therefore a character that gains one or more prestige racial levels belonging to the Focus of the Body (a Constitution-based focus) cannot gain any prestige racial levels belonging to another Constitution-based focus, (such as Focus of the Beast), but he is free to acquire prestige racial levels associated with one of the other abilities such as Dexterity or Strength. Mechanically, prestige racial levels are the same as racial levels with the following exceptions.

- The character must complete the "enchantment of the flesh" ritual described in the following section before he can begin acquiring prestige racial levels from a specific focus.
- Prestige racial levels are available to characters of any race.
- Characters can acquire prestige racial levels at any point in their adventuring career, not just at 1st-level.
- A character that acquires one or more prestige racial levels from a particular focus can acquire an equal number of class levels before he must abandon the focus, i.e. he cannot gain any remaining prestige racial levels from that focus. Therefore, a character that acquires one prestige racial level from the Focus of the Acrobat can then gain a class level before acquiring the second prestige racial level from the same focus. If he chooses to acquire a prestige racial level from a different focus, he must abandon all other foci.
- Focus skills are treated as class skills.

Ritual

As previously stated, a character with the Evolve feat can perform the ritual anywhere in the Forge, whereas everyone else must perform the ritual in one of the Forge's seven sacred places. The character cannot gain the focus' first prestige racial level until he satisfies one of the aforementioned prerequisites. After meeting the preceding requirement, the participant enters into a deep trance as he forges a bond between himself and the world's intrinsic mystical forces. He must remain in this nearly catatonic state for ten minutes until the transformation is completed. The ritual is only necessary to acquire the first prestige racial level in each focus.

Foci

Focus names are abbreviated as follows: Focus of the Acrobat FoAct; Focus of the Arachnid FoArd; Focus of the Arid Wastes FoAdW; Focus of the Beast FoBst;

Table 10.1: Oathbound Prestige Races

Prestige Race	Source	Status	New Focus
Focus of the Beast	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Updated	--
Focus of the Body	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Updated	--
Focus of the Deep	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Updated	--
Focus of the Green	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Updated	--
Focus of Protection	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Eliminated	
Focus of the Senses	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Updated	--
Focus of the Serpent	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Updated	--
Focus of the Shadow	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Updated	--
Focus of the Sphere	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Updated	--
Focus of the Wyrm	Oathbound: *Domains of the Forge*	Updated	--
Focus of the Claw	Oathbound: *Plains of Penance*	Updated	--
Focus of the Huge	Oathbound: *Plains of Penance*	Updated	--
Focus of the Light	Oathbound: *Plains of Penance*	Updated	--
Focus of the Small	Oathbound: *Plains of Penance*	Updated	--
Focus of the Exile	Oathbound: *Wrack & Ruin*	Updated	--
Focus of the Brawler	Oathbound: *Arena*	Updated	--
Focus of the Gloom	Oathbound: *Mysteries of Arena*	Renamed	Focus of the Dark

Focus of the Body FoBdy; Focus of the Brawler FoBwr; Focus of the Canine FoCnn; Focus of the Claw FoClw; Focus of the Cockroach FoCkh; Focus of Contemplation FoCtn; Focus of the Dark FoDrk; Focus of the Deep FoDep; Focus of the Elements FoEls; Focus of the Exile FoExl; Focus of the Fair FoFar; Focus of the Fated FoFtd; Focus of the Feline FoFln; Focus of the Flame FoFlm; Focus of the Frigid FoFrd; Focus of the Grave FoGrv; Focus of the Green FoGrn; Focus of the Huge FoHug; Focus of the Inventor FoInv; Focus of the Light FoLgt; Focus of the Lode FoLod; Focus of the Mighty FoMty; Focus of the Mind FoMnd; Focus of the Mystical FoMyl; Focus of the Primate FoPrt; Focus of the Senses FoSns; Focus of the Serpent FoSrp; Focus of the Shadow FoShw; Focus of the Slayer FoSlr; Focus of the Small FoSml; Focus of the Sphere FoSpr; Focus of the Wyrm FoWym.

General Effects

The transformation caused by the acquisition of a prestige racial level is permanent and unalterable regardless of whether the character remains on the Forge. Only the intercession of a divine entity or one of the Feathered Fowl can undo the metamorphosis. If the character loses a level for whatever reason, he loses class levels, racial levels and racial Hit Dice before losing prestige racial levels. If he is forced to lose a prestige racial level, he loses all benefits gained from the prestige racial level; however the reacquisition of lost prestige racial levels can be accomplished without performing the ritual again. Unless otherwise stated, all of abilities gained by a prestige racial level are treated as extraordinary abilities.

Prestige Racial Levels

The following section contains all of the prestige racial levels grouped according to focus that are currently available to characters in the Forge. The description for each focus provides a brief summary of the ability(s) associated with that particular focus, the Hit Dice granted by the prestige racial level, the skill points and the domain(s) where the foci are most prevalent. The description for the prestige racial levels themselves and the table listing the prestige racial levels appear directly beneath it.

Focus of the Acrobat

In the minds of many humanoids, the mention of the word acrobat typically conjures images of colorful entertainers performing amazing feats of agility and breathtaking stunts. Although the abilities gained from this particular focus can be used to dazzle commoners and kings alike, the astounding benefits gained from this collection of prestige racial levels also have combat applications. The focus is most popular among rogues; however other lightly armored fighting classes are also known to take this focus.

Focus Ability: Dexterity

Hit Die: d6

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex) and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Eclipse, Penance, Anvil, Wildwood

Focus of the Acrobat

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Bounding
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Nimble
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Tumbling

Bounding Creature
Summary: The character has extraordinary jumping abilities.
Benefits: Up to two times per day, the bounding creature gains the benefits of the *jump* spell, using his Hit Dice as the caster level. This is a spell-like ability.

Nimble Creature
Summary: The creature has astounding balance.
Benefits: The creature suffers no penalties to his Balance checks whenever he moves at full speed, although he must still make two Balance checks if he makes a double move. He is not considered to be flat-footed while balancing. If he is not rushed or threatened while balancing, he can take 10 on his Balance check.

Tumbling Creature
Summary: He becomes an amazing tumbler.
Benefits: He can move at his full speed while tumbling without penalty. When falling, he always lands on his feet, and he can stand up from prone as a free action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. Whenever he makes a Jump check, he also adds his Tumble modifier to the check.

Focus of the Beast

Proponents of this focus embrace their feral ancestry developing an array of natural weaponry and defenses. They are found throughout the Forge; however only humanoids can embark on this particular evolutionary path. Martial classes, barbarians and rangers in particular, comprise the overwhelming majority of its devotees.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d8
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature)(Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain: Any
Race: Humanoids

Focus of the Beast

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Scented
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Tailed
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Feral
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Wild

Scented Creature
Summary: The creature's nose is transformed into an animal-like snout. His ears also grow and develop the ability to move in any direction.
Game Effects: The creature acquires the scent ability.

Tailed Creature
Summary: A furry tail sprouts from the base of his spine. Its length is approximately two-thirds his height.
Game Effects: He can use his tail as a natural weapon that deals 1d6 points of damage. The appendage is also strong enough to support his weight; therefore he can use his tail to hang upside down thus allowing his arms and legs to perform other tasks such as swinging a weapon without hindrance or penalty.

Feral Creature
Summary: The creature grows a thick coat of fur.
Benefits: The creature gains a +2 natural armor bonus and resistance to cold 5.

Wild Creature
Summary: The creature's fingernails harden, becoming razor-sharp claws, while his jaw elongates and his teeth transform into fangs.
Benefits: A Medium-sized creature's claws deal 1d4 points or damage, while his bite inflicts 1d6 points of damage. The damage dealt by these attacks must be adjusted appropriately for creatures that are smaller or larger than Medium-sized. These attacks are considered natural weapons. He must designate a primary and secondary attack form. Spellcasters that undergo this transformation have a 20% chance of miscasting spells with verbal and somatic components, and a 10% chance of miscasting a spell that requires only one of these components.

Focus of the Body

Regardless of the creature type, the body is a marvelous machine unparalleled by any technological or even magical device. Nonetheless, it is clearly not a perfect creation as it is subject to the effects of age, disease and other physical shortcomings. This focus attempts to minimize the body's frailties, making it especially prevalent amongst combat-oriented classes.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d8
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (nature)(Int), Profession (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Any except the Kiln

Focus of the Body

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Metabolized
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Immunized
3rd	+1	+3	+1	+1	Sinewy
4th	+2	+4	+1	+1	Optimized

Metabolized Creature
Summary: The creature's metabolism operates at optimal efficiency.
Benefits: The creature is immune to fatigue and exhaustion.

Sinewy Creature

Summary: The creature's skeletal structure develops an astounding elasticity while simultaneously increasing its durability and strength.
Benefits: The character gains DR 1/- and has a 25% chance of ignoring the effects of critical hits and sneak attacks.

Immunized Creature
Summary: The creature's immune system and metabolism are naturally resistant to disease and poisons.
Benefits: The creature gains immunity to all diseases and poisons irrespective of their nature.

Optimized Creature
Summary: The creature's body cannot be immobilized or magically altered.
Benefits: The creature gains the benefits of the *freedom of movement* spell, and immunity to polymorph attacks.

Focus of the Brawler

Disciples of this focus revel in the physicality of hand to hand combat. In the eyes of the focus' proponents, the body itself is viewed as the ultimate weapon, which is far superior to iron and steel. Monks are often drawn to this focus, yet it is also popular among other combat-oriented classes as well.

Focus Ability: Strength
Hit Die: d8
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis) and Tumble (Dex).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Any except for the Kiln

Focus of the Brawler

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Toughened
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Brawler
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Burly

Toughened Creature
Summary: He is resistant to being knocked out and stunned.
Benefits: The evolved creature adds his Strength modifier to all Fortitude saves against stunning effects that also deal damage such as being struck by a Stunning Fist attack. He would not receive this benefit against a spell, spell-like ability or supernatural ability that stuns creatures without dealing damage. Whenever a physical attack deals nonlethal damage, he ignores the first five points of damage from the blow.

Brawler Creature
Summary: The creature can use his fists to ward off blows.
Benefits: If the brawler creature is not grasping an object or item with his hand(s), each free hand gives him a +1 shield bonus, which stacks with shield bonuses gained from other sources. A brawler creature wearing gauntlets still gains this benefit.

Burly Creature
Summary: The creature's unarmed attack and grappling damage increase.
Benefits: The creature adds 1 ½ times his Strength modifier to his unarmed attack and grappling damage.

Focus of the Canine

Those that follow this path are focused on emulating the superior traits of the canine family that enables it to hunt more effectively. Utilizing the creatures' evolutionary developments as well as their unique mindset, the character acquires the unique attributes often associated with dogs and wolves. The focus is most effective when used in a group setting, much like the wolf pack, which it closely emulates.

Focus Ability: Wisdom
Hit Die: d6
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Wildwood, Penance, Anvil

Focus of the Canine

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Devoted
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Laughing
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Pack

Devoted Creature
Summary: Like the most protective canine, the creature goes to extraordinary lengths to protect a friend.
Benefits: The devoted creature can make an aid another special attack as a move action rather than a standard action. If his effort succeeds, the friend gains a +6 bonus rather than the normal +2 bonus.

Laughing Creature
Summary: The creature's vocal chords change, enabling the creature to mimic the unsettling cry of the hyena.
Benefits: Up to twice per day, a laughing creature can emit a disturbing, mocking cry that requires all creatures within a 20-ft. radius of the laughing creature to make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ the laughing creature's HD + his Wisdom modifier). Creatures failing this saving throw are shaken for 1d4+1 rounds. This effect is a spell-like, mind-affecting ability that requires the usage of a standard action. In addition, deaf creatures are totally immune to this effect.

Pack Creature
Summary: A pack creature acquires the mindset of a wolf, attacking with greater cohesion and effectiveness when fighting with a group of creatures rather than as an individual. The collective mindset does not produce any noticeable physical changes.
Benefits: Those taking this prestige racial level treat all of their class, racial and prestige racial levels as well as racial Hit Dice as rogue levels when flanking an opponent. If the creature already has rogue levels or levels that are treated as rogue levels for the aforementioned purpose, he can flank a creature as if he were a rogue four levels higher than his current level. When the pack creature flanks an opponent, his actions are guided by instinct. As a result, he adds his Wisdom modifier to his attack and damage rolls against a flanked opponent. This bonus stacks with his flanking bonus.

Focus of the Claw

Only creatures with natural weaponry embark down this path as it enhances the damage dealt by their natural weapons and enables their natural weaponry to overcome certain types of damage reduction. Races already equipped with claws and bite attacks benefit the most from this focus. The focus is most popular amongst races that espouse the usage of their natural weaponry over manmade devices.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d8
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domains: Wildwood, Penance, Anvil

Focus of the Claw

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Deadly
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Lethal
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Razor
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Edged

Deadly Creature
Summary: His natural weapons are treated as magic weapons when overcoming damage reduction.
Benefits: His natural weapons ignore damage reduction/magic.

Lethal Creature
Summary: His natural weapons are treated as adamantine weapons when overcoming damage reduction.
Benefits: His natural weapons ignore damage reduction/adamantine.

Razor Creature
Summary: His natural attacks become more accurate and deal more damage.
Benefits: All of his natural attacks gain a +1 enhancement bonus.

Edged Creature
Summary: He can change the molecular composition of his natural weapons.
Benefits: At will, he can transform the molecular composition of his natural weapons into any non-magical substance such as alchemical silver or cold iron. The alteration requires a full round action to complete.

Focus of the Dark

The adjustment to a permanent existence beneath the earth is a difficult transition for surface dwellers relegated to a permanent subterranean existence. Fortunately, the specialized adaptations gained from this focus greatly improve their chances for survival. Humanoid adventurers delving into the deep parts of the Forge owe their existence to the benefits gained from this focus.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d8
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (dungeoneering)(Int), Knowledge (earth)(Int), Knowledge (geography)(any subterranean locale)(Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Eclipse, Arena, Wildwood, Penance

Focus of the Dark

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Sunless
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Inconspicuous
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Tenebrous

Sunless Creature
Summary: The creature no longer has any need for sunlight. His skin takes on an ashy hue, while his eyes and ears drastically enlarge.
Benefits: He gains darkvision up to 60 ft. If he already has darkvision, his range increases by 30 ft. He can absorb moisture through his skin; hence he is no longer subject to thirst except in an area without humidity. The creature is dazzled whenever exposed to sunlight or the effects of a *daylight* spell.

Inconspicuous Creature
Summary: The creature becomes virtually invisible under certain conditions.
Benefits: While in conditions of total darkness, the creature is virtually unnoticeable. Opponents within visual range of the creature do not take notice of him unless they make Will saves versus DC 10 + ½ the inconspicuous creature's HD + his Con modifier. Even if the viewer makes his Will save, he must still make a Spot check, if applicable, to actually see him.

This ability is automatically negated whenever the inconspicuous creature moves more than 5 ft. in a single round or performs an action necessitating excess movement, such as firing a ranged weapon or casting a spell with a somatic component. Actions that generate sound do not automatically negate this ability, but they do entitle anyone within earshot to make a Listen check to detect the inconspicuous creature's presence. This ability does not stack with total concealment.

Tenebrous Creature
Summary: The tenebrous creature can cloak himself in shadow.
Benefits: Twice per day, the tenebrous creature can use the spell *obscuring mist* as a spell-like ability, although the spell-like ability is comprised of shadows rather than mist. The shadows cannot be dispersed by the wind, and they move with the tenebrous creature. His Hit Dice determines the caster level.

Focus of the Deep

The depths of the oceans, lakes and seas of the Forge are even more inhospitable to surface dwelling creatures than the dark places below the earth. To overcome the obstacles posed by an aquatic environment, land-based species adopt the physiological features found in aquatic creatures. Humanoids that have extensive dealings with the Forge's water-based life forms are dependent upon this focus to maintain their livelihoods.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d8
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Knowledge (water)(Int), Profession (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Any

Focus of the Deep

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Gilled
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Aquatic
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Deep

Gilled Creature
Summary: The creature develops gills on his neck enabling him to breathe underwater.
Benefits: He acquires the amphibious trait.

Aquatic Creature
Summary: The creature becomes an excellent swimmer.
Benefits: The creature receives a swim speed equal to half his land-based speed; therefore a creature with a land speed of 30 ft. has a swim speed of 15 ft. He gains a +8 racial bonus to all Swim checks in addition to the benefits described under the skill's entry in the *Player's Handbook*.

Deep Creature
Summary: The creature can survive at extreme depths.
Benefits: He ignores the effects of pressurization at extreme depths, and he gains the special ability blindsight. He can also make a slam attack. A Medium-sized creature's slam attack deals 1d4 points of damage plus double his Strength modifier. Blindsight and the slam attack only function while he is underwater.

Focus of the Exile

The creature becomes more attuned to the Forge heightening his ability to detect the Feathered Fowl's presence and unravel the world's mysteries and secrets. This unusual focus is not available to most creatures. To begin it, one must first be marked upon the face with one of the seven brands of exile scattered throughout the Forge. Few willfully choose this fate, even in exchange for the unique powers this focus can grant as it means that one is permanently barred from Penance society on pain of death. The path of the exile is the most obscure of all those ever developed and very few of those actually marked even know of it.

Focus Ability: Wisdom
Hit Die: d6
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Knowledge (arcana)(Int), Knowledge (geography)(any domain)(Int), Knowledge (history)(any domain)(Int), Knowledge (local)(any domain)(Int) and Spellcraft (Int).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domains: Any

Focus of the Exile

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+2	+2	Awakened
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+3	Opened
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+3	Attuned

Awakened Creature
Summary: The creature can sense the Feathered Fowl's approach.
Benefits: He can sense the presence and general location of the Feathered Fowl whenever one of them is within 1,000 feet of him. This prestige racial level does not allow him to pinpoint the avatar's exact location; therefore it does not enable the character to ignore miss chances attributable to concealment. The awakened creature automatically knows the shortest path to the domain's citadel.

Opened Creature
Summary: He can sense whenever the resident Feathered Fowl is observing him or uses his pull ability.
Benefits: Whenever one of the Feathered Fowl observes him, he is instantly aware that he is being watched. If the Feathered Fowl pulls someone or something into his domain, he can detect the

precise location where the creature or object arrived. This ability is effective only within the confines of the domain where he is currently located.

Attuned Creature
Summary: He gains instant awareness of a particular domain's laws and customs as well as the ability to communicate with the Feathered Fowl.
Benefits: The attuned creature automatically knows the laws governing his current location. He can "take 20" on all Knowledge checks pertaining to any of the Feathered Fowl and/or their spies and the details of their citadels. He can do the same in regards to all Knowledge checks about the bound god or the secrets of a particular domain. He can only use this ability when he comes into direct contact with one of the aforementioned entities or when he happens upon one of the Forge's mysteries or secrets. There is a 1% chance that the usage of this ability attracts the interest of the domain's overlord.

Focus of the Feline

Many of the Forge's most successful animals are felines. Their success is due, in large part, to their increased dexterity, agility, jumping prowess, and night vision. Characters who take the focus of the feline seek to harness the essence of the cat and adopt their superior methods of hunting and survival.

Focus Ability: Dexterity
Hit Die: d6
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Tumble (Dex).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Wildwood, Penance, Anvil, Kiln

Focus of the Feline

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Lithe
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Dark Seeing
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Stealthy
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Feline

Lithe Creature
Summary: The creature can jump and climb with greater ease.
Benefits: The creature adds its Dexterity modifier to all Climb and Jump checks.

Dark Seeing Creature
Summary: This creature gains the ability to see in dim places.
Benefits: The creature gains low-light vision as well as the special ability blindsense up to 30 feet. If the creature already has low-light vision, he gains darkvision up to 60 ft. or adds +30 ft. to the range of his darkvision. If he already has blindsense, the range increases by 30 ft.

Stealthy Creature
Summary: The creature gains astounding balance, light-footedness and the ability to react silently and swiftly to danger.
Benefits: He suffers no penalties to Hide and Move Silently skill checks when moving at full speed, and only a -10 penalty when running or charging.

Feline Creature
Summary: The creature can scramble for safety or fall from great heights without risk of injury.
Benefits: The feline creature is extremely adept at avoiding damage from falling and always lands on his feet. Whenever it suffers falling damage, it makes a Reflex save. It subtracts the results of this save from its falling damage. For instance, a feline creature that tumbles from a 60 ft. high tower to the ground, normally suffers 5d6 points of damage from the descent. In this instance, the GM determines that the character sustains 15 points of damage from the fall. The creature then makes a Reflex save and generates a result of "14". The creature manages to land on his feet and negates 14 points of damage from the fall resulting in the loss of only one hit point.

Focus of the Flame

Fire is one of humanity's greatest tools. It can cook food, heat shelter, raze trees and forge metal. Fire is an integral part of civilization but the members of this focus take the mastery of fire to an extreme. Their obsession with fire literally consumes them, making them one of the Forge's most dangerous enemies. The proponents of this potent focus hail from all professions and all domains including the frigid Vault.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d6
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (arcana)(Int), Profession (Wis) and Spellcraft (Int).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Any

Focus of the Flame

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Burnt
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Immolated
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Conflagrated

Burnt Creature
Summary: The creature gains limited resistance to fire and the ability to spit a jet of flame at a single target.
Benefits: The creature gains resistance to fire 5 and he can spit gouts of flame identical to the effect created by an *elixir of fire breath*. He can use the latter effect up to twice per day, automatically hitting any single target within 25 feet. The flames deal 4d6 points of fire damage to the affected object or creature. The victim is entitled to a Reflex save (DC 10 + ½ burning creature's

HD + his Con modifier) to reduce the damage in half. This is a spell-like ability.

Immolated Creature
Summary: The creature is wreathed in flame, dealing fire damage to all opponents that come into close physical contact with him.
Benefits: Up to twice per day, thin, wispy bursts of flame cover your entire body and remain in existence for 1 round per Hit Die. Creatures striking you with their bodies, such as those utilizing unarmed strikes, touch attacks or natural weapons can still hit you normally; but if their attack roll hits your touch AC, the attacker takes 1d6 points of fire damage plus an additional point of fire damage for every 2 Hit Dice that immolated creature has. Those employing handheld weapons that have a melee reach of 5 ft. or less take half of the preceding damage if their attack rolls would hit your touch AC. While this ability remains in effect, the immolated creature suffers from vulnerability to cold, taking half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from cold, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure. This is a spell-like ability.

Conflagrated Creature
Summary: The creature is surrounded by flames.
Benefits: Up to twice per day, the conflagrated creature can conjure a roaring conflagration centered on him. The flames fill a 10-ft radius around him dealing one point of fire damage per Hit Die to all creatures and unattended objects, other than himself, within this area. Creatures and unattended objects within the area take damage for every round of exposure. The flames move with the conflagrated creature. The effect lasts for 1 round per Hit Die. This is a spell-like ability.

Focus of the Frigid

In contrast to the preceding focus, the Focus of the Frigid enables its constituents to master the power of cold. Its members can traverse across snow with tremendous ease, conjure walls of solid ice or bombard their foes with a blast of ice, snow and bone-chilling cold. The focus is naturally most popular in arctic regions such as the frozen Vault, the cold mountaintops of Anvil and the cold, coniferous forests of northern Wildwood.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d8
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Craft (Int), Knowledge (geography)(any arctic locale)(Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int) and Survival (Wis).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Vault, Anvil, Wildwood

Focus of the Frigid

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Tundra
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Layered
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Icy
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Frozen

Tundra Creature
Summary: The creature can move faster than normal on snowy and icy surfaces.
Benefits: He is immune to all nonlethal damage resulting from exposure to cold weather. Whenever he moves at his full speed on a flat or downhill surface covered by snow and/or ice, he can slide an additional distance up to half the distance that he moved during the round. Therefore, a tundra creature that moves 30 feet can slide for another 15 feet. In addition, he never loses his balance while moving on snow or ice even if it has been magically created.

Layered Creature
Summary: The creature develops a thick layer of blubber beneath its skin that provides insulation against cold and deadens the impact of blunt force trauma.
Benefits: He gains resistance to cold 5 and DR 2/ slashing and piercing.

Icy Creature
Summary: The creature can magically conjure a barrier of solid ice.
Benefits: Twice per day, the icy creature can duplicate the effects of a *wall of ice* spell. The caster level is the same as his Hit Dice, and the DC for the Reflex save is 10 + ½ icy creature's HD + his Con modifier. This is a spell-like ability.

Frozen Creature
Summary: The creature can unleash a 20-ft. cone of frigid air.
Benefits: Twice per day, the frozen creature can open his mouth and exhale a blast of ice, snow and frigid air dealing 1d6 points of damage per Hit Die (maximum 15d6), within a 20-ft. cone. Creatures within the area of effect can make a Reflex save (DC 10 + ½ frozen creature's HD + his Con modifier) to reduce the damage by half. This is a spell-like ability.

Focus of the Green

Plants come in a variety of different shapes and sizes from tiny, colorful flowering plants to dense shrubbery, but the proponents of this focus most emulate the features of the kingdom's largest members, the trees. They so closely resemble trees that some individuals mistake them for immature treants. Druids, rangers and other humanoids with an affinity for plants typically follow this unusual path.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d8

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (nature)(Int), Listen (Wis), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Wildwood, Penance, Anvil

Focus of the Green

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Photosynthesizing
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Barked
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Green

Photosynthesizing Creature
Summary: The creature can survive without eating.
Benefits: The creature is immune to all hunger effects while exposed to daylight. He also gains the druid's woodland stride ability.

Barked Creature
Summary: The creature's skin hardens granting him additional protection against certain weapons.
Benefits: The creature's skin gains the strength and texture of tree bark, although it remains surprising flexible. He gains a +1 natural armor bonus and DR 3/slashing.

Green Creature
Summary: The creature becomes a plant.
Benefits: His creature type becomes plant. He retains all of his memories, class levels, Hit Dice and alignment as well as his sentience and ability scores. He gains all plant traits. All of his Hit Dice become d8's. At will he can *speak with plants* as per the spell.

Focus of the Huge

This prestige racial level enlarges the proponent by one size category. The Focus of the Huge is unpopular in the cities and amongst underground explorers where it tends to make life more difficult, but it is popular in wilderness regions where space is not of a concern. Unlike most other foci, the Focus of the Huge is comprised of only one prestige racial level.

Focus Ability: Constitution

Hit Die: d8

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Profession (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Any

Focus of the Huge

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+0	Enlarged

Enlarged Creature
Summary: This prestige racial level makes any humanoid one size category larger.
Benefits: The prestige racial level's effects are identical to the spell *enlarge person* except that the transformation is permanent. Like the spell, multiple effects that increase size do not stack.

Focus of the Light

Advocates of this focus bask in the warm and radiant glow of all forms of light. They learn to master and manipulate the light all around them, using it in an offensive and defensive manner. Most view it as the antithesis of the Focus of the Shadow; however its proponents scoff at such an assertion. The colorful aurads of Penance are the most fervent devotees of this focus.

Focus Ability: Charisma

Hit Die: d4

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Knowledge (arcana)(Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis) and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Penance, Wildwood, Anvil, Kiln

Focus of the Light

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Prism
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Beaconed
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Brilliant
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Luminous

Prism Creature
Summary: He can resist the effects of light-based spells and spell-like effects.
Benefits: He gains spell resistance 10 + his levels versus all spells and spell-like effects containing the light descriptor. If he resists the effects of the spell, it restores one point of damage per spell level.

Beaconed Creature
Summary: The creature can create magical sunlight.
Benefits: He can duplicate the effects of a *daylight* spell up to twice per day using his HD as the caster level. In addition, he cannot be blinded by natural or magical forms of light. Only spells with the light descriptor meet the latter requirement.

Brilliant Creature
Summary: He can transform any handheld weapon into pure light.
Benefits: Up to twice per day, the brilliant creature can bestow the brilliant energy special ability to any handheld weapon (magical or nonmagical). The weapon retains this magical property for one minute for every Hit Die that the brilliant creature possesses. This is a spell-like ability.

Luminous Creature
Summary: He can direct bright beams of sunlight towards any target.
Benefits: He can duplicate the effects of a *searing light* spell up to twice per day. The caster level is the same as his character level. This is a spell-like ability.

Focus of the Mighty

Beings acquiring this focus truly believe that brute force can solve virtually any dilemma and to at least some extent they are right. When employed properly, sheer might is a nearly unstoppable tool in any creature's arsenal of weaponry. Not surprisingly, the adherents of this focus are generally comprised of combat-oriented classes.

Focus Ability: Strength

Hit Die: d8

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str) and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Arena, Anvil, Wildwood, Penance, Eclipse

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Chiseled
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Forceful
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Gainful

Chiseled Creature

Summary: He gains phenomenal muscle definition and tone.

Benefits: Although this prestige racial level does not bestow additional strength, the creature's physique is impeccable. The size and shape of his muscles appears to have been carved by a master sculptor. Whenever he interacts with other members of his creature type that would take a romantic interest in him, he adds half of his Strength modifier to all Charisma-based skill checks except for Intimidation. He adds his full Strength modifier to all Intimidation checks against beings belonging to the same creature type as him.

Forceful Creature

Summary: He relies upon raw power to avoid great harm.

Benefits: Twice per day, the forceful creature can add his Strength modifier to any failed saving throw or skill check with Strength, Constitution or Dexterity as the key ability modifier. He must declare his intention to do so after rolling his saving throw or skill check and before determining the outcome of the effect. For instance if a forceful creature failed his Reflex save against a *fireball* spell, he can add his Strength modifier to his saving throw in order to change the saving throw's original outcome, but he must make this decision before the creature that cast the spell rolls his damage dice. (Naturally, this ability should only be used if it would turn a failed saving throw into a successful one.)

Gainful Creature

Summary: He receives a brief burst of incredible strength.

Benefits: The character can increase his Strength score for one round, but he also takes an equal amount of nonlethal damage. He can improve his Strength by up to +20 or + his total Hit Dice, whichever is less. He may use this ability a number of times per day equal to his Strength modifier. The popular adage "no pain, no gain" accounts for the prestige racial level's strange moniker.

Focus of the Primate

Individuals pursuing this evolutionary path acquire the abilities commonly associated with the smaller and more nimble members of the species rather than those prevalent amongst the great apes. The creature develops the ability to move through the trees with remarkable ease, enabling it to move through virtually impenetrable jungle at its normal speed. This particular focus is a popular choice for humanoids dwelling within the densely forested regions of central and southern Wildwood.

Focus Ability: Constitution

Hit Die: d8

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Wildwood, Penance, Anvil

Focus of the Primate

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Climbing
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Brachiating
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Reaching

Climbing Creature

Summary: The creature's climbing ability improves dramatically.

Benefits: The creature acquires a base climb speed equal to half his land-based speed. As a result, it also gains a +8 bonus to all Climb checks and it can "take 10" even if rushed or threatened during its ascent. The creature can also undertake an accelerated climb, moving at double its climb speed while making a single Climb check at a -5 penalty. It also retains its Dexterity bonus to AC while climbing, and attackers attempting to strike it do not receive any special bonus to their attack roll. (See the Skills chapter in the *Player's Handbook* for more details on the adjudication of the Climb skill.)

Brachiating Creature

Summary: The creature's arms are 50% longer than they originally were, while its torso seems more barrel-shaped.

Benefits: The creature acquires the ability to swing through the trees, enabling it to move through any forested area at its normal speed regardless of the presence of obstacles such as undergrowth, fallen trees or any other natural barrier. This feature functions in the same manner as the druid's woodland stride except that the brachiating creature cannot move in the aforementioned manner if he is confined to the forest floor. Because of the improvement to his agility, the creature receives a +5 bonus to all Balance checks and is considered to have 5 ranks in the skill

even if he did not spend the necessary skill points. (See the Skills chapter of the *Player's Handbook* for the adjudication of the Balance skill.)

Reaching Creature
Summary: The creature's arms are twice their original length, extending its reach and allowing it to run on all fours.
Benefits: The creature's reach increases by 5 ft. In addition, it can move as a quadruped if it so desires, adding +10 ft. to his speed. It cannot move as quadruped while holding or grasping an object with his hands.

Focus of the Senses

These prestige racial levels heighten his senses, improving his ability to recognize and react to danger. On the surface, it appears as if the focus enhances the creature's reflexes, but in reality, the focus' benefits are actually derived from the creature's ability to anticipate the actions of others rather than respond to them. Wilderness and subterranean explorers, including rangers and spelunkers often rely upon this focus as a supplement for their natural instincts.

Focus Ability: Wisdom
Hit Die: d6
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis) and Spot (Wis).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Any

Focus of the Senses

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Sharpened
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Vigilant

Sharpened Creature
Summary: His reaction time improves.
Benefits: He adds his Wis modifier to all initiative checks.

Vigilant Creature
Summary: He can strike slower opponents with greater accuracy.
Benefits: Whenever the vigilant creature attacks a flat-footed opponent, he adds the difference between his initiative check and his opponent's initiative check to his attack and damage roll against that foe. This bonus only applies to his first attack during the combat.

Focus of the Serpent

Throughout folklore and mythology, serpents are wily, untrustworthy creatures often in league with the forces of darkness and evil. Despite their prevalent but largely unfounded reputation, the species' development is one of evolution's greatest success stories. The focus is rather common among many of the Forge's humanoid races; however its proponents are often met with suspicion and mistrust from their fellow humanoids.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d8
Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier
Domain(s): Wildwood, Penance, Anvil, Arena, Eclipse

Focus of the Serpent

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Slithering
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Circulatory
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Venomous

Slithering Creature
Summary: The creature is adept at moving on the ground.
Benefits: The creature can move at full speed while prone as long as he is wearing light or no armor. If he wears something heavier, his speed is reduced by 10 feet to a minimum of 5 feet. He suffers no penalties to his attacks rolls while prone, and standing up from a prone position does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Circulatory Creature
Summary: The creature grows an additional heart.
Benefits: The creature reduces all Constitution damage dealt to him by half (rounded down).

Venomous Creature
Summary: The creature develops a pair of poisonous fangs.
Benefits: The creature gains a bite attack. A Medium-sized creature's bite deals 1d6 points of damage, while the bite of a Small or Large creature deals 1d4 and 1d8 points of damage respectively. This attack is considered a natural weapon. In addition to the bite damage, his fangs administer a dose of venom that deals 1d4 points of initial and secondary Constitution damage. A successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ venomous creature's HD + his Con modifier) negates the venom's effects. It takes the venomous creature one minute to replenish its supply of poison.

Focus of the Shadow

Rogues and other creatures that rely upon stealth and darkness are the most common proponents of this mysterious focus. Its adherents acquire the ability to become insubstantial for limited periods of time, while magical forms of darkness actually restore the creature's vitality. Focus of the Shadow is most prevalent in regions dominated by darkness such as the entire domain of Eclipse and the subterranean depths of Penance and Arena.

Focus Ability: Constitution
Hit Die: d8

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Hide (Dex), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis) and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Eclipse, Arena, Penance, Anvil, Wildwood

Focus of the Shadow

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+0	Shadow
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+0	Insubstantial

Shadow Creature

Summary: The forces of darkness benefit the creature.

Benefits: Whenever the shadow creature passes through or into the area of effect of any spell or spell-like ability with the darkness descriptor, it restores one point of damage per spell level for every minute of exposure; therefore a *darkness* spell restores two hit points to the shadow creature per minute, (up to a daily maximum equal to his Hit Dice). The shadow creature's vision is unaffected by any of the aforementioned spells thus he can see opponents within a *darkness* spell's area of effect even if he does not have darkvision.

Insubstantial Creature

Summary: The creature can become incorporeal.

Benefits: He can become incorporeal twice per day as per the spell *gaseous form*. Each usage lasts for two minutes per Hit Die. This is a spell-like ability.

Focus of the Slayer

Warriors acquiring these prestige racial levels focus on the offensive aspects of combat improving their ability to deal lethal blows and increase the devastation caused by their attacks. While traditionally trained fighters adopt a broad approach to combat, those following this path focus their efforts exclusively on dealing massive quantities of damage to offset the focus' defensive liabilities and lack of accuracy. It is most commonly found among the rank and file members of Arena's vast armies; however its popularity is beginning to spread to other regions of the Forge.

Focus Ability: Strength

Hit Die: d8

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str) and Profession (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Arena, Wildwood, Penance, Anvil

Focus of the Slayer

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Martial
2nd	+1	+2	+0	+0	Decimating
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Devastating

Martial Creature

Summary: The creature's attacks deal more damage than normal.

Game Effects: Whenever the creature rolls a damage die and gets the maximum result, he rolls that die again. He does not add any of his bonuses to this additional die roll. For instance, a fighter hits his foe with a club that normally deals 1d6+8 points of damage. He rolls his damage and gets a "6", the highest result. He rolls the die again and this time receives a "4". He deals 18 points of damage, 14 from the initial die roll and 4 more from the bonus die roll. He is only entitled to one bonus roll for each die of damage.

Decimating Creature

Summary: The creature can greatly enhance a single attack.

Benefits: Whenever the creature uses the full attack action, he combines his base attack bonus into a single attack. For instance, a 13th level fighter with a base attack bonus of +13/+8/+3 would only make one attack roll with a base attack bonus of +24 instead of three separate attack rolls. In addition, the creature adds the base attack bonuses of his secondary attacks to the damage thus in the preceding example the 13th level fighter's single attack would deal an additional +11 points of damage (8 + 3). The decimating creature can use this ability as many times per day as his Strength modifier.

Devastating Creature

Summary: Precisely placed critical hits deal maximum damage.

Benefits: Whenever the creature scores a critical hit, the weapon's critical multiplier is increased by +1 if the critical roll is equal to or greater than the attack roll that generated the critical threat. For instance, if a 10th level fighter with a +2 *keen longsword* rolls an 18 on his attack roll, this swing results in a critical threat roll. If the fighter rolls an 18 or higher to confirm the critical hit, the weapon's critical multiplier improves from x2 to x3.

Focus of the Small

This prestige racial level reduces the proponent by one size category. It is popular among creatures that are forced to negotiate their way through what would otherwise be very tight spaces, such as rafters exploring the undercity of Penance and among Large-size races that would face a difficult time in humanoid-sized cities. Unlike most other foci, the Focus of the Huge is comprised of only one prestige racial level.

Focus Ability: Constitution

Hit Die: d8

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis) and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Any

Focus of the Small

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+0	Reduced

Reduced Creature

Summary: This prestige racial level makes any humanoid one size category smaller.

Benefits: The prestige racial level's effects are identical to the spell *reduce person* except that the transformation is permanent. Like the spell, multiple effects that decrease size do not stack.

Focus of the Sphere

Aquatic creatures aspiring to make the transition to life on the surface face an even more difficult road than land-based creatures attempting to adapt to life underwater. In addition to the most pressing obstacle, developing the ability to breathe air, aquatic creatures also suffer from their appendages' uselessness on dry land. Therefore, creatures endeavoring to make the transition from life beneath the waves to life on the surface are dependent upon this focus for survival.

Focus Ability: Constitution

Hit Die: d8

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Craft (Int), Knowledge (water)(Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Any

Focus of the Sphere

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Lunged
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Legged
3rd	+1	+3	+1	+1	Armed

Lunged Creature

Summary: The creature develops lungs.

Benefits: He acquires the amphibious trait.

Legged Creature

Summary: The creature gains a pair of legs allowing it to walk upright.

Benefits: The creature now has a land speed equal to half its swim speed. The creature's gait is somewhat unsteady; therefore it suffers a -2 penalty to Balance checks as well as opposed bull rush and trip attacks.

Armed Creature

Summary: The creature grows arms in addition to his existing appendages.

Benefits: He gains a pair of humanoid-like arms proportional to his size. He can use these limbs to wield weapons and manipulate objects. If he opts to wield weapons with his arms, he cannot combine these attacks with any natural weapons that he may already possess.

Focus of the Wyrm

Dragons are creatures of legend thus there is no shortage of humanoids aspiring to become like these mighty creatures. Although this path provides outstanding combat benefits, it is somewhat shocking that the majority of its proponents are actually arcane spellcasters who are simply awestruck and spellbound by these beings' remarkable physical qualities and affinity for magic.

Focus Ability: Constitution

Hit Die: d8

Focus Skills: The focus skills (and the key ability for each) are Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (arcana)(Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis) and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Domain(s): Any

Focus of the Wyrm

Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+0	Scaled
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+0	Winged
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+1	Spellbound
4th	+2	+1	+1	+1	Draconic

Scaled Creature

Summary: Colorful and rigid dragon scales cover the creature's body. When the character acquires this prestige racial level, he must select a specific color for his scales.

Benefits: The creature gains a +2 natural armor bonus and DR 1/bludgeoning.

Winged Creature

Summary: The creature sprouts wings.

Benefits: A pair of scaly wings protrudes from his back giving him a fly speed of 40 ft. with average maneuverability. He can also use his wings as natural weapons dealing 1d3 points of damage each.

Spellbound Creature

Summary: The creature is resistant to spells.

Benefits: He gains spell resistance 5 + his Hit Dice.

Draconic Creature

Summary: His creature type changes to dragon.

Benefits: His creature type becomes dragon. He retains all of his memories, class levels, Hit Dice and alignment as well as his sentience and ability scores. He gains all dragon traits. All of Hit Dice are converted to d12's. He also acquires a breath weapon, which he can use once every hour. The type of breath weapon must match that of a dragon of the same alignment; therefore a chaotic evil character can acquire a red dragon's

breath weapon. Once he makes his selection, it is irrevocable. His breath weapon deals 1d6 points of damage for every 2 HD that the creature possesses, (up to a maximum of 10d6). The saving throw DC against the draconic creature's breath weapon is 10 + ½ the draconic creature's HD + his Con modifier.

Gifts

In many cases, the Feathered Fowls' irresistible pull on creatures hailing from alien worlds permanently alters their body and spirit, bequeathing one or more lasting gifts upon the unsuspecting souls ripped from their homeland and deposited into the Forge. The powerful being responsible for their unwilling migration to this alien world grants newcomers special powers and abilities intended to ease their transition to an often hostile and uninviting fresh habitat. These gifts typically embody the ideologies and physical characteristics of the creature's newfound environment or the personality of the domain's incarcerated overlord and consist of arrival and earned gifts. Commensurate with its name, immigrants to the Forge acquire arrival gifts simultaneously with their initial appearance on the planet; whereas creatures gain earned gifts only after piquing the interest of the domain's virtually omniscient master. Wildwood is no exception to this basic principle as the overwhelming majority of benefits bestowed upon new arrivals and its favored sons are invariably linked to some aspect of hunting or wilderness survival. The subsequent lists also include gifts typically given to seeds pulled into other domains such as Penance and Arena.

Sample Arrival Gifts

The rude awakening resulting from the character's sudden materialization onto a distant, foreign realm is frequently tempered by the realization that the journey mysteriously changed him in some unknown manner. Transformed by the forced migration to the Forge, the divine blessings showered upon the recipient equip him with some of the tools necessary for survival in his adopted homeland. The subsequent sample gifts fulfill the aforementioned purpose, although there is no preclusion prohibiting the GM from supplementing this catalog with additional gifts tailor made for the strengths and weaknesses of the player characters. Any bonuses derived from these gifts conform to the stacking rules.

Ability Boost: You gain a bonus to any ability score that ranges from +1 to +5.

Acclimated: You gain a +1 bonus to all Fortitude saving throws against weather-related effects, such as withstanding hypothermia or heat exhaustion. This bonus only applies to natural phenomenon and does not provide any benefit against spells, spell-like effects or supernatural abilities.

Beast hunter: You are an expert at combating magical beasts, enabling you to recognize their strengths and exploit their weaknesses. You gain a +1 insight bonus to your AC against magical beasts, while receiving a +1 insight bonus to attack rolls made to hit magical beasts. Against magical beasts your critical hit multiplier increases by +1.

Brave: You get a +4 morale bonus to all saving throws against fear effects.

Cat and mouse: You add a +2 bonus to all pursuit checks.

Chameleon: You gain a +6 competence bonus to all Hide checks.

Charm: You gain a +4 competence bonus to Diplomacy and Gather Information checks.

Connected: You can cast *status* as if you were a 6th level cleric. Connected is considered an innate spell-like ability that can be used once per day.

Coordinated: You are ambidextrous. When fighting with a weapon in each hand, you gain the benefits of the Two-Weapon Fighting and Two-Weapon Defense feats.

Dark thumb: You are an expert at combating plants, enabling you to recognize their strengths and exploit their weaknesses. You gain a +1 insight bonus to your AC against plants, while receiving a +1 insight bonus to attack rolls against plants.

Empathy: You receive a +4 bonus to all Sense Motive checks.

Efficient: You can go twice as long as normal before you must make Constitution checks against starvation and thirst.

Feral: You become more wild and instinctive, resulting in a -2 penalty to your Intelligence and a +2 bonus to your Strength and Wisdom scores.

Ferocious: You gain the feat Diehard at no additional cost even if you do not meet its prerequisites. If you already possess this feat, you can make a standard action without taking damage.

Fleet of Foot: Your land-based speed increases by 10 ft.

Focused: Arcane spellcasters cast all spells from one particular school of magic as if they were one level higher than they actually are.

Funny: You get a +4 competence bonus to all Perform (comedy) skill checks. In addition, you can automatically take 10 on any Perform (comedy) skill check even if you are rushed or threatened.

Good-looking: Your physical appearance is appealing to others. Whenever dealing with other members of your race, you gain a +2 bonus to all skill checks where Charisma is the key ability.

Green skin: Your skin color changes to a light shade of olive green intermixed with dull brown splotches. Because of your unique coloration, you receive a +6 bonus to all Hide checks in any forest, jungle, swamp or other green environment where settlement or construction did not replace the natural surroundings. Furthermore, all ranged attacks directly targeting you within the aforementioned type of terrain suffer a 20% miss chance.

Hardy: You ignore the effects of massive damage, eliminating your need to make a Fortitude saving throw whenever you suffer an enormous amount of damage from a single attack.

Healthy: You get a +2 bonus to all saving throws against natural poisons and diseases.

Inconspicuous: You are adept at blending into the crowd giving you a +4 luck bonus to Disguise and Hide checks.

Inspiring: Your instill pride in others. You get a +2 bonus to Diplomacy and Perform (oratory) skill checks.

Intimidating: You gain a +4 bonus to Intimidate checks.

Intuitive: You are incredibly attuned to your natural instincts, enabling you to add your Wisdom modifier to one attack roll or to your AC once per day. You must declare your intention to use this ability prior to you or your opponent making the die roll. If you use it to improve your AC, you receive the bonus against only one specifically designated attack.

Jumpy: You act normally during a surprise round.

Keen ears: You get a +4 bonus to Listen checks.

Keen eyes: You acquire a +2 bonus to Search and Spot checks.

Natural weapon: You transform an appendage of your choice or your mouth into a natural weapon. The natural weapon deals the same damage as an unarmed strike made by a creature one size category larger than you are. Therefore, a Medium-size humanoid that normally deals 1d3 points of damage with an unarmed strike would inflict 1d4 points of damage instead.

Night eyes: You gain darkvision up to 60 ft.

Nimble: You add a +4 competence bonus to Sleight of Hand skill checks.

Quiet: You make virtually no sound while moving giving you a +4 competence bonus to Move Silently checks.

Recall: Once per day, a spellcaster can recast any 2nd level or lower spell that he has cast during the course of the day. He cannot recast spells gained from an item such as a spell cast from a scroll or a wand.

Resilient: You acquire limited resistance to physical attacks granting you DR 1/-. Damage reduction gained from other sources does not stack.

Scent: You acquire the scent special ability. If you already possess this power, you can detect odors at twice your normal range.

Scentless: The creature gives off no discernable odor making his presence undetectable to creatures using the scent special ability.

Shapechanger: Your subtype is now shapechanger. When you acquire this gift, you must designate an animal of the same size category as your alternate form. You can assume this alternate form once per day.

Slippery: You get a +4 bonus to all Escape Artist checks.

Survivalist: You gain a +2 bonus to all Knowledge (nature) and Survival skill checks. You also add the same bonus to all Fortitude saving throws and Constitution checks when resisting the effects of extreme weather conditions.

Talented: One of your latent talents is brought to the forefront. You gain a +4 bonus to a specific Craft or Profession skill that must be determined at the time that you receive this gift.

Telepathic: You gain the supernatural ability telepathy. The ability's range is 60 feet.

Thick skin: Your skin hardens giving you a +1 natural armor bonus even if you already have a natural armor bonus.

Tongue of beasts: When this gift is received, you must select an animal family, such as canine, feline, primate or ursine. You can communicate with members of this particular animal family as if you had cast a *speak with animals* spell.

Trailblazer: You can move through difficult natural terrain without expending any additional squares of movement. This benefit only applies to wilderness settings devoid of settlement or construction.

Twist of Fate: Once per day, you can reroll any single die roll. You must abide by the result of this second die roll even if it is worse than his initial die roll.

Understanding: You are fluent in an additional language of your choosing.

Wary: You gain the extraordinary ability trap sense whenever you encounter a trap in a wilderness setting. A wilderness setting is any environment where construction or settlement has not replaced the natural surroundings. You gain a +1 bonus to your Reflex saving throws for every five Hit Dice to avoid the effects of the aforementioned types of traps up to a maximum of +4.

Weapon of choice: You develop an affinity for one specific weapon. You gain a +1 competence bonus to all attack rolls made with the particular weapon.

Withstand energy: You get resistance to acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5 or sonic 5. You must determine the energy type when you initially acquire this gift.

Youthful: You age half as quickly as normal.

Zealous: Clerics cast their domain spells as if they were one level higher than they actually are.

Sample Earned Gifts

During the course of a character's lifetime within the Forge, the exploits of his wondrous deeds and heroic actions sometimes elicit the admiration of the domain's ruler, prompting the Feathered Fowl to rain additional honors onto the noteworthy individual. As the name implies, earned gifts are acquired exclusively based upon merit instead of good fortune. Once again, the following listing of sample earned gifts does not include every possibility, and bonuses still abide by the stacking rules.

Boost speed: You can double your speed for one round once every hour.

Cheat death: Once per day you can reroll any failed saving throw that kills you. You must abide by the results of the subsequent die roll.

Danger sense: Whenever another creature(s) attempts to surprise you, you can make a Wisdom check (d20 + your Wis modifier) against DC 10 + the Hit Dice of the most powerful opponent. If you win, you are not surprised and are able to take an action during the surprise round. If you win the check by 5 or more, your verbal warning also prevents your allies from being surprised as well.

Dream walking: Once per day, you can enter another creature's subconscious mind as if you had

cast a *dream* or *nightmare* spell (your choice). The spell's caster level is the same as your Hit Dice and saving throw DC against this ability is 10 + ½ Hit Dice + your Cha modifier. This is a mind-affecting spell-like ability.

Ethereal sight: Once per day, you can peer through solid objects as if you were wearing a *ring of x-ray vision*. This is a spell-like ability that lasts for ten consecutive minutes per usage.

Fast healer: You recover twice as many hit points as normal through natural healing; hence a full night's rest restores two hit points per character level.

Fury: You can rage as a barbarian once per day for a number of rounds equal to your Hit Dice. If you already possess this ability, this gift allows you to rage one additional time per day.

Kinship with stone: Once per day, you can *meld with stone* as per the spell of the same name using your Hit Dice as the caster level.

Last Stand: Whenever an attack reduces your hit point total below 0 but more than -10, you receive an immediate attack of opportunity against the opponent that dealt the damage if you can reach him. After making this attack, you fall unconscious unless you possess the Diehard feat.

Lost Knowledge: You benefit from a +4 bonus to all Knowledge checks involving information about lost civilizations and their ruins.

Luck of the cat: You gain a +2 insight bonus to Reflex saves.

Marksman: You gain a +1 bonus to all ranged attack rolls.

Mind reading: You can read the minds of other beings as if you had cast the spell *detect thoughts*. You can use this spell-like, mind-affecting ability up to three times per day. Your Hit Dice serves as the caster level and the saving throw DC against the effect is 10 + ½ your character level + your Cha modifier.

Nature's blessing: You gain a +1 insight bonus to your AC and saving throws whenever you are attacked by animals, fey, plants and vermin.

Savage: Whenever you score a critical hit against an opponent, you gain an extra attack against that same foe using the attack bonus from your previous attack. You can only utilize this ability once against any particular adversary.

Second skin: You are accustomed to wearing armor. Whenever clad in an armor that you are proficient with, the armor's maximum Dex bonus is increased by +1, while the armor check penalty and arcane spell failure chance decrease by -1 and -5% respectively. Your speed is unaffected by armor; therefore a human fighter wearing full plate armor still has a speed of 30 ft.

Sharpshooter: You can make ranged sneak attacks, which deal an extra 1d6 points of damage, against any opponent within 30 feet of you. If you already possess this ability, this gift increases your range by 30 feet instead.

Stalker: You gain a +2 competence bonus to all Hide, Listen, Move Silently and Spot skill checks whenever you are in a wilderness environment bereft of construction or settlement.

Steady handed: You acquire a +2 bonus to all skill checks involving the precise manipulation of objects with your hands. This bonus applies to Escape Artist, Open Lock and Sleight of Hand skill checks. You also receive this bonus whenever you make any Craft, Perform and Profession skill check that meets the preceding criteria. The GM must ascertain whether the particular task satisfies the prerequisites on a case by case basis. For instance, you gain a +2 bonus on Perform (string instrument) skill checks, but you do not get the same bonus when you roll a Perform (sing) skill check.

Swindler: Whenever you purchase an item, you make a Bluff check opposed by the seller's Sense Motive check. If you win, you can buy the item for less than its market price. You get a percentage discount equal to the difference between your Bluff check and the seller's Sense Motive check.

Telekinetic: You can manipulate objects through mental force as if he had cast a *telekinesis* spell. The caster level is equal to your Hit Dice, while the saving throw DC is 10 + ½ your Hit Dice + your Int modifier. This is a spell-like ability.

Terrain mastery: You are familiar with the denizens and hazards of a specific type of terrain such as forest, plains, desert or marsh. You gain a +1 bonus to attack and weapon damage rolls against creatures indigenous to that specific environment. You also gain a +4 competence bonus to a particular skill based upon the terrain that you have selected just like the horizon walker.

Tongue of the eternal: You are fluent in one of the following languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic or Infernal. You can choose any of the aforementioned tongues irrespective of your alignment.

Undetectable: As a free action that you can use once per hour, you become silent and invisible for one round as per the spells *silence* and *invisibility*. This ability is commonly employed to escape a pursuer or close in on a target. When the effect expires, creatures must make Listen or Spot checks to detect your new location.

Voyeur sense: You automatically sense when another creature is watching you from afar, although you are unable to pinpoint the observer's exact location or methodology employed, such as a *crystal ball* or a *scrying* spell. You are aware of his general direction (east, south, north or west) but not the distance.

Weapon use: You are proficient with an exotic or martial weapon of your choice.

Wild Talent: Once per day, you can cast a 0, 1st or 2nd level spell as an innate spell-like ability. The GM determines which spell you receive.

Chapter 11: Symbiots

"Blood spewed in every direction, as the human feverishly attached a gangly, monstrous appendage to his unconscious patient. After nearly an hour partaking in this gruesome endeavor, the man proudly exclaimed, 'Success!'"

-- Harold Lombrod, an observer describing a symbiotic surgical procedure

Throughout the annals of history, the continued advancement of most sedentary societies depends heavily upon the technological marvels devised by their greatest inventors. Fabricating a growing inventory of groundbreaking devices from a wondrous marriage of humanoid ingenuity and engineering prowess, civilization continues to move forward by unparalleled leaps and bounds. Whether designed for a military purpose, such as the terrifying doomstriders prevalent within the neighboring domain of Arena, or crafted for a more mundane usage, the development of these instruments requires an extensive infrastructure capable of supplying the logistical tools necessary for construction on a grand scale. Vast quantities of manpower, economic resources, political stability and daring imagination form the foundation for these astounding discoveries and visionary breakthroughs. Unfortunately, Wildwood's untamed, disorganized and largely anarchic wilderness lacks these crucial building blocks, prompting its creative geniuses to look elsewhere for inspiration and the materials needed to vie against their more technologically advanced competitors. Not surprisingly, they look toward the abundant forms of life running rampant throughout Haiel's boundless incubator of biological diversity.

While druids and rangers possess the innate ability to befriend the domain's wild denizens, the remaining members of its indigenous, sentient races remain somewhat at odds with the natural world surrounding them. As part of a concerted effort to level the playing field with their naturally inclined brethren and trespassing interlopers from neighboring domains, a handful of imaginative pioneers embarked on a bold experiment. With some assistance from a few radical members of Wildwood's druidic population, this tiny group of daring explorers converted the feral environment into an immense laboratory as they posited and practically tested their original theories regarding symbiotic relationships between divergent organisms. They confined their initial research to the study of biologically simplistic creatures to gain a greater understanding of the natural phenomenon. After only a short period of trial and error, they soon learned that these living affiliations fell into three categories, those where one partner benefited at the expense of the other, those where both parties profited without harming each other, and those where one component benefited without helping or hurting the other. They referred to the aforementioned classifications as parasitism, mutualism and commensalism respectively. Irrespective of their rapid and remarkable progress, they also reached the inevitable conclusion that the coexistence of two interdependent but distinct organisms provided no potential for widespread humanoid applications. Undaunted by the initial setback, a tight-knit core of researchers and sages pressed forward and formulated a new theory based loosely upon their previous work. Instead of forging a symbiotic relationship between two separate entities, they decided to remove living tissue from one being and transplant it onto another in a deliberate effort to enhance the physical characteristics of the recipient. The first forays in this bold direction yielded limited results; however centuries of additional experimentation followed as future generations fine-tuned the burgeoning industry, transforming the taxing procedure from pure guesswork into a more exact but still unpredictable and risky science. Despite abandoning the fundamental principle that spurred their examination of biological relationships, they still used the term, symbiot, to describe the transplanted tissue, a moniker that remains in widespread use throughout Wildwood.

Although the term symbiot implies some measure of cooperation between living entities, the word refers exclusively to the practice of surgically grafting organic material culled from a suitable donor onto another organism. Bone, appendages, organs and skin obtained from a myriad of bestial and sentient beings provide an inexhaustible supply of materials for those endeavoring to improve their bodies via this method. While the physical differences between these two sources are notable, the moral implications are far more profound. The consciences of most inhabitants generally tolerate the grafting of organic material from an unintelligent plant onto a humanoid, but the same individuals view the transplantation of body parts from other sentient beings as utterly reprehensible. To accommodate the demand for organs and appendages, some unscrupulous individuals engage in the harvesting and sale of organic tissue. Natives derogatorily refer to these makeshift prisons of humanoid livestock as "body farms", and the few in existence are universally avoided by all sentient races and even most feral creatures. Regardless of the grafted tissue's origin, a long and dangerous process awaits the recipient and his frequently unwilling donor.

The Process

Forming an inexorable biological bond between two living entities requires specialized expertise, boundless patience and a rock steady pair of hands. In contrast to the potent wonders of the civilized world that necessitate a mastery of arcane magic and extensive engineering knowledge, the arduous task of binding organic material together results from the unique fusion of a wondrous unnatural substance, a deep understanding of the natural world and precise surgical skill. Ultimately, the final outcome rests in the hands of the creature performing the tedious and dangerous operation, an individual commonly known as the symbiotic surgeon.

Illustrated by Terry Pavlet



Symbiotic Surgeon

The extremely rare and incredibly gifted symbiotic surgeon is a renowned expert in the scientific fields of anatomy and biology blessed with remarkable nerves of steel. Druids and clerics are typically well-suited for the occupation, but the vocation remains open to all classes and races. It is extremely beneficial for characters endeavoring to master the profession to purchase at least one rank in the skills Heal, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (nature) and Knowledge (the planes). Unlike most specialties, the symbiotic surgeon is not a core class or even a prestige class; instead it is a profession available to anyone willing to devote skill points towards the career path. An individual must purchase at least one rank in Profession (symbiotic surgeon) before he can try to perform any type of symbiotic surgery. Skill check rolls for this profession greatly differ from typical skill check rolls as explained in the subsequent passages. During the course of the surgery, the symbiotic surgeon utilizes a variant form of this skill check to determine success or failure throughout each of its three essential stages, selection, harvest and transplant. The following subheadings provide all of the details for adjudicating each phase of the long and difficult process. Naturally, the symbiotic surgeon's expertise is not cheap. He typically charges a fee measured in gold pieces equal to the Difficulty Class of the surgery as described in the heading Transplant multiplied by 200. However, this is generally the average as less experienced surgeons may charge half of this figure while the foremost experts in the field demand payment up to four times higher than the average.

Tools and Equipment

Like any other profession, the implements utilized by the practitioner often spell the difference between success and failure. Disastrous results in the overwhelming majority of most trades lead to an economic loss and a wasted expenditure of time; however in the case of symbiotic surgery, catastrophes are always drastically life altering events that sometimes prove fatal. Because of the stakes involved in the procedure's outcome, the specialists performing these operations rely upon an assortment of precisely engineered devices and materials to minimize the risks to their patients. The most commonly used instruments and substances appear below.

Surgeon's Kit: Even the most accomplished symbiotic surgeon is incapable of performing the simplest procedure without this large, indispensable leather pouch of handheld tools. In most cases, the weathered bag contains an assortment of handheld tools including a durable serrated knife capable of hacking through bone in a matter of minutes, several small, metallic rods either ending in a wickedly barbed hook utilized to stitch flesh together or a sharp single-edged blade capable of slicing skin with exacting precision, a wide variety of sutures and a magnifying lens along with an artificial light source. A surgeon's kit typically costs 100 gp in any large settlement in Wildwood, while a masterwork version fetches a price of 600 gp in most markets. The superior variety adds a +1 bonus to all Profession (symbiotic surgeon) skill checks made by the owner.

Selection

The act of choosing a symbiot encompasses more than merely picking an organism possessing desirable traits or conferring useful abilities. Creatures hailing from other worlds and domains inaccurately equate the daunting procedure with a trip to the local bazaar, naively describing the difficult undertaking as nothing more than a biological shopping spree. In actuality, the host's decision is a dilemma fraught with short-term and lifelong ramifications. In addition to the obvious physiological perils associated with the immediate removal of an incompatible symbiot, a string of unsuccessful surgeries makes it far more difficult to transplant tissue to the host in the future. As a result, careful and deliberate planning is a necessity whenever a character opts to unite its body and mind with organic tissue taken from a foreign entity.

Naturally, organic material originating from an identical or similar species to the potential host is the ideal situation; however some degree of deviation occurs with increasing regularity. While it is technically possible to graft the wings of an adult dragon onto a humanoid, the chances of prolonged success remain virtually non-existent. In the preceding instance, failure is essentially assured because of the extensive dissimilarities between humanoid and draconic physiology as well as the vast difference in size. Determining whether the donor's organic material is suitable for the host marks the critical first step on the long and dangerous journey toward permanent amalgamation between the recipient and the donor's tissue.

Naturally, the character's limitations depend upon his capability with the donor tissue. Creatures with a hardy constitution are more likely to permanently accept transplanted organic material while weak and sickly beings are unlikely to even survive the harrowing ordeal, let alone enjoy success. Symbiotic surgeons must weigh these risks before commencing this arduous and potentially lethal undertaking.

Harvest

This daunting step begins the process, pushing the symbiotic surgeon's skills to the absolute limit, as his mind and body must work in complete harmony to accomplish the arduous task ahead of him. Irrespective of the practitioner's prowess in his chosen profession, the entire stage of harvest proves impossible without the aid of a unique and powerful indigenous substance. Natives refer to the gooey, phosphorescent green paste as *hellsblot.*

Hellsblot

On those rare occasions when the beating heart of Wildwood's primordial master calls him to partake in the hunt, the domain's greatest hunter cedes intellect

to instinct and willingly indulges his overwhelming primeval urge. Despite every precaution and his tremendous power, Haiel always sheds at least a few drops of his precious blood in the midst of the chaotic fray. As the streams of the sanguine liquid fall to the ground, they mingle with the fertile soil, creating a moist, olive-colored mixture resembling wet cement. Wild creatures and most sentient inhabitants ignore or dismiss the odd material that symbiotic surgeons desperately covet. They refer to the unique substance as *hellsblot*, a name derived from its original moniker, "Haiel's blood."

Fortunately the exceedingly rare commodity retains its potency for thousands of years as it proves impervious to the ravages of decay or dilution. Most practitioners store *hellsblot* in a small, airtight one-ounce ceramic jar or tightly wrap an identical quantity inside of a wet leaf. Regardless of the methodology employed, it always maintains its damp consistency while emitting an eerie, green luminescence, two unusual properties that only enhance the aura of mystique enveloping *hellsblot*. Despite its mysterious appearance the general populace remains predominately ignorant of its actual purpose, preserving the coveted secret that its tiny band of symbiotic surgeons zealously guards.

In many respects, *hellsblot* functions as living soil in a manner akin to placing fresh plant cuttings into a jar of water. When physically applied to organic matter, *hellsblot* acts like a plant's root system, providing copious supplies of oxygen and other essential nutrients to the living tissue. Therefore, a tiny amount of *hellsblot* strategically positioned on the exposed portion of a severed limb temporarily prevents the appendage from dying. In addition to its preservative properties, *hellsblot* also demonstrates its usefulness by connecting living tissues on a microcellular level and serving as a topical analgesic. While it proves incapable of repairing major blood vessels and fractured bones, it does create muscular and neural connections between two pieces of living tissue. *Hellsblot* gives the symbiotic surgeon the ability to remove organic material from the donor and the recipient without inflicting pain as well as attach the live tissue to its new host by continuously supplying it with oxygen and nutrients for 20d6+120 minutes. The substance also displays the incredible ability to simulate the functions of a major organ such as a heart or lungs, allowing the creature to remain alive for 10d6 + 60 minutes. A single ounce of *hellsblot* is sufficient to sustain four medium-sized appendages, and it typically costs 16,000 gp per jar when available in Wildwood's larger settlements. Like other commodities in Wildwood, interested parties can acquire *hellsblot* through bartering or by locating it through investigative means.

Removing the Tissue

After procuring an adequate supply of *hellsblot*, the symbiotic surgeon prepares both parties for the laborious and painstaking operation. In the case of the donor, some type of magical or mechanical restraint is generally required as virtually no creature willingly donates body parts or organs for the benefit of another individual. As a result, the recipient and his allies must resort to a variety of methods to subdue his intended benefactor ranging from the crude but efficient act of physically knocking him unconscious to the sly and devious task of poisoning him with a paralytic toxin. Once he and his associates obtain his involuntary acquiescence, the surgeon commences the procedure by carefully removing the targeted appendage or organ from the incapacitated donor and then duplicating the effort on the recipient's body, if necessary. He performs the operation in this particular order because if he fails to properly remove the donor's organic tissue, there is no need to continue with the operation. He must possess at least one rank in the appropriate Knowledge skill pertaining to the donor and the patient. For instance, a symbiotic surgeon performing surgery on a dragon and a human must possess at least one rank of Knowledge (arcana) and one rank of Knowledge (nature); otherwise he lacks the prerequisite knowledge to complete the operation. He determines success by making a Profession (symbiotic surgeon) skill check**.** The initial Difficulty Class for this skill check is 20; however it is subject to the following modifiers.

Type of Tissue Removed	**DC Mod.**
Minor appendage (hand or foot)	+1
Major appendage (arm, leg or wing)	+4
Minor bodily organ (gland, liver)	+4
Major bodily organ (gills, heart, lungs)	+9
Minor sensory organ (nose, ear)	+1
Major sensory organ (eye)	+4
Minor structure (mouth, skin)	+9
Major structure (rib cage)	+16

Additional Conditions	**DC Mod.**
Donor's natural armor bonus	(a)
Uses masterwork surgeon's kit	-1
For every five ranks of Knowledge	-1 (b)
For every five ranks of Heal	-1

(a) For external appendages, organs and structures, the modifier is one-half of the donor's natural armor bonus. For internal organs and structures, the modifier is equal to the donor's natural armor bonus.

(b) The Knowledge skill must correspond with the appropriate skill for the donor or recipient type. For instance, five ranks of Knowledge (arcana) subtracts -1 from the DC of the skill check if he is performing surgery on a dragon or implanting tissue harvested from a dragon, but it provides no benefit when conducting an operation on a human.

The delicate procedure takes as many minutes as the check's Difficulty Class; therefore extracting a ribcage from a human takes 36 minutes of labor intensive work. After removing the organic tissue, the surgeon liberally coats its exposed muscle, nerves and vessels with *hellsblot*, effectively placing it into a state of suspended animation. If the miraculous substance is used to simulate the functions of a major bodily organ or structure, such as utilizing it in place

of a missing heart, it can keep the creature alive for an additional 10d6+60 minutes.

Additional Considerations: When adjudicating whether an organ or appendage qualifies as a minor or major variety, the GM must utilize tremendous discretion. As a rule of thumb, any bodily organ or tissue vital to imminent survival or locomotion qualifies as a major variety. For instance, a creature's heart is considered a major organ because the organism can only live for no more than a few minutes without one; however a creature could survive without a functioning kidney for at least several hours before expiring.

Postoperative Effects

Radical alterations to a creature's physiology do not come without a steep price. Ripping a major organ or structure from the body is a traumatic event that even with the application of *hellsblot*, the surgery results in the creature's immediate death unless it makes a Fortitude save (DC 15). In addition, the patient loses a percentage of its maximum hit points equal to the Difficulty Class of the preceding Profession (symbiotic surgeon) check. Therefore, whenever the surgeon removes an extremity from the patient such as an arm or a leg, the creature instantaneously suffers damage equal to 24% of its maximum hit points. There is no saving throw against this effect, and the rules for massive damage still apply to the affected creature.

If the symbiotic surgeon successfully removes the desired tissues, then he is ready to complete the transplant. Failure leaves the tissue in an irreparable state, preventing him from effectively utilizing it during the transplant procedure. For this reason, surgeons always remove the donor material first, just in case of a mistake.

Example: Vargold, the symbiotic surgeon, begins the procedure by attempting to successfully remove the dragon's wings from its body. Before commencing with this task, he must first find a means to restrain the creature. Vargold and Berru, his human patient, opt to render the young dragon unconscious by dealing nonlethal damage to the creature. After more than a minute, they finally accomplish this difficult task. With the dragon completely incapacitated, Vargold begins the delicate procedures. Because he is removing a major appendage (a wing), the Difficulty Class of this task is normally 24; however the dragon possesses a natural armor bonus of +9 bringing the new total to 28. (The wings are an external limb; therefore the Difficulty Class is only increased by one-half of the dragon's natural armor bonus.) Vargold possesses nine ranks of Knowledge (arcana), and he spent ten ranks in his Heal skill. His expertise reduces the surgery's Difficulty Class by -3, making the new DC 25. Vargold's Profession (symbiotic surgeon) skill check is +18; therefore he needs to roll a 7 to succeed. He rolls a 9 on his attempt to remove the first wing, and a 10 on his second try. Both attempts succeed. Each surgery lasted for twenty-five minutes, and Vargold coats the exposed tissue with *hellsblot* allowing the wings to remain alive. In the process, the dragon suffers hit point damage equal to 50% of its maximum hit points. (Difficulty Class of 25 multiplied by 2) The dragon's normal hit point total is 90; however before the surgery began it had 88 hit points. After completing the surgery, the dragon suffers 45 hit points of damage (50% of 90) bringing its current total to 43. Because there is no tissue to remove from his friend Berru, Vargold is now prepared to move onto the next stage of the operation.

Transplant

After harvesting the organs from the donor and preparing the recipient for the transplant, the surgeon is now ready attach the organic material to its new host. Once again this procedure requires him to make another Profession (symbiotic surgeon) skill check using the following formula.

Profession (symbiotic surgeon) skill check + Dex modifier

This calculation takes into account his surgical experience and the steadiness of his hands. The subsequent modifiers to this check account for his cool intellect, his knowledge of anatomy and physiology and his ability to properly close the wound. The base Difficulty Class for the aforementioned check is 20 plus the following modifiers.

Donor Creature Type vs. Host	DC Mod.
Same species	+0
Same creature type	+1
Same creature group (see below)	+4
Different creature group (see below)	4 + (a)

Type of Tissue Transplanted	DC Mod.
Minor appendage (hand or foot)	+1
Major appendage (arm, leg or wing)	+4
Minor bodily organ (gland, liver)	+4
Major bodily organ (gills, heart, lungs)	+9
Minor sensory organ (nose, ear)	+1
Major sensory organ (eye)	+4
Minor structure (mouth, skin)	+9
Major structure (rib cage)	+16

Additional Conditions	DC Mod.
Adding foreign tissue (see below)	+9 (b)
Each previous symbiotic surgery	+9 (c)
Per size category difference	+16(d)
Recipient's natural armor bonus	(e)
For every five ranks of Knowledge	-1 (f)
For every five ranks of Heal	-1
Uses masterwork surgeon's kit	-1

Creature Groups: All creature types are divided into four creature groups representing their compatibility with organic material harvested from other creature groups. The groups are arranged in numerical fashion, and each entity consists of the following members.

- **Group 1:** Humanoid, monstrous humanoid
- **Group 2:** Animal, fey, giant
- **Group 3:** Dragon, magical beast, vermin
- **Group 4:** Aberration, outsider, plant

(a) = difference between creature group numbers x 4. For instance, tissue taken from a magical beast for implantation on a humanoid

increases the Difficulty Class by +12 because the magical beast belongs to group 3 and the humanoid to group 1. 4 + the difference of 2 multiplied by 4 yields a total of 12.

(b) This includes implanting appendages, organs and structures normally absent from the base creature such as adding a tail, a wing, gills or an exoskeleton to an elf. This also includes adding additional limbs or organs to a creature without the inherent capacity to support them including adding a third arm onto a humanoid. This is an additional modifier cumulative with the modifier for performing the actual surgery, i.e. grafting a wing onto an elf adds a +13 to the DC, +4 for the major appendage and +9 for adding a foreign appendage.

(c) Receiving tissue from the same donor source is considered one surgery; therefore transplanting two arms from the same troll counts only as one symbiotic surgery.

(d) It is impossible to transplant organic material to a creature two or more size categories larger or smaller than the donor.

(e) For external appendages, organs and structures, the modifier is one-half of the donor's natural armor bonus. For internal organs and structures, the modifier is equal to the donor's natural armor bonus.

(f) The Knowledge skill must correspond with the appropriate skill for the donor and/or recipient type. For instance, five ranks of Knowledge (arcana) subtracts -1 from the DC of the skill check if he is performing surgery on a dragon or implanting tissue harvested from a dragon, but it provides no benefit when conducting an operation on a human.

Aftermath

The surgery lasts for a number of minutes equal to the Difficulty Class of the practitioner's Profession skill check. If successfully completed, the patient moves onto the final stage of the process acceptance. Failure, on the other hand, comes with a number of consequences. The most immediate concern is injuries caused by the botched procedure. The potential host sustains damage equal to the difference between the surgery's Difficulty Class and the proponent's Profession check. Therefore, if he attempted to complete a procedure with a Difficulty Class of 28, and his modified result came out to 22, the patient takes 6 points of damage. If he failed his check by 5 or less, the donor tissue remains viable and he may try again; otherwise he irreparably damaged the organic material during the transplant, rendering it utterly useless. Time also becomes a factor at this point as the effects of the *hellsblot* frequently begin to wear off, endangering the tissue to the ravages of necrosis. The surgeon can attempt to reattach the host's original organic material if he preserved it or else the patient must learn to cope without the missing tissue, if possible. The GM must determine the exact effects of missing limbs and organs. In general, the loss of a major organ results in death within 1d6 minutes, the loss of a minor organ results in death 1d4 days later and the absence of an appendage imposes a -8 penalty to all rolls impacted by the lost appendage. (*Torn Asunder*, a supplement also available from Bastion Press provides an excellent resource for adjudicating the consequences of destroyed body parts.)

Example 1: The moment of truth is now at hand as Vargold begins the arduous process of grafting the dragon's wings onto Berru's back. By consulting the preceding chart, the Difficulty Class assigned to this particular surgery is 39. (20 + 12 (the amount added because of the different creature types) + 9 (adding a foreign appendage) +4 (for adding a major appendage -3 [for 15 ranks of Knowledge (nature)] – 2 (for 10 ranks of Heal) -1 (for 9 ranks of Knowledge (arcana) = 39) Vargold adds a +24 to his die roll, (+18 for his Profession (symbiotic surgeon) skill check and + 6 for his Dexterity modifier) Vargold requires 39 minutes to perform the operation, and he needs to roll a 15 or higher on his check to successfully attach the dragon's wing to his friend. Vargold rolls a 17 indicating that he succeeded in attaching one of the dragon's wings.

Example 2: Unfortunately, the second surgery does not go as well as Vargold rolls a 3, generating a modified total of 27, twelve shy of success. Berru immediately suffers 12 points of damage, and his botched effort destroyed the dragon's wing in the process.

Acceptance

With the more excruciating portion of the operation complete, the survival of the grafted tissue depends upon its ability to avoid rejection by the host's body. Fortunately, the *hellsblot* used during the surgery suppresses much of this effect; however it remains a significant danger nonetheless. Within 1d6 hours after the surgery, the patient must make a Fortitude save using the donor's Fortitude save bonus as the Difficulty Class for his Fortitude saving throw. In addition, the following modifiers are then added to the Difficulty Class of this saving throw.

Donor Creature Type vs. Host	DC Mod.
Same species	+0
Same creature type	+1
Same creature group (see below)	+4
Different creature group (see below)	4 + (a)

Creature Groups: All creature types are divided into four creature groups representing their compatibility with organic material harvested from other creature groups. The groups are arranged in numerical fashion, and each entity consists of the following members.

- **Group 1:** Humanoid, monstrous humanoid.
- **Group 2:** Animal, fey, giant
- **Group 3:** Dragon, magical beast, vermin
- **Group 4:** Aberration, outsider, plant

(a) = difference between creature group numbers x 4. For instance, tissue taken from a magical beast for

implantation on a humanoid increases the Difficulty Class by +12 because the magical beast belongs to group 3 and the humanoid to group 1. (4 + the difference of 2 multiplied by 4 yields a total of 12.)

If he wins, there is no ill effect, but if he loses, his body rejects the donor's tissue and begins to immediately attack it. Every hour afterward, the recipient must make a Constitution check (DC 15 + 1 for every previous check) to avoid suffering one point of Constitution damage. This process continues until he dies or the offending tissue is removed. For instance, in the case of Berru and the black dragon, Berru's Fortitude save is +12, whereas the dragon's Fortitude saving throw is +9. The base Difficulty Class of Berru's saving throw is 9. Because of the dragon's creature type, it adds an additional +12 modifier to the saving throw's Difficulty Class; therefore the DC is now 21. If Berru wins, he does not adversely react to his new wing, but if he loses, his immune system fervently attacks the foreign material matter affixed to his back. If he wants to live, Berru is left with no other option but to remove the dragon's wing from his back.

In addition to this immediate response from the recipient's immune system, the recipient must make another Fortitude saving throw 1d4 weeks after the completion of the surgery and then 1d4 + 1 months after the surgery. If he makes the aforementioned saving throws, his body permanently accepts the grafted tissue, and rejection is no longer a danger. The long and difficulty process is now complete, transforming the host into an augmented variety of its creature type.

Benefits and Drawbacks

No creature undergoes this harrowing surgery without the realistic prospect of acquiring some type of benefit from the procedure. For instance, the transplantation of a pair of eyes from a creature with darkvision grants the recipient the same ability, while the addition of a pair of wings to a flightless creature enables it to fly and bestows a natural attack if the donor used them in such a manner. The host can acquire any extraordinary ability specifically linked to a particular appendage, organ or structure, but under no circumstances can he acquire a creature's spell-like or supernatural abilities as well as extraordinary abilities acquired as the result of membership to a specific class. The dragon provides an excellent example of this general rule. While it is wholly possible to surgically implant the dragon's eyes onto the host, giving him its keen senses extraordinary ability, the same does not hold true for its breath weapon or blindsense abilities. Because the keen senses ability relies exclusively upon the dragon's eyes, the host is eligible to benefit from this ability; however this does not apply in the case of the latter two abilities. The dragon's breath weapon is a supernatural ability and its blindsense extraordinary ability does not derive from a readily identifiable organic structure, making it impossible to impart these abilities to the recipient. In addition to allowing the host to utilize the donor's extraordinary abilities, the transplanted tissue can also increase his ability scores, skills and speed as well as enabling him to use a natural weapon, gain a natural armor bonus or acquire a new mode of locomotion. Of course, the recipient also suffers from any of the same weaknesses that plague the donor. For instance, while an orc's eyes confer darkvision upon the wearer, they also make him sensitive to bright lights. Furthermore, symbiotic surgery often radically alters the host's physical appearance, sometimes making him seem odd looking to other creatures. The subsequent heading details the general rules for determining the benefits and drawbacks attributable to the symbiotic surgery.

General Rules

When adjudicating the effects of organic transplantation, the first and foremost rule remains that the recipient cannot acquire any spell-like or supernatural abilities from the donor or that he cannot attain extraordinary abilities that do not depend upon a specific organic structure. In most cases, this determination is fairly clear-cut; however there are always rare occasions when a precise ruling is not readily apparent. For instance, a character can argue that the transplantation of a bat's ears give him the animal's blindsense ability because it depends upon its primitive form of radar to locate creatures and objects. On the surface the player's contention appears plausible, but bats must also generate ultrasonic waves, a capacity that the player does not possess. Under these circumstances, the GM remains the ultimate arbiter, yet it is usually best to err on the side of caution and not allow the player to acquire a questionable ability. Communication is necessary to prevent any misunderstandings; therefore it is advisable to discuss the matter with the player prior to his character's preparation for the surgery. However, the acquisition of extraordinary abilities does not represent the only benefits that the character can gain from undergoing the procedure. The subsequent paragraphs provide additional guidance in adjudicating these benefits as well as the consequences of losing a particular appendage, organ or structure as the result of this surgery.

Ability scores: Certain transplantations can potentially increase the recipient's ability scores, especially in the case of adding appendages and limbs. The first step in making this determination is by obtaining a figure referred to as a baseline. The baseline is simply the difference between the donor's ability score and the recipient's ability score. The surgery typically improves or reduces the character's ability score by a fractional amount of the baseline depending upon the type of tissue transplanted. The specific quantities are provided in the subsequent sections describing the effects of each type of surgery. For instance, an ogre with a Strength of 21 decides to exchange his arms with a frost giant that possesses a Strength of 29. The baseline is 8 (29 – 21). An arm increases the recipient's Strength by 1/8 of the baseline; therefore the transplantation of two arms increases the ogre's Strength by ¼ of the baseline. The ogre's Strength improves to 23. (21 + 2) For simplicity's sake, whenever an entry states that the transplanted tissue improves an ability score, it is also presumed that a

lower score reduces the host's ability score in an identical manner. Therefore, if the ogre received the arms of an elf with a Strength of 13, the operation reduces his Strength score to 19.

Natural armor: The recipient acquires a natural armor bonus equal to a percentage of the donor's natural armor bonus depending upon the type of tissue transplanted. Similarly, the recipient loses an identical percentage when his original tissue is replaced by the donor material. For instance, the addition of an arm from a grimlock adds a +.4 natural armor bonus to a gnoll recipient, (see the subsequent section regarding percentages); however the gnoll loses a +.1 natural armor bonus because of his own +1 natural armor bonus. Therefore, the character's net gain from the transaction is a +.3 natural armor bonus. However, if the same individual decides to replace the grimlock arm at a later point in time, he loses the net gain received from that surgery rather than a percentage of his current natural armor bonus.

Natural attacks: The recipient acquires a natural attack if the donor creature used the bodily structure as a natural attack. Therefore, if a human grafts a dragon's claw onto his arm, he can use the claw as a natural attack, dealing the same amount of damage as the donor. The usage of natural attacks must abide by the rules provided in the Glossary of the *MM*. Natural weapons cannot be used in conjunction with handheld or ranged weapons; therefore a human warrior that acquires a claw cannot attack with his sword and claw in the same round.

Skill bonuses: The recipient only acquires racial skill bonuses applicable to a particular organ or bodily structure. For instance, the transplantation of an eagle's eyes onto a human host grant the recipient the animal's +8 racial bonus to Spot skill checks because the particular skill depends exclusively upon visual senses. When determining the baseline for a skill bonus, the baseline is computed as the difference between the donor's racial bonus on that particular skill to the host's racial bonus on that particular skill.

Special: Some types of organic tissue provide additional abilities not covered by any of the other general categories.

Speed: Speed follows the same basic procedure as ability scores except that the baseline is the difference between the donor's speed and the recipient's speed. Otherwise it is identical to ability scores.

Percentages

It is important that characters keep close track of any fractional benefits that they receive from transplanted organic tissue. For instance, numerous appendages grant fractional natural armor bonuses. In most cases, the bonus gained is less than one; however after several symbiotic surgeries, the character's fractional total may exceed one. For example, the addition of a minotaur's horn adds a natural armor bonus of one-tenth the donor's natural armor bonus; therefore the recipient's natural armor bonus improves by .5. (Minotaur's natural armor bonus of +5 divided by 10) Since this is a fraction less than one, it is rounded down resulting in a natural armor bonus of 0. However, several months later, the character receives a transplanted pair of young black dragon wings. Each wing improves the recipient's natural armor bonus by one-tenth of the donor's natural armor bonus; therefore the character now has a natural armor bonus of 1.8. (Young black dragon's natural armor bonus of +9 divided by 10 multiplied twice) Normally the character only receives a natural armor bonus of +1, but the character also benefited from a .5 natural armor bonus from the addition of his horn. When added together, the character's total is now 2.3. His natural armor bonus is now +2.

Appendages and Limbs

Not surprisingly, the transplantation of appendages and limbs account for the majority of all symbiotic surgeries performed in Wildwood. This category includes common humanoid features, such as arms, hands, feet and legs as well as monstrous structures such as carapaces, exoskeletons, tails and wings.

Arm

An arm often improves the recipient's Strength score as well as bestowing the abilities of any attached appendages such as a hand or claw. An arm is generally defined as any appendage attached to a central body or torso that does not support the creature's weight. This definition includes the arms typically found on a humanoid as well as a tendriculos' tendrils or the tiny forearms of a dinosaur.

Ability score: An arm improves the recipient's Strength score by one-eighth of the baseline. The addition of the odd appendage reduces the recipient's Charisma score by half of the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance.

Natural armor bonus: The arm improves the user's natural armor bonus by one-tenth of the donor's natural armor bonus.

Natural weapon: The host can use any type of natural attack affixed to the arm.

Special: If there is an appendage affixed to the arm that qualifies as a hand (see below), the character also receives the benefits of the hand. In addition, if the donor's reach was greater than the recipient's, his reach is increased. Hence, a human receiving an arm from a hill giant now possesses a 10-foot reach with attacks made using that arm.

Foot

A foot is any bodily structure that comes into direct contact with the ground when the creature is in an upright position. This definition encompasses a human's foot, a bird's talon, a cat's paw or any other tissue that performs the same function. In all cases, the foot is found at the end of the creature's leg.

Ability score: A foot increases the host's Dexterity score by one-eighth of the donor's natural armor bonus.

Natural weapon: Bipeds can use the foot as a natural weapon in the same manner as the donor.

Skills: A foot grants the host a bonus to Balance and Move Silently skill checks equal to one-quarter of the baseline. It also bestows a bonus to Climb, Jump and Swim skill checks equal to one-eighth of the baseline.

Hand

A hand is any appendage with at least one digit affixed to a bodily structure meeting the criteria for an arm. This includes a human's hand or a girallon's claws. In all cases, the hand is always found at the end of the arm. A hand is typically used to grasp and manipulate objects.

Ability scores: The hand improves the recipient's Dexterity score by one-quarter of the baseline. The addition of the odd appendage reduces the recipient's Charisma score by half of the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance.

Natural weapon: If the donor's hand acted as a natural weapon, the recipient can use the appendage in a like fashion without hindrance.

Skills: A hand grants the host a bonus to Climb, Open Lock, and Sleight of Hand skill checks equal to one-quarter of the baseline.

Special: Whenever a spellcaster casts a spell with a somatic component, there is a percentage chance equal to 5 times the difference between the host's creature group and the donor of miscasting the spell. Therefore, if the spellcaster is a human from creature group 1 and the donor is a dragon from creature group 3, there is a 10% chance of miscasting the spell. (3 -1 = 2 x 5 = 10%)

Horn

This category encompasses any bony structure emanating from a creature's head such as a unicorn's horn or a deer's antlers. Horns provide some protection against attacks directed at the creature's skull as well as providing the recipient with an often formidable natural weapon.

Ability score: One or more horns reduce the creature's Charisma score by 1 if the creature does not normally grow a horn.

Natural armor bonus: A single horn enhances the host's natural armor bonus by one-eighth of the donor's natural armor bonus. Multiple horns do not provide any additional benefit.

Natural weapon: The recipient can utilize the horn as a natural weapon provided that the donor benefited from the horns in this manner. If the host only grafted one of a creature's multiple horns onto its head, the attack deals a corresponding percentage of the base damage to the target. For instance, if a human grafts one of a minotaur's two horns onto its skull, his horn deal 1d4 points of damage rather than the normal 1d8 points of damage because he is only using one of the creature's two horns.

Leg

Legs provide stability, speed and strength as well as bestowing the abilities of any attached appendages such as a foot or a paw. A leg is generally defined as any appendage attached to a central body or torso that supports the creature's weight while in an upright position. In most instances, legs provide the creature its locomotion. This definition includes the legs typically found on a humanoid as well as the numerous appendages supporting the weight of a centipede.

Ability score: A leg improves the recipient's Strength score by one-eighth of the baseline. The addition of the odd appendage reduces the recipient's Charisma score by half of the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance.

Natural armor bonus: The leg improves the host's natural armor bonus by one-tenth of the donor's natural armor bonus.

Natural weapon: The host can use any type of natural weapon affixed to the leg such as a kicking attack.

Skills: A leg improves the beneficiary's Climb, Jump and Swim skill checks by one-quarter of the baseline.

Special: If there is an appendage affixed to the leg that qualifies as a foot (see above), the character also receives the benefits of the food.

Speed: Each leg increases the recipient's land-based speed by one-half of the baseline.

Tail

This classification includes any organic structure directly affixed to the bottom rear of the creature's central torso, such as a lizard's tail, the stinger of a giant wasp or the tail of a giant shark. Most tails emanate from the lower portion of the creature's spinal cord, and they are incapable of supporting the creature's weight. Tails improve stability especially at high speeds, and in many cases they also provide the recipient with a potent natural weapon.

Ability score: The addition of the odd appendage reduces the recipient's Charisma score by half of the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance unless the creature already had a tail.

Natural weapon: The host can employ his new tail as a natural weapon if the donor also utilized the appendage in this fashion. However, if the tail conferred an additional extraordinary ability, such as the poisonous sting of a scorpion's tail, the recipient does not gain the benefits of this ability unless the symbiotic surgeon performs a separate surgery to activate the organ or gland responsible for the production of this substance. The subsequent section, bodily organs describes this process in greater detail.

Skills: The addition of a tail improves the recipient's Balance and Swim skill checks by one-half of the baseline.

Wing

In simplest terms, a wing is any appendage that empowers a creature to fly. This includes the wings found on a bird, dragon or pixie. Wings also provide an added form of protection in addition to its usage as a natural weapon. In addition to their inherent benefits, the recipient also gains the usage of any attached appendage such as a claw.

Ability score: The addition of the odd appendage reduces the recipient's Charisma score by one-half of the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance unless the creature already has a set of wings.

Natural armor bonus: A wing improves the host's natural armor bonus by one-tenth of the donor's natural armor bonus.

Natural weapon: A wing can function as a natural weapon as long as the donor possessed the ability to attack opponents with the appendage.

Special: If there is an appendage affixed to the wing that qualifies as a hand (see above), the character also receives the benefits of the hand.

Speed: Creatures need a complete pair of wings to fly. The speed of land-based creatures is half of the donor's speed and his maneuverability rating is one worse than the donor. Creatures that normally possess wings utilize the donor's speed and maneuverability rating.

Bodily Organs

Bodily organs include all internal organs that perform an important and often essential biological function as opposed to gathering sensory data. Bodily organs are responsible for circulatory, digestive, reproductive and respiratory functions within nearly all living organisms. Bodily organs are divided into two larger classifications, major organs and minor organs. The most noteworthy and commonly transplanted members of the former category are the heart and lungs, while a plethora of diverse organs make up the latter variety.

Major Organs

Although not universal, virtually all sentient beings possess three major organs that sustain life, a brain, a heart and lungs. If any of these three organs fail, the creature dies within a matter of minutes, whereas it can survive for hours, days or sometimes indefinitely from the demise of a minor organ. As previously mentioned there is no viable method for transplanting a brain into a new host; hence this section only addresses the remaining two major organs. Because of the time constraints involved in this type of operation, this type of transplant surgery is one of the riskiest endeavors.

Heart

In many respects, blood is the water of life, and the heart is the organ that circulates the precious fluid throughout the body. All of the creature types eligible for symbiotic surgery possess a heart with the exception of plants.

Ability score: A heart improves the recipient's Constitution score by one-quarter of the baseline. His Strength score also increases by the same amount as his Constitution score. There is no danger raising a creature's Constitution score by two or less; however it is extremely dangerous to raise the recipient's Constitution score by more than two as the result of the transplantation. The elevated blood pressure bursts fragile arteries and veins precipitating a massive stroke within 1d4 weeks after the surgery. The affected character must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + the donor's Constitution score); otherwise the stroke deals a number of points of ability drain equal to the difference between the aforementioned saving throw's Difficulty Class and his result. The stroke affects the recipient's Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma and Dexterity. For instance, a human with a Constitution of 9 receives a transplanted heart from a fire giant with a Constitution of 21. The baseline for this transplant is 12, and the character's Constitution increases by one-quarter of the baseline providing the human with a +3 adjustment to his Constitution and Strength scores. Because this increase is greater than 2, the character must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 31) (10 + the fire giant's Constitution score); otherwise he suffers ability drain from a massive stroke.

Speed: For each additional point of Constitution gained in this manner, the recipient's speed increases by one-sixth its normal speed.

Lung

Most creatures require oxygen to survive, and the lungs provide a biological mechanism for extracting the life-giving gas from the surrounding atmosphere whether they are land-based or aquatic organisms. Land-based life forms possess lungs, while aquatic creatures have gills. Amphibians possess one or both of these respiratory organs. All of the creature types eligible for symbiotic surgery have lungs with the exception of plants.

Ability score: Each lung improves the recipient's Constitution score by one-eighth of the baseline. His Strength score also increases by the same amount as his Constitution score.

Special: If the donor creature is immune to toxic gases, then the host also benefits from this ability.

Speed: For each additional point of Constitution gained in this manner, the recipient's speed increases by one-eighth its normal speed.

Minor Organs

A variety of organic tissues responsible for the production of essential fluids and substances comprise this comprehensive classification of organic tissue. Internal organs produce compounds such as saliva, venom, adrenaline and other chemicals. Because of their varied functions, these organs bestow a myriad of diverse extraordinary abilities to their recipients.

The following listing provides the benefits for a large number of commonly transplanted minor organs. Of course, the catalog is not all-inclusive; therefore the GM is the final arbiter when determining the effects of organs not present on the following inventory.

Special: Minor organs bestow a number of useful extraordinary abilities upon their host. The subsequent summary details the benefits of the most common minor organs.

Adrenal gland: Normally situated just above the kidneys, this important gland is responsible for the secretion of adrenaline, a hormone that increases the creature's heart rate. If the gland is transplanted from a creature with the ability to temporarily boost a physical attribute or speed, such as the cheetah's sprint ability, the recipient acquires the usage of these extraordinary powers. Creatures that do not eat, breathe or sleep do not possess an adrenal gland.

Liver: The liver acts as a biological purifier by extracting toxins from the bloodstream. If the donor receives a racial bonus to saving throws against poison or is naturally immune to poisons, the host receives these benefits as well. Only livers transplanted from creature types that breathe, eat and sleep provide the aforementioned properties.

Poison gland: Symbiotic surgeons transplant poison glands whenever they graft an appendage or structural organ responsible for the introduction of the venom into the donor's intended target. In these cases, the surgeon removes the organ from the donor creature simultaneously with the removal of the appendage or structural organ; therefore there is no need to make a check to extricate the organ from the donor. However, the symbiotic surgeon must make a separate check to properly connect the poison gland to the host. For instance, when the surgeon removes a scorpion's tail for implantation onto a human host, he makes only one Profession (symbiotic surgeon) check to remove the appendage from the scorpion. However when he attaches the tail onto its new recipient, he must make two Profession (symbiotic surgeon) checks, the first one to correctly attach the tail to the human, and the second check to connect the host to the poison gland.

Reproductive organs: It is impossible to transplant reproductive organs under any circumstances.

Sensory Organs

Sensory organs gather, process and interpret external stimuli, allowing the creature to see, hear, touch and smell their immediate surroundings. Unlike the preceding classifications of organs, sensory organs are predominately external devices with some internalized structures.

Antennae

Although rarely encountered on humanoids, arthropods and some monstrous creatures rely upon antennae as a primary source of information. Affixed to the creature's head, antennae are extremely sensitive instruments designed to detect vibrations and atmospheric changes attributable to natural phenomenon or the presence of other creatures. Examples of antennae include those found on rust monsters or giant insects.

Ability score: The addition of the unusual organ reduces the recipient's Charisma score by one-quarter of the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance unless the creature already has antennae.

Skills: The addition of one or more antennae improves the recipient's Listen, Search and Spot skill checks by one-half of the baseline.

Ear

An ear is any at least partially external organ attached to the creature's head that enables it to hear sounds. Most creatures possess two ears, one on each side of its head.

Ability score: The alteration of the creature's ears reduces the recipient's Charisma score by one-quarter of the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance.

Skills: Each ear increases the host's Listen skill checks by one-half of the baseline. The character receives no additional benefit if he transplants three or more ears.

Eye

An eye is any external organ that allows the creature to visualize its external environment. Eyes normally require an ample quantity of light to see; however darkvision allows many creatures to still see even when their surroundings are cloaked in total darkness. Most living organisms possess two eyes, but there are quite a few exceptions to this general rule.

Ability score: An eye improves the recipient's Dexterity score by one-eighth of the baseline. The alteration of the creature's eyes reduces the recipient's Charisma score by one-quarter of the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance.

Skills: Each eye increases the host's Search skill checks by one-fourth of the baseline, while improving the recipient's Spot skill checks by one-half of the baseline. The character receives no additional benefit if he transplants three or more eyes.

Special: If the donor had the darkvision ability, the recipient also acquires this power, although the range is proportionately adjusted based upon the number of visual organs received from the donor. For instance, an orc has two eyes, and its darkvision extends to a range of 60 feet. If a human received one of the orc's eyes, it gains darkvision, but its range is only 30 feet since it received only one of its eyes.

Nose

A nose is any external sensory organ capable of smell. Many animals have a heightened sense of smell that empowers them to pick up another creature's scent. Creatures generally possess only one nose.

Ability score: The alteration of the creature's nose reduces the recipient's Charisma score by one-quarter of the difference between the host's creature

group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance.

Skills: A nose enhances the host's tracking ability, granting him a bonus of one-half of the baseline to all Survival skill checks made while following tracks.

Special: If the donor has the scent ability, the recipient also acquires the usage of this ability.

Structures

Any anatomical feature that does not fit into any of the previously discussed categories is generally referred to as a structure. In general, structures usually consist of several varieties of interconnected tissue or a complex formation, such as the mouth that contains a combination of bone, soft tissue and cartilage or a rib cage comprised of numerous bones.

Carapace

The term carapace refers to any protrusion of bony material that provides protection to the donor. It includes bony structures such as the tojanida's shell. If the carapace inhibits the movement of the host's head or extremities, its mobility and other sensory functions are impaired accordingly.

Ability scores: Because of the carapace's bulkiness, the host suffers a -2 penalty to his Dexterity score. The addition of the odd appendage reduces the recipient's Charisma score by the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance.

Natural armor bonus: The carapace enhances the recipient's natural armor bonus by half of the donor's natural armor bonus.

Skills: The carapace partially inhibits movement; therefore affixing a carapace to a host that normally does not possess such a bony structure results in a -4 penalty to all Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Move Silently, Ride and Tumble skill checks. Surprisingly, the carapace's buoyancy gives its host a +2 bonus to all Swim checks.

Special: Because it provides added protection to the recipient's vital organs, there is a 5% chance for every +1 natural armor bonus bestowed by the carapace that it negates critical hits and sneak attacks attempted against the recipient. For instance, if the carapace grants the host a natural armor bonus of +5, there is a 25% chance that it negates the aforementioned special attack forms. (5 x 5 = 25)

Speed: The carapace's weight encumbers the character, reducing his speed as if he carried a heavy load.

Exoskeleton

This category includes any form of exterior skeleton such as those possessed by some types of vermin and monstrous insect species. The giant stag beetle's armor-like plating meets the criteria for this classification. As a rule of thumb, members of the arthropod family such as insects and crustaceans are the only species with an exoskeleton. As with the carapace, the exoskeleton must accommodate the host's head and extremities; otherwise it proves rather useless to its host.

Ability scores: The exoskeleton's rigidity imposes a -4 penalty to the host's Dexterity score. The addition of the odd appendage reduces the recipient's Charisma score by the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance.

Extraordinary abilities: If the donor benefits from any type of energy resistance with the exception of sonic energy, the host it also resistant to the same types of energy albeit at half of its original strength. Therefore, if the donor possesses cold and fire resistance/10, the host receives cold and fire resistance/5.

Natural armor bonus: The exoskeleton augments the recipient's natural armor bonus by three-fourths of the donor's natural armor bonus.

Skills: If any creature other than an arthropod acquires an exoskeleton, it suffers a -8 penalty to all Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Move Silently, Ride, Swim and Tumble skill checks.

Special: Because it provides added protection to the recipient's vital organs, there is a 5% chance for every +1 natural armor bonus bestowed by the carapace that it negates critical hits and sneak attacks attempted against the recipient. For instance, if the carapace grants the host a natural armor bonus of +5, there is a 25% chance that it negates the aforementioned special attack forms. (5 x 5 = 25)

Speed: The exoskeleton's added weight and stiffness reduces the character's movement by half.

Mouth

Although the mouth is responsible for discerning various tastes, it is vastly different from other sensory organs because it consists of multiple tissue types and performs more than one function. A mouth is any orifice that provides direct external access to the creature's digestive or respiratory systems. It generally consists of an upper and lower jaw, the affixed teeth, a tongue and the palette. The throat and larynx are not considered part of the creature's mouth. If the donor or recipient cannot eat or breathe through its mouth, then the organ is incompatible for transplant.

Ability score: The alteration of the creature's mouth reduces the recipient's Charisma score by one-half of the difference between the host's creature group and the donor as described under the heading Acceptance.

Natural weapon: The recipient acquires a bite attack if the donor also benefited from such a natural attack. However, if the bite conferred an additional extraordinary ability, such as the venomous fangs of a poisonous snake, the recipient does not gain the benefits of this ability unless the symbiotic surgeon performs a separate surgery to activate the organ or gland responsible for the production of this substance. The previous section, bodily organs describes this process in greater detail.

Special: Whenever a spellcaster casts a spell with a verbal component, there is a percentage chance equal to 10 times the difference between the host's creature group and the donor of miscasting the spell. Therefore, if the spellcaster is a human from creature group 1 and the donor is a dragon from creature group 3, there is a 20% chance of miscasting the spell. (3 -1 = 2. 2 x 10 = 20%)

Ribcage

This complex skeletal formation keeps vital internal organs in place while simultaneously protecting them against injury. Directly affixed to the spinal cord, the ribcage resembles a bony, cylindrical cage that connects again at the sternum or breastbone. Symbiotic surgeons always cut the bone away from the donor's spinal cord before implanting it in the new host.

Natural armor bonus: A transplanted rib cage provides the recipient with a natural armor bonus of one-quarter of the donor's natural armor bonus.

Skin

Skin is basically defined as the outer membrane of any living organism whether it is the common epidermis of a humanoid, or the rigid scales of a dragon. Symbiotic surgeons only transplant skin onto the recipient's upper torso as smaller quantities produce no beneficial effects.

Natural armor bonus: Transplanted skin grants the host a natural armor bonus of one-quarter of the donor's natural armor bonus.

Special: If the donor benefits from any type of energy resistance with the exception of sonic energy, the host it also resistant to the same types of energy albeit at one-quarter of its original strength. Therefore, if the donor possesses cold and fire resistance/10, the host receives cold and fire resistance/2. In addition, if the skin possesses an additional extraordinary ability, such as the capability of secreting a slippery liquid, the recipient does not gain the benefits of this ability unless the symbiotic surgeon performs a separate surgery to activate the organ or gland responsible for the production of this substance. The previous section, bodily organs describes this process in greater detail.

Conclusion

While the preceding scenarios and examples attempt to touch upon every possible situation, exceptions undoubtedly exist. In most cases, the application of common sense is usually sufficient to resolve any differences; however as always, ultimate authority resides with the GM. When in doubt, it is best to err on the side of maintaining game balance, even at the expense of upsetting an insistent player.

Chapter 12: The Belly of the Beasts

"Wildwood's ruins hold many secrets best left undiscovered."

-- A pathfinder to a group of greedy explorers

The Belly of the Beasts is an Oathbound adventure designed for four to five 11th level characters; however it can be scaled in either direction to accommodate stronger or weaker parties. Characters participating in the adventure can hail from any of the Forge's seven domains or even from another world. It is not necessary for any of the characters to have participated in the previous Oathbound adventures, although the adventure does provide linkage to some of the events that transpired in *Goddust*, the preceding scenario that appeared in the campaign sourcebook, *Mysteries of Arena*.

Adventure Background

Crumbling edifices and forsaken structures litter the sprawling landscape of Wildwood, providing silent testimony to the existence of the ruined civilization's long dead inhabitants. Although society succumbed to the onslaught of vicious predators and rampant vegetation, terrible secrets and powerful magic remain hidden within the shattered walls beckoning brave souls to unearth these forgotten mysteries and potent artifacts from their rocky graves. The bulk of these intrepid explorers sadly die in the attempt as nature steadily incorporates the dilapidated buildings into its grand design replacing stone roofs with mounds of green moss and support beams with twisting vines. Within a few years after its construction, the formerly cosmopolitan metropolis is virtually indistinguishable from the pervasive greenery dominating the terrain.

As a result, fortune hunters prefer pouncing on these elusive opportunities as soon as possible in an effort to plunder the ruins before other treasure seekers and the omnipotent forces of nature wrest their valued prizes from their grasp. Whenever rumors of a newly discovered locale reach the attentive ears of interested parties, the greedy residents of its few inhabited regions immediately spring into action, mobilizing their trusted band of followers before traversing into the savage woodlands in a quest for riches and glory. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of these fortuitous entrepreneurs are actually natives of other domains, particularly Penance, Arena and Eclipse, looking to exploit Wildwood's natural resources for commercial enterprises back home. In many respects, the exploration of ruined civilizations is an industry unto itself, not unlike more recognizable business endeavors such as fishing and logging.

On the surface, the destruction of the city of Tamurasott was no different than the decimation of countless other settlements fabricated by Wildwood's indifferent master for his personal amusement and alleged scientific inquiry. While somewhat more technologically advanced than the average specimen, the settlement's bewildered, humanoid occupants proved no match for the hordes of voracious beasts and carnivorous plants unleashed upon the startled populace as part of Haiel's twisted experiment. Yet, one of them survived and made his way to the border settlement of Penumbra where his fantastic tale spurred the avaricious imagination of several listeners, setting into motion the chain of events leading to the character's involvement in the sordid affair.

Adventure Synopsis

Within the hallowed confines of his citadel at the heart of a dormant volcano, the impassive lord of Wildwood scours the universe searching for exotic beasts to add to his expansive menagerie. However, mindless, bloodthirsty predators are not his only targets as Haiel also enjoys testing the mettle of braggadocios and entire societies deeming themselves above the laws of nature. The settlement of Tamurasott provides a fine example. Nestled amongst the foothills adjacent to a range of towering mountains, Tamurasott bore no resemblance to a typical frontier town. Its exquisite architecture displayed an exceptional knowledge of engineering as well as a keen eye for aesthetics. Opulent manor homes constructed from marble and other prized building materials replaced the ramshackle barracks often associated with a remote outpost while magnificently carved bronze sculptures and masterfully painted frescoes adorned the streets and exterior walls. Meanwhile, its sophisticated citizenry idled their days away in the pursuit of intellectual betterment, excelling in the study of the humanities and other liberal arts. Despite this haughty veneer, at its core Tamurasott was essentially a mining outpost, albeit one hiding several dark, well-kept secrets.

While its snobbish inhabitants spent much of their time honing their skills in the fine arts as well as the pursuit of trivial pastimes, an oppressed underclass of slaves endlessly toiled within the dank, claustrophobic tunnels and chambers of the nearby mines. Comprised largely of humanoids considered intellectually inferior to their cerebral masters, this makeshift labor force ceaselessly quarried valuable minerals and precious gems from the honeycomb of passageways and rooms beneath the surface. After retrieving the vital ores from the earth's tenacious grasp, they piled their treasures inside of a massive cavity several feet beneath an oddly shaped building reminiscent of a giant toadstool that stood in the center of the city. At the end of each day, the wondrous collection of geological treasures mysteriously vanished into thin air only to repeat the astounding cycle the following day.

Perhaps blinded by the condescending attitude and pervasive arrogance displayed by Tamurasott's obnoxious residents, Haiel remained blissfully unaware of the slaves' existence as well as the function of the enigmatic subterranean chamber

below the heart of the settlement. His disdain for the inhabitants provided ample motivation as he hurriedly constructed an exacting replica of the outpost without any knowledge of the structures' intended purpose or function. After two weeks of painstaking work, the blade of the green proudly completed his masterwork and then pulled roughly 1,500 cultured but disoriented humanoids into his primordial domain. Moments later, hungry packs of marauding beasts rampaged through the streets, transforming the slightly sloped cobblestone roads into roaring rivers of blood. None escaped the savage carnage except for one resourceful wizard who shockingly made his way through more than thirty miles of dangerous woodlands before arriving in the rough and tumble settlement of Penumbra.

His survival undoubtedly attested to his exceptional magical powers and his remarkable skill with a blade, yet these abilities did not compensate for the sheltered man's naivety. Thoroughly exhausted and beleaguered after his harrowing ordeal, the overly trusting refugee sought respite in one of the city's shady lodging establishments, only to pique the interest of a band of thieves in the employ of Dardan Neraggamos, a human merchant originally from Penance. Under the guise of nursing him back to health, the trio of brigands discreetly relieved the battered traveler of his worldly possessions as he spun an excruciatingly detailed but poetic account of Tamurasott's destruction and his escape. Initially, they feigned interest in his rambling tale as they picked his pockets clean; however one of his statements caused them to take notice. He claimed that his people devised a means of transporting massive quantities of non-living matter over vast distances utilizing a contraption that he called the telesponder. Intrigued by his astounding revelation, they interrogated him at length about the unique device, eventually learning that a working model stood in the center of the abandoned city now overrun by hordes of ravenous predators and deadly plants. After hearing this, they hustled the weary man out of the inn and back to their master's residence where he eagerly joined in the questioning of his unsuspecting mark. Realizing the tremendous business potential of this potent invention, the quartet gleaned as much technical information from him about the operation and function of the telesponder before killing him and disposing of his body in a shallow grave in the basement of his fortified abode. Through their efforts, they discovered that the telesponder is actually a large mushroom-shaped structure crafted from an amalgamation of several exotic substances such as beryllium, boron and tungsten that is powered by a living, non-sentient crystalline organism known as the Khall.

Unfortunately for Dardan, Penumbra is not renowned for the preservation of secrets. The stranger's tale soon reached the ears of Dardan's two staunchest rivals, Dammia Zolachar, a female elf native to the coniferous forest surrounding Penumbra and Wrog, a reclusive dover allegedly in the service of a distant warlord from Arena. The three competitors are now engaged in a feverish race to verify the foreigner's claim and to assert their economic dominance over their rivals. However, none of them is willing to risk their own necks to acquire such supremacy; therefore they seek adventurers to perform their dirty work for them.

Episode 1: The PC's arrive in Penumbra via several alternative means depending upon the adventure hook that the GM decides to use. There they meet with one of the three individuals hoping to attain possession of the telesponder, although they never specifically describe the nature of the potent artifact to the party. Of course, their employer's competitors also hold the same aspirations and have hired their own set of adventurers not only to venture to the ruined city of Tamurasott but also to discover their rivals' plans. Depending upon whom they are working for, the PC's partake in a potentially violent confrontation with one of their opponents.

Episode 2: After the preceding encounter, the PC's venture into the wilderness accompanied by a guide provided by their benefactor. They make their way through the coniferous forest outside of Penumbra and head south toward their intended destination; however their progress is quickly interrupted by the adventurers in the service of their remaining rival. After overcoming this obstacle, the PC's press forward, encountering several of the domain's unusual plants and natural hazards as well as one of the coniferous forest's most dangerous predators, a pack of marauding trolls.

Episode 3: The PC's arrive at the treacherous shores of the River Alluun, the most imposing natural barrier on their journey to Tamurasott. At the banks of the tumultuous waterway they face several options to cross the river. If they are still accompanied by Bala, their wild elf guide, he leads them to Thaddeus, the experienced captain of a small skiff. Otherwise, adventurers on their own must ford the perilous river through other means. Either way, the river's chief predator, the green dragon Loc lurks along the banks of the river, demanding a hefty toll as well as flattery in exchange for safe passage across the turbulent waterway. After negotiating the dangerous river and its owner, the PC's continue their trek towards Tamurasott running into several additional natural hazards along the way.

Episode 4: The PC's finally reach the ruined city of Tamurasott now overrun by dense vegetation and a pack of marauding werewolves under the command of their leader, Savragos. The vicious lycanthropes' appearance depends upon the circumstances surrounding the PC's appearance. Once they resolve the outcome of their encounter with Savragos and his band of werewolves, they discover the structure housing the telesponder. Utilizing whatever means at their disposal, the PC's gain access to the building and enter it.

Episode 5: Now inside of the building, they search through its oddly shaped hallways and chambers searching for the control panel of the strange device. Along the way, the PC's run into several dangerous traps before they eventually reach their intended destination, a large circular chamber highlighted by a tubular piece of glass containing an alien-looking crystalline being. The subsequent events depend

entirely upon the party's actions. If they manage to activate the telesponder, the building becomes unstable as the telesponder has transported a massive quantity of its foundation to another location. In addition, the disturbance also notifies Haiel to the device's true purpose and its potentially devastating effects on the local wilderness. On the other hand, the PC's can simply return to Penumbra and inform their employer that they located and secured Tamurasott while verifying the building's existence.

Preparation

It is essential that the GM carefully read the adventure in its entirety before attempting to run the scenario. The story's potential outcome is heavily dependent upon the motives and demeanor of the PC's employer. The first two episodes of the adventure are largely event driven, whereas the last three episodes are predominately location-based encounters. The GM must be familiar with the rival parties assembled by their benefactor's competitors in order to successfully develop and adjudicate the confrontations with these foes in episodes 1 and 2. These conflicts give the characters vital clues as to the true nature of their mission in addition to providing valuable insight into their employer's goals and outlook. Although the composition of each of these groups is identical, each possesses a different leader that serves as the driving force behind the players' interaction with their adversaries. It is also important for the GM to fully read and understand the background information provided for PC's by their guide, Bala. Although the final three episodes of the adventure are primarily location-based, the scenario's conclusion depends exclusively on the characters' and their employer's actions; therefore it is also important to read this section prior to beginning the adventure.

As with previous Oathbound products, all NPC's, monsters and item statistics appear in an abbreviated form at the end of each encounter, while full statistics are provided in alphabetical order at the end of the chapter. This section also describes the major NPC's personalities and motivations as well as providing additional information about the individual if the GM wishes to use any of them in the future. Furthermore, *The Belly of the Beasts* incorporates creatures, items and natural hazards found in the previous Oathbound sourcebooks as well as world-neutral sourcebooks including *Into the Green* and *Minions*. Although these resources bestow useful background information and additional details, they are not required to run the adventure. Text appearing in shaded boxes is designated as player information that can be read aloud, paraphrased or handed out to the players whenever appropriate.

Scaling the Adventure

The Belly of the Beasts possesses an equal mix of event-based and location-based encounters that can easily be adjusted for stronger and weaker parties with 11th level serving as the average. In most instances, it is not advisable for the GM to change the statistics for specific NPC's except as noted in the subsequent section. Increasing or reducing the number of monsters and the severity of several hazards provides the best means of redressing any imbalance issues that present themselves. The following information gives some guidance on adjusting the opposition's strength to accommodate adventuring parties falling outside of the recommended character levels.

Episode 1: An Intriguing Proposition

Foes Revealed: The GM can reduce the number of underlings for weaker parties, while increasing the number of foes provides an appropriate remedy for stronger parties. Alternatively, the GM can add a lieutenant one level below the group's leader to provide an additional challenge for exceptionally powerful player characters.

Episode 2: Into the Woods

Under Attack: The suggestions provided in the preceding section are highly effective for scaling this encounter.

Hunting Party: Adding or subtracting the number of trolls comprising the hunting party is the best means of adjusting this confrontation.

Episode 3: River Alluun

Loc's Lair: Because the green dragon, Loc is a single individual, the GM must adjust the malevolent reptile's age category in accordance with the player characters' levels.

Episode 4: Tamurasott

Floating Gazebo: Utilize the methods described in the preceding sections, Foes Revealed and Ambush to adjust this encounter.

Adventure Hooks

It is presumed that the PC's have participated in one or more of the adventures presented in the previous Oathbound sourcebooks; however the adventure hooks that appear here can accommodate newcomers to the Forge as well. With this in mind, the adventure hooks are written in a relatively generic fashion, enabling the GM to easily make changes according to his specific needs. Irrespective of any alterations, *The Belly of the Beasts*' events and storyline basically remain the same.

Agents of a Bloodlord

At the request of Dardan Neraggamos, one of Penance's bloodlords solicits the PC's assistance in this matter. This option works best if the party is based in Penance and has witnessed the events that transpired in the adventures, *Dark Welcomes*, *Ascension Day* and/or *Black on Black*. If this is the case, Lord Belus sends the player characters to the distant settlement of Penumbra in northern Wildwood. Otherwise, the GM can utilize any other bloodlord familiar to the player characters. The GM should reveal very little about the purpose of the mission, only stating that the party is to meet with Dardan who will then explain their purpose.

On the Brotherhood's Trail

News reaches the war ravaged sands of Arena that the Brotherhood of Dust is regrouping its forces in the feral domain of Wildwood. Obviously, this hook is best used if the player characters participated in the adventure *Goddust* that appears in the preceding Oathbound sourcebook, *Mysteries of Arena.* The urgent message leads the player characters to Wrog, one of the competitors in the race for the telesponder. Once again, the exact details must remain vague as Wrog's warlord master in Arena fabricated this tale to solicit the player character's assistance in securing the telesponder.

The Disappearance

A close associate of Dammia Zolachar is advertising a reward for the safe return of the mysterious stranger that began this entire cycle of events. This adventure hook is best utilized for characters native to Wildwood as well as newcomers to the Forge. Naturally, Dammia's underling puts the player characters in touch with his employer who claims that brigands in service to an unknown master kidnapped him and are holding him hostage in a ruined city south of Penumbra.

Survival

The GM can introduce this adventure hook to bring characters into the Forge. Preferably, Haiel pulls the party into his feral domain along with hundreds of other individuals as part of one of his grand experiments. The PC's flee through the wilderness, hacking a few predators and taking a beating along the way before stumbling into a group of hunters. The new allies nurse them back to health and then tell the grateful adventurers of a potential business opportunity for them in the nearby settlement of Penumbra. The GM can direct the characters to one of the three rivals seeking the telesponder.

Episode 1: An Intriguing Proposition

A tangled web of lies and deceit draws the player characters into the service of one of Penumbra's three wealthiest citizens and into the midst of a bitter rivalry. However, they are not alone as the agents in the employ of their competitors are also aware of their presence. After receiving their instructions, the PC's prepare to depart from the settlement and head into the wilderness; however not before one of their foes confronts them in an effort to prevent them from carrying out their mission or glean valuable information from them.

The Mission Revealed

Regardless of the adventure hook used to draw the characters into this devious intrigue, the adventure begins with a meeting between the PC's and their prospective employer. Irrespective of the individual hiring them, the following text provides a good description of Penumbra's environs as well as the residence of their potential benefactor.

In contrast to the pristine beauty of the surrounding wilderness, the city of Penumbra is a stark example of urban squalor at its very worst. The repulsive stench of poverty wafts through the congested, anarchic streets of dilapidated buildings and makeshift shanties. Its citizenry fares no better as the huddled humanoid residents wear little more than dusty rags and an implacable grim expression on their weathered faces. Mischievous urchins and seasoned cutthroats openly roam the thoroughfares in search of marks to rob or swindle. Amidst this backdrop of deprivation and neglect stands a large but formidable residence seemingly carved from a single block of dark gray stone. The ominous-looking home possesses numerous windows; however the stone lattices built into their frames deter bold thieves from using them to infiltrate the structure. In addition to the preceding security measure, a massive wall nearly twenty feet high surrounds the abode while a retinue of six well armed men mans the only visible access point, a wrought iron gate. The suspicious soldiers keep a wary eye on all those passing within close proximity to the property.

Naturally, the guards are aware of the impending arrival of adventurers in accordance with their master's wishes; therefore they do not give the PC's a difficult time as long as the PC's are forthright about their contact person or the intended nature of their mission. If the characters are vague and outwardly deceptive, the captain of the guards spends several minutes asking probing questions about their purported business within the residence as well as detailed background information about them. After soliciting a satisfactory response from the party, two of the soldiers lead them past the front gate and into the structure, escorting them down a magnificently decorated hallway into an audience chamber where their prospective employer is waiting to greet them.

A pair of guards leads you past the imposing gate and up to a reinforced wooden door. They fumble through a ring of keys before inserting the correct one into the intricate lock on the entrance. The door flings open, and two soldiers beckon you to follow them down a long, magnificent corridor. Ornate paintings and sculptures apparently culled from numerous worlds line the walls of the passageway, belying the obvious wealth of the building's patron. After processing forty feet down the hallway, you arrive at a bronze door that they hurriedly open. Before you is an impressive audience chamber adorned with gigantic tapestries and exquisite

mahogany furniture. Two servants stand at the base of a dais where the apparent owner of the residence sits in an ebony throne.

The individual seated atop the throne depends upon the adventure hook that the GM is using. The following sections provide an appropriate description for each of the three rivals as well as explaining their demeanor and stated purpose for acquiring the telesponder.

Dardan Keraggamos

The GM may read or paraphrase the following text to provide a physical description of the cunning humanoid merchant.

A middle aged human male with piercing blue eyes, an aquiline nose and a full head of straight gray hair occupies the magnificently crafted seat. Clad in an opulent royal blue robe trimmed with ermine fur, the obviously wealthy individual wearing a platinum ring on each hand emits an unmistakable aura of nobility and sophistication. In response to your heralded arrival, the stately gentleman slowly rises from his chair and gingerly bows in your direction. He deliberately descends from his perch and strides out to warmly greet you, outstretching his bejeweled hand as he approaches.

Dardan begins his repartee with the party by making small talk about the city of Penance, describing his past experiences within the city while gauging the characters' knowledge of Penance in an effort to prove their statements. During the conversation, Dardan specifically asks about the health and status of the bloodlord that sent the PC's to Penumbra. (If the characters participated in any of the preceding Oathbound adventures relating to Penance, i.e. *Dark Welcomes, Ascension Day* or *Black on Black*, they should describe what happened in the preceding scenario.) After a few minutes of this exchange, Dardan moves forward to the business at hand, asking the characters to take a seat at a nearby table before explaining the nature of their mission. After providing them with suitable refreshments, the attentive host explains their mission. The subsequent text may be read aloud to the players or paraphrased; however the GM must exercise caution by maintaining the basic gist of Dardan's statements.

"I am pleased that our common friend has sent you to Penumbra to partake in this perilous but extremely important mission. As you know, longevity in Penance depends exclusively upon one's ability to maintain economic and political supremacy over your adversaries. It is for this reason that you have been sent to aid me. Only a few days ago, a rasher exploring the forests thirty miles south of here stumbled upon a remarkable discovery, a previously unknown ruined civilization. Before a rampaging horde of savage beasts drove him off, the wily explorer located what he believed was a repository for the society's vast riches. To the best of his knowledge, the structure appeared intact and abandoned. There is no telling what treasures lay within the building; however our common friend has taken a keen interest in the contents of this mysterious building not only for its material riches but also for the prestige of laying claim to this otherworldly cache. Therefore, I need you to venture to this ruined city and gain access to this structure. According to his testimony, the building resembles a giant mushroom. Yet, I must warn you that the fellow that described this tale inexplicably vanished shortly after his appearance. I fear that he fell into disreputable hands, and that the individuals behind his probable abduction are also en route to the distant locale. To speed you along on your journey, I am providing you with the services of my finest guide, Bala. No one knows the area better than he. Once you have thoroughly searched the building, use this (see below) *to return to my humble abode and describe your findings. For your troubles, you may keep any magical items that interest you."*

Dardan hands the party's cleric or druid a scroll containing the spell *word of recall* attuned to bring the characters back to Dardan's audience chamber. Dardan feigns ignorance if the party requests elaboration on any of the information that he provided, especially as it concerns the fate of the missing stranger. If the characters detect deception on his part through the usage of magical abilities or Sense Motive checks, Dardan pulls them aside and explains that no one is above suspicion even within his own retinue of servants. As a result, he must withhold some information while he remains within their presence. (Unfortunately for Dardan, this statement is entirely true.) Before the party departs for the wilderness, provide them with the description of Bala that appears at the end of this section.

Wrog

The GM may read or paraphrase the following text to provide a physical description of the battle-scarred dover warrior.

A middle-aged dover bearing numerous scars across this hardened face occupies the elevated chair. His rippling muscles penetrate the frayed edges of the battered suit of chain mail armor draped across this barrel-shaped chest and arms. Upon seeing you enter the room, the mighty dover rises to his feet and slams his massive arm against his chest, releasing a primordial and terrifying battle cry. After his spontaneous utterance, the chiseled warrior slowly lumbers toward you before greeting you with a military salute.

Wrog obviously lacks charm and subtlety, yet he knows how to forge camaraderie amongst soldiers. He immediately gravitates towards the warriors in the party, briefly sharing glorious tales from past battles and recollections from his time in Arena. After spending a few minutes reminiscing about his past, Wrog turns his focus to the matter at hand, inviting the party to enjoy a mug full of the finest ale at his expense while he discusses the purpose of their mission. The subsequent text may be read aloud to the players or paraphrased; however the GM must be careful not to alter the context of Wrog's statements.

"My old friends in Arena tell me that you are hot on the heels of the Brotherhood of Dust. You may not be aware that the vile substance is sometimes attainable in the nefarious black markets of Penumbra. However, operating this type of business within Penumbra is extremely dangerous because of the interest it attracts from rivals.

As a result, I have learned from reliable sources that the Brotherhood now occupies the ruins of a failed civilization thirty miles south of here. They inhabit a strange building shaped like a massive toadstool. I do not know if they have recruited anyone else to their cause within the immediate vicinity of the ruins, but I can tell you with some certainty that their agents are present within Penumbra and that they will stop at nothing to prevent you from destroying their headquarters. Because you are unfamiliar with the lay of the land, my best guide, Bala, shall accompany you on this difficult trek through the wilderness. Feel free to keep the spoils of war that you accumulate along the way; however destroy any caches of goddust that you encounter."

Wrog utilizes his lack of social graces to his best advantage, keeping the subsequent conversation as short as possible by providing ambiguous answers and frequently changing the subject to recitations of his valorous exploits on the crimson sands of Arena. Fortunately for Wrog he can afford such luxuries since the *ring of mind shielding* that he wears makes him immune to most magical efforts to discern the veracity of his tale. If the party utilizes Sense Motive checks to gauge their employer's true goals, Wrog explains that he is acting in accordance with his warlord's instructions, and that he is not privy to the source of his master's information. Before the party departs for the wilderness, provide them with the description of Bala that appears at the end of this section.

Dammia Zolachar

The GM may read or paraphrase the following text to provide a physical description of the alluring but deceitful female elf.

A surprisingly tall, statuesque pale-skinned female elf with flowing black hair pulled back around her pointed ears demurely rests upon the oversized chair. She wears a luxurious, loose-fitting silk gown that gently wraps around her slender figure along with a sparkling silver necklace holding a diamond studded pendant. Upon seeing you enter the room she flashes a disarming smile and daintily rises to her feet. She walks toward you, seemingly gliding across the chamber's floor as if she were levitating a few inches above the ground.

Dammia's captivating beauty and elf heritage is often enough to allay the fears and suspicions of even the most cautious adventurers. Dammia basks in the glow of her radiant appearance, openly flirting with the party's attractive male humanoids without inciting jealousy amongst their female companions. Before discussing the mission and the reward, she graciously invites her guests to join her for a snack of elven bread and wine. After exchanging some pleasantries with the adventurers, she begins to discuss the business at hand. The subsequent text may be read aloud to the players or paraphrased; however the GM must make a concerted effort to maintain the outward sincerity of Dammia's imploration.

"My spirit abounds with joy that such worthy and noble (gentlemen and/or ladies) have responded to my impassioned request for assistance. My heart is troubled that despite so much good in our world, the allure of evil and avarice still holds sway over the souls of the easily corruptible. A few days ago, an envoy from the renowned elven settlement of Vertumnos arrived in Penumbra and sadly fell into the hands of several disreputable individuals. Unbeknownst to his captors, the courier carried an important message for me from Sadranial, Vertumnos' queen. (At this time, characters can make a Knowledge (local) (Wildwood) check (DC 10) to obtain at least some basic information about the elf city of Vertumnos described in Chapter 4.) *Acting at the behest of their employer, these brigands abducted the diplomat and after robbing him of his worldly possessions, my sources learned that his kidnappers imprisoned him in the crumbling ruins of an abandoned city thirty miles south of here. You must make haste and rescue him from the clutches of these misguided thieves. To accomplish this task, I am sending my trusted guide, Bala to accompany you. Go quickly for I fear that his life is in tremendous danger. For your expeditious efforts, I am offering you 2,500 gold pieces as an advance with the balance to be paid upon his safe return to Penumbra. Of course, you may keep any valuable that you come across during your journey. Farewell and let fortune smile upon you."*

Based upon the party's reaction to Dammia, the PC's reward should fall somewhere in the range of 7,500 to 15,000 gold pieces subject to negotiations between her and the player characters. She has no intention of paying the remaining balance; therefore she is willing to acquiesce to the party's demands as they do not appear to make her look weak or desperate. Dammia is an accomplished sorceress; therefore she uses her repertoire of spells to conceal her true intentions from any divination magic employed by the player characters. If the party detects any hint of deception, Dammia claims that she must keep the nature of the mission a close kept secret for reasons that she can not disclose to anyone outside of her inner circle.

Bala

The GM may read or paraphrase the following text to provide a physical description of the feral-looking wild elf.

A supple suit of olive-colored leather armor wraps around the wiry frame of a dark brown skinned elf with jet black hair. An expertly crafted longbow is slung over his shoulder along with a quiver bearing forty arrows while a pair of leather whips hangs from his sides. Even when casually walking, the lithe elf moves with the agility and grace of a sinewy cat.

Bala possesses the same combat statistics regardless of his employer; however his demeanor and actions differ accordingly. (Bala's combat statistics appear at the end of the adventure along with those of his potential employers.) The GM must carefully read the subsequent entry describing Bala's motivations and role in the adventure prior to beginning the journey into the wilderness.

Dardan Neraggamos: As part of a deliberate effort to foster trust between him and the party, Dardan has told Bala nothing about his true intentions. As a result, Bala is extremely helpful, even lending a hand in combat if absolutely needed. Bala even describes the ecological features as well as history of the region

in great detail if the PC's request further information about the area.

Wrog: Wrog carefully instructs Bala to maintain his distance from the PC's, speaking to them as little as possible without arousing their suspicions. Bala behaves as an aloof barbarian, even feigning an inability to speak Common if the party persists in asking him questions. However, Bala discreetly leaves a discernable trail so that Wrog can easily follow the group's progress from a safe distance. (Characters directly observing Bala can make a Spot check opposed by Bala's Sleight of Hand check to determine what he is doing. PC's not keeping a close eye on Bala inadvertently notice what he is doing with a successful Spot check (DC 30). He does not aid the party in combat regardless of the circumstances.

Dammia Zolachar: Acting on the orders of his lover, Bala is a pleasant traveling companion, although he repeatedly insists that time is of the essence. Bala willingly fights if the party requires his assistance; however he generally refrains from engaging in battle unless his abstention from combat arouses distrust amongst the party. He is fully aware of Dammia's intentions; however to avoid getting caught in a lie, he gives vague answers to any questions about her or his relationship to her.

Inquiries & Preparations

While wandering through the streets of Penumbra in search of supplies and perhaps information, the party quickly learns that they are not the only ones attempting to fulfill their mission. Adventurers in the employ of their benefactor's rivals are also hot on the trail of the ruined civilization deep in the coniferous forest of northern Wildwood. If the characters decide to embark on this course of action, the characters may frequent one or more of the following establishments to stock up on supplies and obtain additional information from the local inhabitants. Obviously, the party does not attract the interest of adventurers in the service of their own employer; therefore these references can simply be ignored or substituted if the GM feels that the situation warrants such an action.

The Dark Passage Inn and Tavern: Generally considered the unofficial headquarters of all aspects of commerce with Eclipse, the seedy business caters predominately to thieves and merchants hailing from the dark domain. Characters seeking information about the trade of goddust receive a +4 circumstance bonus to their Gather Information check; however their inquiries also results in a later encounter with Wrog's mercenaries.

The Distant Pedestal: Natives of Penance gravitate towards this upscale bar and restaurant along the outskirts of the city. News from the far off domain flows freely, as traveling entrepreneurs and even musicians from Israfel's realm are frequent visitors. Characters seeking information about Dardan's activities and background in this locale receive a +4 circumstance bonus to their Gather Information check. Unfortunately, their questions also arouse the interest of the adventuring band in the employ of the wily merchant from Penance.

Wilds: Explorers and natives of the surrounding woodlands comprise the vast majority of this rustic inn/tavern/trading post's rough and tumble patrons. The clientele consists largely of elf and dover rangers and druids. Wilds is renowned for its extensive collection of exotic alcoholic beverages and unusual game dishes. Characters trying to learn more about the ruined civilization receive a +4 circumstance bonus to their Gather Information check. Their inquisitiveness also garners the attention of one of their competitor's adventurers.

House of Crux: Although this four-story building appears to be nothing more than an ordinary, run-down hotel, the House of Crux is actually the city's raucous brothel. The sleazy bordello serves all social and economic classes, and it is renowned as a hotbed for thievery and confidence schemes. Dammia actually is a clandestine part owner of the business; therefore character seeking information about her gain a +4 circumstance bonus to their Gather Information check; however their actions also attract the interest of the adventurers in her service.

Shops: Like any other large city, Penumbra boasts an eclectic but extensive collection of shops and warehouses catering to virtually every need. Prices for organic commodities range on the low side, whereas prices for manufactured goods are double and sometimes triple their cost in a more cosmopolitan marketplace such as Penance. Magical items are extremely rare, but available if the party wants to spend an enormous amount of time and money to find and purchase them. The inventory consists predominately of druidic potions and weapons, armor, rings and miscellaneous items with a market price less than 10,000 gold pieces. As always, the GM exercises the ultimate authority in determining whether a particular item is in stock or unavailable. Although the merchants manning the numerous booths and storefronts are privy to a bevy of information, the omnipresence of organized bands of thieves and extortionists make them extremely reluctant to talk to strangers regardless of the situation. As a result, characters trying to glean information from the traders suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to their Gather Information check and also attract the interest of one of their competitor's agents.

Knowledge Learned

If the PC's decide to ask questions about their potential rivals and the nature of their mission, they obtain the following information based upon the results of their Gather Information checks. Naturally, the GM should only provide the information pertinent to the player character's line of questioning; therefore if they are making inquiries about Dammia and their Gather Information check exceeds DC 10, they obtain information only about Dammia.

DC 10: Dammia, Wrog and Dardan are among the city's wealthiest and most influential individuals. It

is believed that they are the silent owners of a number of businesses scattered throughout the city, and that they have ties to important persons in other domains.

DC 15: Dammia owns an interest in the House of Crux, while Dardan and Wrog have numerous friends and allies at the Distant Pedestal and the Dark Passages Inn and Tavern respectively.

DC 20: Dammia, Wrog and Dardan are searching for adventurers to find a mysterious ruined civilization south of the city. It is said that Dammia is offering a monetary reward, while her counterparts are hiring foreign mercenaries from their native lands. (Wrog hails from Arena, while Dardan is from Penance.)

DC 25: Some people recall hearing about a mysterious stranger that came to town only a few days ago. According to their accounts, the visitor fell under the influence of several local thugs before inexplicably disappearing. No one saw him leave the city; therefore it is believed that he is being held captive or buried somewhere in Penumbra.

DC 30: The appearance of these ruins is a relatively recent event. It is well known that a band of werewolves claims the area as part of their hunting grounds.

The GM should feel free to add any additional information that he deems appropriate to the situation; however he can not reveal the motives of the PC's competitors or fuel the PC's suspicions about their employer. In addition, Bala's motives and actions undoubtedly influence the player characters' decision to pursue additional investigation or spend a tremendous amount of time procuring provisions within Penumbra.

Foes Revealed

EL 12

Depending upon the party's actions in the preceding section, they may draw the attention of one of the adventuring groups in the service of one of their employer's rivals. Since this encounter is exclusively event-driven the GM is free to improvise the setting and circumstances leading up to this verbal and possibly physical exchange; however the confrontation must occur within Penumbra. This portion of the adventure is designed to plant the seeds of doubt within the PC's minds regarding the nature of their stated mission as well as test their ability to interact with their opposition without simply deferring to a violent solution. It is also important to note that while the leadership of each band of adventurers differs, their henchmen are basically the same. The subsequent sections provide a description and information about the leader of each group. Naturally, the player characters take the place of the leader and underlings normally working for their employer.

Marrallo Dubois (Leader of Dardan's Adventurers)

Like his employer, Marrallo hails from the city of Penance; however the glib merchant's extensive travels throughout the forests neighboring the massive metropolis gave him the wilderness survival skills that Dardan sorely lacks. Devilishly handsome and amazingly articulate, Marrallo bears the appearance and sophistication of an aristocratic gentleman. To reinforce this desired impression, he is typically attired in expensive clothing along with wearing several obviously expensive pieces of jewelry. The GM may read or paraphrase the following text to provide a physical description of the charming and dashing human male.

An aromatic scent heralds the arrival of a debonair, youthful, six-foot tall man with a wiry frame and flawless, ivory skin. His long, wavy, light brown hair gently hugs the contours of his chiseled face wonderfully accenting his high cheekbones and penetrating blue eyes. An exquisite, silk cloak with sable trim daintily hangs from his muscular shoulders, providing a perfect accompaniment for his exquisitely tailored ruffled shirt and tight-fitting trousers. A gold necklace with a spherical platinum pendant hangs around his neck while two sparkling rings are visible on his hands. Four armed men wearing chain shirts and wielding a pair of shortswords stand a few feet behind him carefully watching your every move.

Actions: Consistent with his regal bearing and placid demeanor, Marrallo always maintains his composure in social situations. He desperately tries to avoid a physical confrontation within the city limits and simply wants to gauge the PC's motives and reasons for making inquiries about his benefactor. An astute negotiator, Marrallo realizes that he must sometimes provide information in order to get some information in return. As a result, Marrallo does reveal some of the following facts if he feels that the party amply compensated him either monetarily or by providing him with valuable and reliable information.

- The journey through the wilderness is fraught with peril. A terrifying beast patrols the shores of a nearby river, demanding tribute from anyone crossing to the other side.
- Although he is aware that goddust is traded within the city of Penumbra, he doubts that the Brotherhood of the Dust is hiding somewhere in the wilderness.
- Dammia's relationship with the elven communities of Wildwood is tenuous at best. The majority of her kin openly dislikes her, while the remainder merely tolerates her but still distrusts her.

Varak Azmorash (Leader of Wrog's Adventurers)

In contrast to Dardan's suave emissary, Varak is a crude and uncouth male faust with a quick temper and a total disregard for social graces and pleasantries. During his youth, soldiers in the service of Wrog's warlord captured the scrawny faust during an incursion into the jungle of southwestern Wildwood. Conscripted into the army, the bitter and resentful faust quickly honed his martial skills in an effort to survive. Through sheer determination, the vicious barbarian steadily rose through the ranks before he attained a coveted position as one of Wrog's lieutenants. When

his master left Arena for his new post in Penumbra, the homesick faust decided to return to his native land along with his superior officer. When the PC's first meet Varak, the GM may read or paraphrase the following text to provide a physical description of the brutish faust warrior.

Jet-black skin tightly wraps around the bony physique of a bestial and somewhat demonic looking humanoid with disproportionately elongated hands and feet, a slender but muscular upper torso and a head bearing a mouth full of dirty, sharp teeth, upright jackal-shaped ears and protrusive eye sockets. He wears nothing except for a weather beaten piece of leather that covers most of his lower torso, while he holds a blood-stained great club in his hands. Four armed men wearing chain shirts and wielding a pair of shortswords stand a few feet behind him carefully watching your every move.

Actions: Bereft of any subtlety or appreciation for tact, Varak immediately demands to know why the PC's are asking questions about his master or the failed civilization south of Penumbra. Although Wrog asked him to avoid combat within the settlement, Varak does everything he can to goad the player characters into a fight. Because Varak's attention is solely focused on provoking a conflict, crafty player characters can extract some useful information from him through deception or trickery. If they accomplish this feat, the enraged faust provides the subsequent information.

- The treasure(s) within the ruined civilization is capable of changing the fortunes of Wildwood forever.
- His master learned of the stranger and the failed civilization through one of Dardan's untrustworthy servants.
- Dammia and her guide Bala (if the PC's are working for Dammia) or Pellator (if the PC's are not working for Dammia) are lovers.

Pellator (Leader of Dammia's Adventurers)

Dammia's subdued elf lover represents the middle ground between Marrallo and Varak. Although he is fairly attractive and well spoken, he prefers to rely upon his outward sincerity and good nature to win the PC's trust rather than through his appearance and words. Yet beneath the innocent veneer lurks a master manipulator, a cagey but low-key confidence man capable of telling outlandish lies without batting an eyelash or cracking a smirk. It was this unique quality that sowed the seeds of his ten year affair with his enchanting elf mistress. When the PC's first meet Pellator, the GM may read or paraphrase the following text to provide a physical description of the sly male elf.

A palpable aura of grace and gentility emanates from the comely male elf with soft, pale skin, majestic strands of long black hair, pointed ears and a sinewy physique. A greenish-black linen cloak draped over his shoulders partially conceals an expertly crafted suit of chain mail and a pair of magnificent daggers dangling from scabbards affixed to his leather belt. Four armed men wearing chain shirts and wielding a pair of shortswords stand a few feet behind him carefully watching your every move.

Actions: Pellator's approach towards the player characters differs depending upon their employer. If the PC's are working for Dardan, Pellator's criticism of the merchant from Penance is subtle and veiled; although he continuously denies that he has any ill thoughts or words for his lover's rival despite continuing to do so. On the other hand, if the party is in the employ of Wrog, Pellator gently informs them of his tendency to overreact to situations and his lack of social graces. Of course, Pellator accomplishes the aforementioned tasks under the guise of trying to help the player characters by providing them with valuable insight that may save their lives. Pellator is more than willing to disparage Dammia's competitors whenever the opportunity arises; therefore he does provide the following information if the circumstances warrant it.

- Dardan is respected for his business savvy, but he is a consummate liar. Below every morsel of truth lies a mountain of deceit.
- Wrog is mentally unstable and delusional. He believes that he is still fighting on the desert sands of Arena, and he is more than willing to use force to get whatever he wants.

Their Henchmen

As stated previously, the henchmen in service to the three leaders are statistically the same, i.e. they are all 7th level human rangers with the same equipment and possessions. They act in accordance with their leaders' actions; therefore if their leader attacks the player characters, they follow suit.

Ranger henchmen (4): 54 hp each

Episode 2: Into the Woods

After receiving their instructions and perhaps engaging in several encounters within Penumbra, the player characters follow their guide Bala into the coniferous forest south of the settlement. Shortly after venturing into the wilderness, the player characters come under attack from one of their competitors. Once they fend off this challenge, the party continues deeper into the woodlands before crossing their path with a hunting party of hungry trolls searching for a meal. Along the way, the GM can add several natural hazards as well as spicing up the wilderness with unique plants and animals with unusual properties.

Under Attack

EL 12

After settling their affairs in Penumbra, the party heads out in search of the failed civilization. Ideally, this event and location-based encounter takes place in close proximity to Penumbra, typically no more than three miles away from the settlement.

The GM may use either of their competitors for this encounter, provided of course that they survived their previous meeting with the player characters in the city. Regardless of which individual the GM uses, the prelude to the engagement begins in the same fashion with the player characters taking an overland route that puts them into contact with one of their rivals also heading in the direction of the failed civilization.

Properly adjudicating this engagement requires preparation on the GM's part. Because the forest is relatively sparse near the city, there is no undergrowth or massive trees making it easier for the PC's to move through the woods as well as see and hear their prospective opponents. He must determine where the encounter is to take place and at what distance does one of the two parties notice the other's presence. Because of the pervasive foliage and background noise, the spotting distance is 3d6x10 feet while the Difficulty Class of all Listen checks increases by 2 for every ten feet that the sound travels. Furthermore, the lack of undergrowth allows creatures to make Move Silently checks while moving through this type of terrain. As the parties move toward one another, the GM and player characters must make Spot and Listen checks to pinpoint their adversary's precise location and then take appropriate action. When the player characters finally see their enemies, the GM can provide the descriptions from Episode 1 for each of the individual leaders and their henchmen. The Wilderness Adventures section in the *DMG* provides additional guidance regarding Spot and Listen checks in outdoor situations.



Unlike their engagement with the PC's in Penumbra, the enemy immediately attacks the player characters; however the opposition retreats if their leader falls in combat or if the unit suffers three or more casualties. The GM should utilize the pursuit rules described in Chapter 9 to adjudicate the chase through the wilderness if either party decides to flee. Opponents that elude the pursuing player characters return to Penumbra and maintain a very low profile until the situation completely unfolds. Captured henchmen are not privy to their master's plans; therefore they reveal no useful information. On the other hand, imprisoned leaders divulge all of the facts listed under their individual entries in the preceding episodes as well as any other information that the GM feels is appropriate to the situation.

Continuing the Journey

If the party survives the previous encounter, the GM can read or paraphrase the following text to describe the surrounding wilderness as they continue their journey toward Tamurasott.

As the last vestiges of civilization fade into the distance, the sights and sounds of the forest become more dominant and pervasive. Majestic coniferous trees reaching heights in excess of 150 feet rain down their spiny, green needles and sticky cones onto the forest floor. The monotonous drone of flying insects and the flutter of winged predators fills the air, although guttural mating calls and primordial screams frequently drown out the omnipresent background noise. An inescapable feeling of uneasiness grips you as you subconsciously feel the cold, remorseless glare of countless unseen hunters and beasts watching your every move from the security of their arboreal sanctuaries and concealed lairs.

Depending upon the party's strength, the GM may add additional random encounters including run-ins with indigenous monsters as well as some of the native plants, animals and natural hazards described in Chapter 3 of this sourcebook, in the Wilderness Adventures section of the *DMG* or those provided in *Into the Green*, also available from Bastion Press. If the GM opts to include such combats, it is recommended that the Encounter Level should be no more than three levels lower than the party's average character level. Player characters venturing through this area move at three-quarters their normal speed; hence a creature with a speed of 20 ft. can cover as distance of 12 miles over the course of a single day. (Consult the Adventuring chapter in the *Player's Handbook* for overland movement rates.)

Hunting Party

As they trek through the wilderness, the player characters trespass into the hunting grounds of a band of trolls searching for a fresh meal. The voracious giants attack without provocation, assaulting the

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player characters with reckless abandon. As with the preceding section, Under Attack, the GM must utilize the spotting distance described in that section as well as the usage of Spot and Listen checks to properly adjudicate the combat's resolution. When the party sees the hungry gang of predators, the GM can read or paraphrase the following text to describe the encounter.

Obviously driven by an insatiable hunger, a group of six slender but muscular 9-foot tall bipedal creatures with mottled green, wart-covered hide hurriedly lumbers through the forest in search of their next meal. Although they lack weapons, their disproportionately long arms culminate in powerful hands bearing wickedly sharp claws and their legs end in three-toed feet. Their heads appear to be shaped like a square with an oddly fashioned nose whose tip extends below their lower jaw and a scalp covered in a dense, knotted mat of writhing black hair.

Consumed entirely by their instinctual need to eat, the trolls fight to the death, placing their trust in their unusual regenerative properties. The trolls dwell roughly one mile west of the area; therefore an astute tracker can trace their path back to their abode with a successful Survival check (DC 12). The nest is little more than a poorly concealed, hollowed out trunk of a dying pine tree. Stuffed into its cavity is a sack containing 1,203 gold pieces, 6 100 gold piece pearls, three potions-*barkskin*, *cure moderate wounds* and *speak with plants*. Otherwise, the trolls only possessions are those described under their full entry in the appendix of this adventure.

Trolls (6): 69, 69, 67, 65, 65, 64 hp

Episode 3: River Alluun

The region surrounding the river Alluun is uneven, difficult to traverse, and filled with numerous creatures hostile to the characters. Steep hills line the river in most places, though there are areas flat enough to move through without having to resort to climbing. Though these regions require less effort to pass through, they are predictably frequented by bandits and other predatory creatures.

The hills lining the river are quite steep. Made of granite, the hills are a series of small peaks with switchback trails that lead up and down each side, often requiring actual mountain climbing to ascend to the top. Massive rock formations are piled atop one another, often leaving only narrow chimneys as the only readily apparent means of moving from one plateau to the next. As the party moves through the treacherous area, the going should be rough, requiring several Climb checks and potential encounters with the predatory aerial or mountainous creatures that call this rugged terrain home.

Between the dual chains of hills is the river bed, which lies at the center of a steep sided valley. The valley banks range from one-half to two miles from the bottom of the rocky hillsides to the river banks. At the valley's center is the turbulent river Alluun, whose extremely rapidly flowing waters have claimed numerous lives, and has resisted all previous attempts to bridge it.

To make the journey even more treacherous, the region is also the hunting grounds of the green dragon Loc. Loc's lair is a simple cave located at the opposite side of the river If the party chooses not to investigate this bluff, Loc spots the party while flying overhead and attacks them before they escape the perilous foothills and muddy banks surrounding his lair. The party should be made aware of the presence of Loc, either by spotting his powerful form flying in the distance, or through the ominous sound of the beating of leathery wings.

If Bala leads the way through the wilderness, he takes the shortest path from the outskirts of Penumbra towards the ruined city of Tamurasott. The trek is approximately seven miles from edge of the foothills on either side of the river. The subsequent events and/or encounters are not keyed to a particular location, but rather should be used by the GM to challenge the player characters along the way. If the GM wants to make the adventure more difficult, this section provides an excellent opportunity to stage additional run-ins with Wildwood's native denizens, while GMs scaling the adventure down for weaker parties can avoid one or more of the following encounters all together

Ambush

EL 12

This encounter may takes place in a relatively level region just before entering into the rocky foothills approaching the river. This is a relatively flat region, providing a popular point for creatures to pass to and from the river Alluun. It is also a popular location for creatures to ambush travelers passing through the area. This location is forested, with low hills to the north and the south.

When the party enters this area, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Ahead of you lies a rocky path, which is beginning to slope downward. To either side are forested hillsides. You can faintly hear the sound of rapidly running water in the distance.

Six asherake fighters wait under the cover of the foliage a mere sixty feet uphill from the party's current location. Three asherakes wait on each hillside. They draw their heavy crossbows and attack, catching the PCs by surprise unless they succeed at a Spot check (DC 20). The asherakes fire their crossbows during the first round of combat. They continue firing crossbows until the party members have closed upon their locations, at which time they drop their crossbows, draw their bastard swords, and take to the air.

Assuming that the party splits and attacks the asherakes on each side, they coalesce into a flock in mid-air over the central path, then swoop down towards whichever character appears to be the largest threat against them. Their strategy is to single out one character at a time, and direct all six of them against that character. If the party instead focuses all of their efforts on one side or the other, the asherakes on the side the PCs are attacking act as above while

the asherakes on the opposing side continue to fire their heavy crossbows at the party, focusing their attacks on the same opponent as the ones who have taken to the air.

If the battle goes well for the asherake, they are relentless in their attacks and refuse to stop until they have rendered each party member dead or unconscious. Once they have won the battle, they gather the party's valuables and leave the bodies. They are not necessarily interested in the death of the party members, though they certainly do not display remorse should their attacks prove lethal. If the battles fares poorly for them, and they either lose half their members or their hit points are dropped to an average of 10 hit points, they attempt to make a full flying retreat.

Asherake (6): hp 36, 38, 40, 40, 42, 48.

Once the aherakes are defeated, if the party searches the nearby area, they find a one-room hut nearly a mile away that served as a staging ground for the asherakes' raiding activities. Aside from the heaping piles of animal furs that they sleep on, the following treasure is located on the floor of the structure: *wand of bull's strength* (3) (Charges: 24, 28, 43) and 2,000 gp.

Safe Passage

Assuming that Bala still leads the party towards Tamurasott, the party is led to an area where a *major image* depicting a cluster of tightly packed trees, which has been made permanent hides the existence of a small cottage. This is the dwelling of Thaddeus, a human druid who has lived here for many years. Without the guidance of Bala, if the party wanders through this area, the illusion may be disbelieved as though it was cast by a 10th level wizard.

Thaddeus is a druid in his middle years with long gray streaked black hair and a beard that goes to the middle of his chest. He is a kind man, but secretive about his past and his connection to the various powers that sent the party on this quest. In truth, he too once served whichever master the PCs are working for, but he has long since retired. He is occasionally willing to ferry people still associated with his old boss across the river for the small fee of 2 gp. per person.

Assuming that the PCs are willing to pay the price he asks, he leads them to the river, where he activates his folding boat, turning it into a skiff. A long durable rope runs from one side of the river to the other. He uses this to pull the boat from one side of the rapidly moving river to the other. The journey goes without incident, safely depositing the PCs on the far side of the river.

The River Alluun

EL 12

When the party comes within sight of the river, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Before you the river rushes by. It appears to be nearly a thousand feet wide, and judging by the sound of the water as well as the swirls and eddies, it appears to be moving rapidly.

If the PCs decide to ford the river without a boat, they must make a series of successive Swim checks (DC 15). Failure results in getting caught up in the flow of water, which drags the affected character 1d20 feet downstream as well as subjecting him to the possibility of drowning (see the DMG). With a successful DC 15 Craft (shipmaking) check, the party can cobble together a rudimentary raft inside of 2d6 hours. If successful, the raft carries them across the river without incident. If the check fails, the raft appears to be soundly constructed, but falls apart 10d100 feet into the river, depositing the characters into the rapids.

Loc's Lair

EL 12

Near the peak of a large butte, which actually causes the river Alluun to re-route, is the lair of the adult green dragon Loc. Although the tree cover hides many of the distant features in Wildwood, the cave entrance to the lair is large enough that it can be seen from three miles away whenever there is a clearing large enough to allow for a clear view of the butte. Reaching the cave requires a mile and a half long hike. There are no trails leading to the cave where Loc makes his lair, but the slope is gradual enough that the PCs can ascend to its location at their full movement rate.

Loc spends a great deal of his time hunting and fighting off other predators who would invade his hunting grounds, but he returns here to eat his kills or when he acquires his treasure. He also maintains a close watch on his lair when he is away and is quick to return to it if he notices the PC's approaching.

The cave itself consists of a circular chamber, which is one hundred fifty feet in diameter. The cave entrance opens directly into the chamber, and there are no other rooms or paths within. When the PCs enter the room, read or paraphrase the following to the players

Before you is a large chamber that appears to have been naturally formed. The majority of the chamber is empty, though against the south wall are two piles of sparkling gold, gems, and items.

If Loc is here when the party enters, he attacks immediately to repel the invaders. If the GM chooses to have him on a hunting expedition when the party enters, he lands several hundred feet away from the cave entrance in hopes that the party will not hear his approach, and then moves quietly to the cave entrance, where he uses his breath weapon to maximum effect. His strategy is to draw the party out of the cave rather than try to fight them within where they would have the advantage. If successful, he takes to the air and attacks with his claw and bite attacks, or his weapons.

Treasure: Brown-green garnet (100 gp), freshwater pearl (11 gp), scroll of *magic weapon*, potion of *blur* (3), *lesser potion of restoration* (3), scroll of *detect secret doors*, potion of *endure elements*, potion of *protection from good*, 7,530 gp.

Loc: hp 230

Nkoll Territory

EL 13

The area surrounding the River Alluun has recently become the home of a small faction of wild nkoll. Unless the party is moving with extreme caution through this area, their scouts should have little difficulty spotting them from a distance. They then convey this information to a force of nkoll defenders, who attack the party in an effort to defend their territory.

Diplomacy has little effect with the nkoll. Even if they do not feel threatened by the party, they consider other races inferior and attempt to destroy them when they wander too close to their settlements. The nkoll attempt to discern which way the party is traveling and then hide from them in the foliage of any area they will pass through. Their initial strategy is to bite the party members, poisoning them, and then use their longswords to attack.

Wild Nkoll (12): hp 52, 53, 52, 54, 55, 57, 60, 61, 62, 62, 63, 65 (See Appendix D of this supplement)

Episode 4: Tamurasott

Tamurasott was a mining community from a world that is rich in both high magic and high technology. As a result, the population is extremely long lived since they were able to effectively deal with cancer, heart disease, and other diseases that are the bane of technological worlds with no magic. Likewise, their machinery includes powerful computers, advanced hydraulics, ray technology, and artificial propulsion. Despite these advances, the world Tamurasott was pulled from is deeply divided by cultural and philosophical differences.

What had once been highly organized nations had devolved into city states and protected territories over the course of several hundred years. Regions as small as a mere few square miles often went to war against one another over differences that often seemed trivial at best. The seats of power were normally reinforced by walls plated in projectile-resistant steel, powerful guns, missile batteries, and armies of highly trained soldiers who wielded both magic and technology to devastating effect.

Despite its outward appearance of savagery, city interiors are filled with feats of engineering and artistry. Buildings themselves are a work of art – beautiful to behold, and extremely functional. Statues and monuments line the streets denoting important individuals in regional history, deities, or simply artistic expressions. Parks, plazas, and other recreational facilities abound.

Before its inhabitants were pulled into the Forge, Tamurasott was a vital part of the kingdom to which it belonged. Nearby mines pulled precious metals from the earth and then transported them to Tamurasott, which was the nearest city. The majority of the ore was processed here and then transported to one of the three other major cities via the telesponder, which consists of a chamber where massive amounts of non-living material can be brought to be transported to another specified location. The device is a large building shaped similar to a mushroom which houses the chamber the goods are teleported from as well as massive capacitors and energy infusers, which reduce the materials to subatomic particles and "beam" it elsewhere.

This technology is extremely expensive and is possessed by only a handful of the most powerful kingdoms on the planet this originated from. It is considered by many to be the ultimate weapon because of its ability to instantly move any non-living object from one part of the world to another. Kingdoms with this technology are able to leverage peace with the threat of moving high-yield explosives from one point to another, causing damage to their enemies at will.

The inhabitants of Tamurasott were well prepared for the challenges present in their home world, but they were unprepared for Wildwood. To make matters worse, Haiel recreated the city to exacting detail, but decided not to bring over the city's defensive weaponry. When the creatures of the domain closed in, the only thing the inhabitants had to defend themselves with was their personal weapons and spells. While these were powerful, they only prolonged the suffering they faced, but did not prevent them from falling prey to the creatures here.

The city is now a silent testament to the heights the civilization had risen to, and the depths to which it may fall. The buildings remain intact, though the inhabitants have been reduced to desiccated remains. A marauding band of werewolves have taken up residence here, though they too are beginning to fall prey to the creatures of Wildwood. A savage pack of lyrmirs has moved into the city and find the houses and buildings to their liking, so they have begun the task of evicting the squatting werewolves.

As the party explores the city, feel free to place additional encounters in as desired. The party may encounter additional werewolves, lyrmirs, or other creatures native to Wildwood.

1. City Gates

EL 10

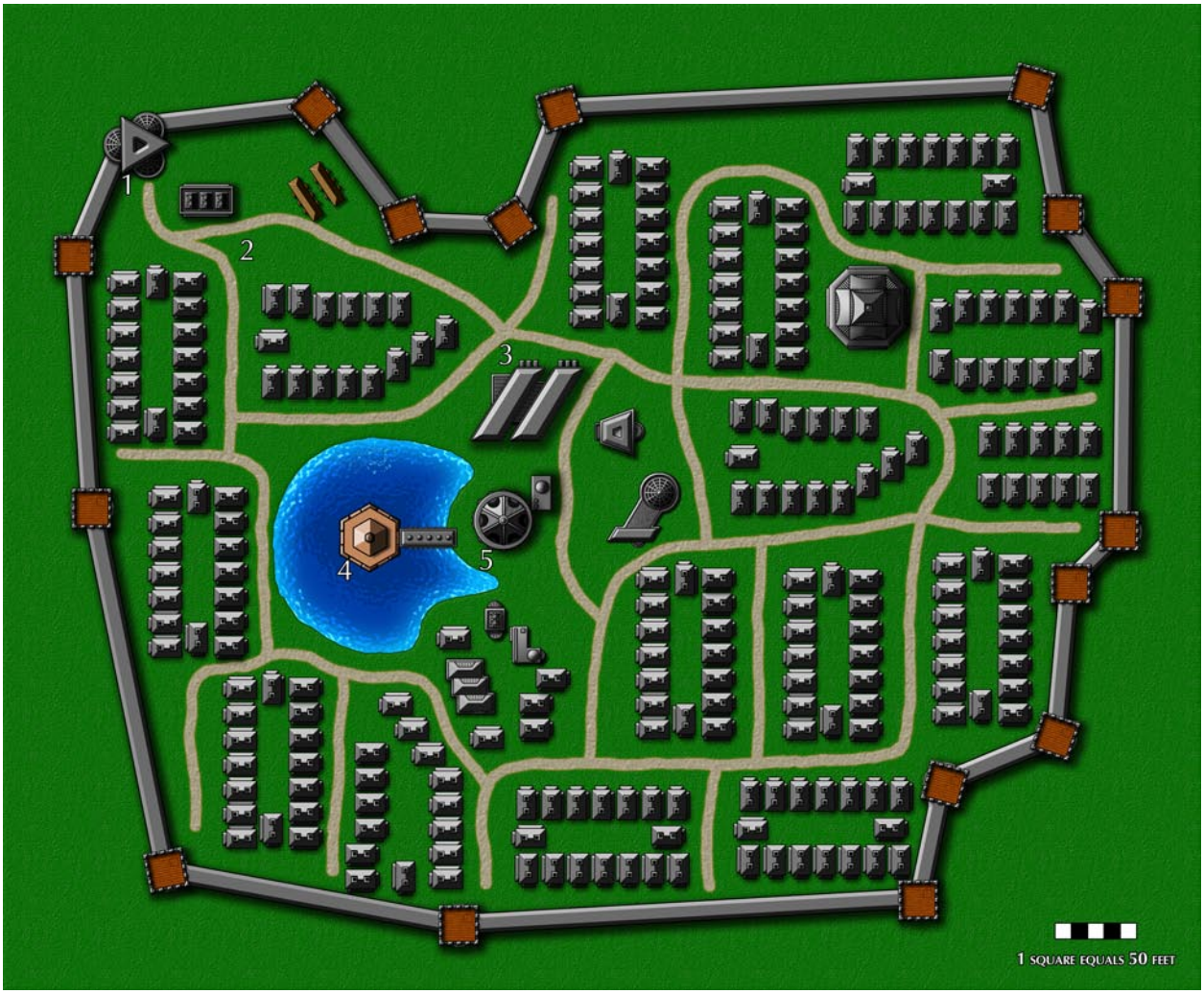
The PCs may attempt to scale the walls rather than going through the main gate, in which case they should face an assortment of monsters who are also trying to gain entrance in this way.

Tamurasott has a single gate which was once protected by armored soldiers, as well as a number of manned high-powered guns. Today, the gate stands open with nothing barring entrance other than a large group of werewolves.

When the party nears the area, read of paraphrase the following to the players:

Before you is an enormous steel plated gatehouse. The doors allowing entrance to the city stand slightly askew, allowing you to pass through them unfettered. Behind the doors you hear ominous feral growls.

Shortly after the creatures of Wildwood invaded Tamurasott, the werewolves moved in. Their initial entrance into the city was over the walls, as was that



of most of the other creatures that wreaked havoc upon the populace of the city, but shortly after securing their position the werewolves decided to open the main gate to allow more of their own kind in. Despite the weight of the doors, without power they merely needed to be pushed to open them. Doing this opened them to attacks from dangerous creatures that had previously been unable to fly or climb over the walls, but it also allowed them to move freely in and out of the city, transferring their plundered goods out of the city.

Just within the gates are a pack of twelve werewolves in hybrid form. When the party enters the area their strategy is simply to surround the party and hope to overwhelm them with sheer numbers. If their numbers are rapidly diminished, the survivors run to area 4 where they warn Savragos of the invaders.

Werewolves (standard) (12): hp 20, 22, 23, 24, 24, 25, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31

2. Lyrmir Pack

EL 11

This area is controlled by a lyrmir hunting pack that is quietly stalking the werewolves in Tamurasott. They are currently attempting to quietly ambush the guards at area 1, but if the party has already dealt with them, they quickly shift their focus to the party.

If possible the lyrmirs approach the party from all sides before attacking, hoping to catch the party by surprise. Upon entering combat they surround the party in an effort to flank their opponents. They avoid clustering together. They use their claws as their primary means of attack against the physically powerful members of the party, but they attempt to use their improved grab and swallow whole abilities to deal with the ones who are less physically powerful.

Lyrmir (4): hp 85, 95, 115, 120

3. The Solitary Defender

EL 10

When the party approaches this building, read or paraphrase the following to the party:

Before you stands a large statue depicting a powerful warrior. It appears to be made of clay, and is cracked, showing the signs of age and abuse.

This is a clay golem, one of five used to defend the city. The other four fell during the battle with the creatures of Wildwood. This one was severely beaten, but outlived the other inhabitants of the city. When Tamurasott had finally fallen, the golem returned to this position. The werewolves have avoided it, but if the party approaches within 50 feet of its location, it animates and attacks.

Clay Golem: hp 110, see the *MM*.

Map of Tamurasott by Jeff Visgaitis and Jason Rosenstark

4. Floating Gazebo

EL 12

Before the party reaches the bridge leading to this area, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Before you is a wooden bridge that sits on the water like a dock. Running down the center are a series of bronze statues, each depicting a different human subject. Each of the individuals has close-cropped hair and odd looking clothing which consists of button-up jackets, long flowing pants, and shoes. The most notable feature of their clothing, and in fact their general appearance, is their lack of character. Each statue has different features but otherwise might as well be modeled after the same individual.

On the other side of the bridge is a massive floating gazebo that appears to be made of metal lattice-work, with a high domed wooden roof.

In Tamurasott this structure was once used for gatherings, weddings, and other private celebrations. The statues along the bridge depict the previous rulers of this city, each of them dressed in their formal clothing, not entirely unlike business suits.

The gazebo is where Savragos has retreated in light of the new threat from the lyrmirs. He stands with two of his most trusted guards. He has become aware of the importance of the telesponder, though his initial attempts to enter have resulted in the deaths of two of his werewolves, so he is cautious about attempting to re-enter without researching its function further. He carries an identicard necessary for entrance into the building, which the PC's will need in order to secure the building and fulfill their objectives. Savragos is willing to speak with the party at first, but if the party begins asking about any knowledge he might have about the telesponder, the werewolf leader quickly begins to see them as a threat. In any event, no amount of diplomacy or coercion will convince Savragos to part with the identicard without a fight.

Assuming that the party and Savragos enter combat, the three lycanthropes wade into combat with little concern for their own well-being and immediately fly into a rage. If Savragos falls before the other guards, they interrupt combat to remove the identicard from his body before continuing with combat.

Savragos: hp 72

Werewolf Guards (2): hp 60, 65.

5. Telesponder Access

The telesponder is a circular building that appears similar to a toadstool from the outside. Although there are no entrances directly into the telesponder, there is an entrance into the access building. When the party nears this area, read or paraphrase the following to the players.

Before you is a circular metal building that is shaped similar to a mushroom. Connected to this building is a smaller one-story rectangular building. As you scout around the two structures, you see a pair of heavy metal doors on the northern end of the rectangular building. Next to the doors is a square panel with a small vertical slot just above a blinking red light.

This is the entrance of the telesponder, which currently stands unguarded. The party needs to slide the identicard from Savragos' body into the vertical slot in order to open the doors. The doors are made of an advanced metal alloy that cannot be broken by any magic item less powerful than a minor artifact. For all intents and purposes, they must have the identicard to gain access.

Episode 5: The Telesponder

The telesponder is one of the most important structures within Tamurasott. It has a backup power supply, which it fell back upon when the main power to the city was interrupted. It remains powered by the capacitors within and will remain so indefinitely due to the crystalline entity, which acts as a control mechanism, a power source, and a databank of knowledge. It was a creature created by the city's previous inhabitants. It has no will of its own, similar to modern computers, but it is a living entity.

In order for the party to gain access to room 5, the control room, and understand how to operate the device, the PCs need to visit each of the numbered rooms. Since it has been over a day since the device has been tended to, the automatic security systems have gone online and will attempt to destroy anything unable to enter the override.

This building should be depicted to the players as a modern facility. The floors are tiled, the walls are made of off-white painted drywall, and the ceiling is twelve feet above and textured. The doors are made of reinforced steel and require the use of an identicard to enter. Computer consoles sit in each room. These are advanced models and interact via voice communication. The party need only voice their desires and the computer will respond. Unlike the rest of the facility, however, the knowledge available in the computer consoles is not locked away or password protected. If the party asks the computer the right questions, they can learn how to operate the telesponder without possessing any special skills.

1. Entrance

EL 7

When the party enters this room, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The double-doors open up into a large chamber that is dimly lit by orange lights within the ceiling. Throughout this room are desks with chairs in front of them and rectangular consoles on top. Against the far wall you can see a red light that appears to be flashing.

The red flashing light indicates that the door has been opened while the building is locked down in security mode. The access code 22514 must be spoken in order to deactivate the trap. Since there is no way to know this without the prior use of divination spells, the only other way to disarm this trap is to plug the holes that flood the room with acidic gas.

The computers on the desks are resistant to the gas, and can be accessed by voice command. This room once functioned as the security station for the building. With these consoles, the PCs can instruct it to display a holographic image of the area surrounding the building, including any creatures that may be waiting out there. They may also instruct the computer to turn the view to the interior rooms within the building as well.

***Acid Fog* Trap:** CR 7; magic device; proximity trigger *(alarm);* automatic reset; spell effect (*acid fog,* 11th-level wizard, 2d6/round acid for 11 rounds); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31. *Cost:* 33,000 gp, 2,640 XP.

2. Resource Room

EL 3

This room was once used as a learning resource room by the people who controlled the telesponder. When the party enters the room, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

This room bears remarkable resemblance to the adjoining room. Desks are placed against the walls and strange consoles sit upon them.

The consoles in these rooms are computers, which respond to voice commands. If asked about this facility, they reveal its purpose and give a small amount of history behind its construction. It explains that it took a year to complete the structure and the machinery within, and that this is one of the pinnacles of technological achievement in its homeworld. If asked how to operate it, it gives a brief description of the controls, as described in room 5. If asked about the crystalline entity, it describes it as a living creature designed to serve by rapidly making complex calculations, thereby regulating the capacitors that power the telesponder.

This is primarily a roleplaying location. If the PCs come away with the information to operate the telesponder, they should be considered successful and rewarded according to the challenge rating. You should make them carefully phrase their questions in order to produce useful answers, though the exact nature of these questions is left to the GMs judgment.

3. Key Room

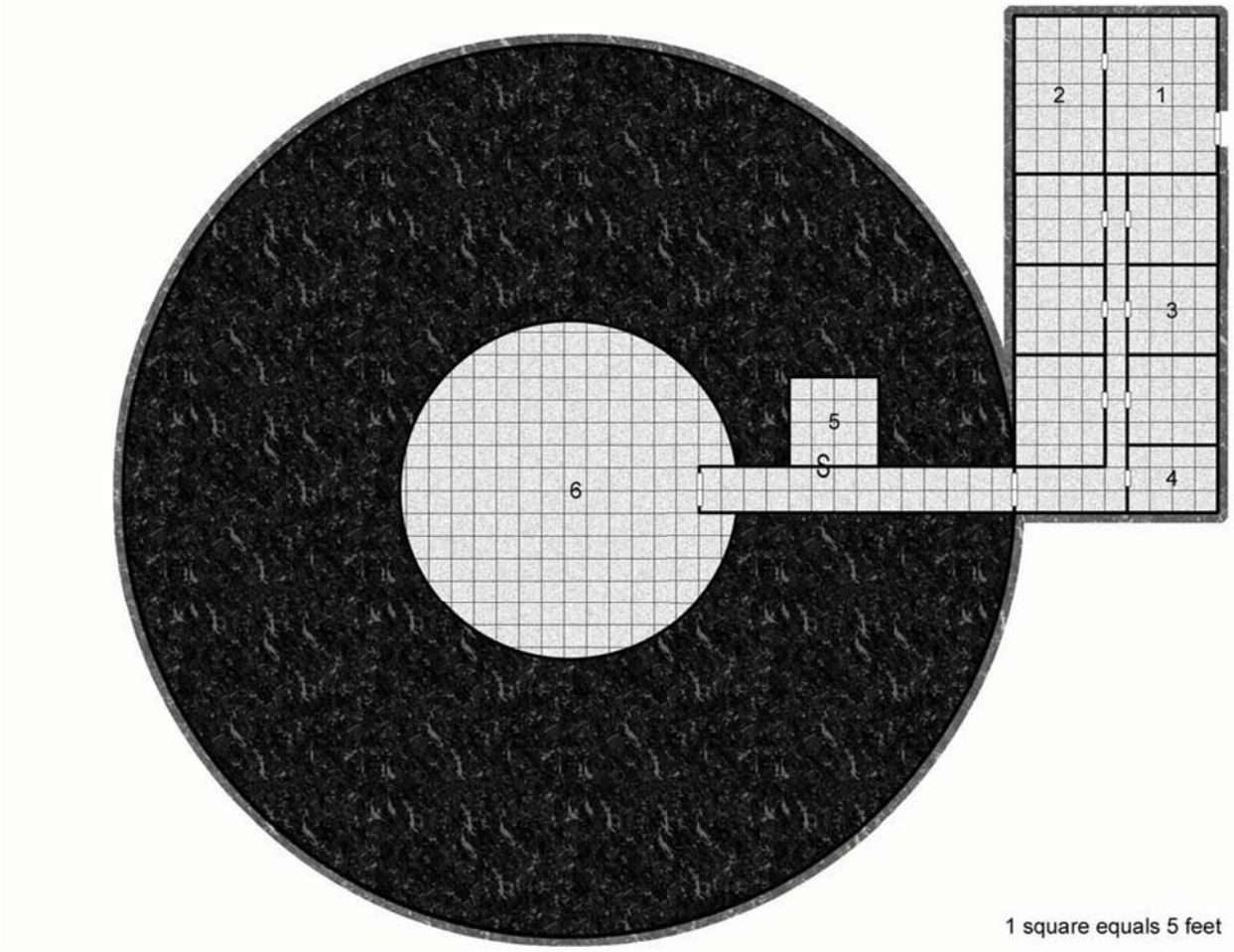
EL 8

When the party enters this room, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The walls of this room contain desks, which are spaced out approximately one every five feet. Upon each desk is a small console, similar to the ones from the first room you entered in this structure. Upon the wall is a metal box with a hinged door that hangs open, with two cylindrical objects inside.

The workstations here contain the same information that can be gleaned from the other computers in rooms 1 and 3. The cylindrical object in the box is a crystal key that opens the door to room 5.

If the party enters the room, it sets off a trap. A massive burst of energy is routed from the capacitors



Map by Jeff Visgaitis and Jason Rosenstark

in the adjoining building and are fired in a straight line from the far wall towards the intruding party members, creating an effect identical to a lightning bolt spell as though cast by a 10th level wizard.

Energy Bolt Trap: CR 6; magic device; proximity trigger (sensor); automatic reset; mechanical effect (energy bolt, (functions as a lightning bolt as cast by a 10th-level wizard, 10d6 electricity, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28. Cost: 15,000 gp, 1,200 XP.

4. Control Room

EL Variable

In order to enter this room, the party must have the key from room 3. When the party enters this chamber, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Before you is a relatively open room with schematics hanging from the walls, and a large console against the far wall. The console is dark gray in color and is featureless except for two diamond shapes on the top of it.

This is the room that activates the telesponder. The door to this room is a flat panel opened with a pressure plate on the door that, when pressed, slides aside to reveal the room inside. Within is a control station that stands waist high. On the control panel are two diamond shaped buttons that change colors, when pressed to make the telesponder do different things. Pressing a button once causes it to turn green. Pushing it a second time causes it to turn red. In order to activate it, each of the three buttons must be pressed at least once. It has the following effects with the following color combinations:

Green/Green: The material within telesponds the material within to the predesignated location.

Red/Red: The sensors map out everything within a thousand miles, generating a holographic display of the region that allows the user to reattune the location to telespond the material to.

Green/Red: This causes a buildup of energy from the capacitors. The energy is then discharged into the chamber, disintegrating everything within.

Red/Green: This combination temporarily releases the crystalline entity so that it can move back into a small chamber above the telesponder where a computer can diagnose it and repair any damage it may have taken. This normally takes no more than two minutes, and the main computer temporarily neglects its other systems in order to keep the systems the crystalline entity normally manages from overloading. Selecting this option more than once without a minute break in between causes the system to overload, resulting in the destruction of the telesponder, as described below (see *Telesponding Chamber*).

If the telesponder is activated without re-attuning it to the desired location, it automatically sends material to the coordinates set for its homeworld. In the Forge, this happens to be the open street two blocks away from Lord Belus's courtyard. The party may re-attune this to a more desirable location if they prefer. They may also use the device to move any material items they may have acquired to the destination of their choice.

In addition, the GM should read the Concluding the Adventure section that appears after the next subsection. This describes the actions of the PC's employer once they acquire access to the Control Room.

5. Telesponding Chamber

EL Variable

When the party enters this chamber, read of paraphrase the following to the players:

You enter a large circular chamber that is currently empty. A piece of transparent circular tubing above you slowly pulses, its color alternating slowly between blue and red while it faintly illuminates the chamber. As it pulses, you feel a faint vibration run through the chamber.

This is the telesponding chamber, which is capable of moving non-living matter instantly from one location to another. The chamber is controlled from room 4, although the primary brain of the device, the crystalline entity, is within the tubing above.

If released from the tube, the crystalline entity's form is much like an amorphous slime. It presents no danger to the party in its current location, nor would it present a challenge if the PCs decide to destroy it. Releasing or destroying the entity sets off a chain reaction, eventually causing the capacitors to overload, and the building to explode 3d4 rounds later, causing 12d6 points of damage (DC 20 Reflex save for half damage) to any creatures caught within when it explodes.

If questioned, the creature is able to speak, but it does so in a detached manner since it has no emotional stake in the development of the situation. It is capable of complex thought, but has the emotional intellect of an insect, possessing no emotions or instinct for self preservation. If questioned, it can provide the following information to the party:

- The entity acts as the control mechanism for the device. It regulates the power, harnesses the magic, and directs the material to its new location.
- If removed, the telesponder self destructs.
- The former inhabitants of Tamurasott created this device twelve years ago as a means of transporting ore rapidly to the capitol city.
- Living matter telesponded elsewhere always arrives dead.

Concluding the Adventure

The adventure's end depends upon the individual employing the characters. The subsequent paragraphs describe how the action unfolds once the characters reach area 4, Control Room.

Dardan Neraggamos: Dardan fully expects the PC's to utilize the scroll that he gave to them at the beginning of the adventure, brining them back to his audience chamber within his estate. If they hesitate or debate the issue, Bala pushes them in the direction of immediately returning to Dardan to report their findings. He is persistent, but not overbearing. Upon

returning to Dardan's residence, he graciously thanks the party for their actions and willingly gives them their just reward if they were promised one by their bloodlord back in Penance. If they do not use the scroll and instead destroy the telesponder or ignore him altogether; Dardan along with his henchmen track down and kill the player characters before claiming their prize. After the PC's departure, Dardan journeys to the locale and immediately establishes a logging operation instantaneously transporting lumber to his master back in Penance. If this happens, Haiel angrily confronts the PC's demanding that they rectify the situation before he utterly destroys them. He gives them the opportunity to remove Dardan and his henchmen from Tamurasott and then permanently destroy the telesponder. If they refuse, he and his army of beasts immediately attack, hunting down the PC's until they are killed before turning his attention toward Dardan and Tamurasott.

Wrog: With Bala's aid, Wrog has been trailing the player characters ever since they left Penumbra. Once the characters acquire access to the Control Room, Wrog bursts into the chamber and proudly boasts that he is now the master of Wildwood. At this moment, he and Bala immediately assault the party, fighting to the death to acquire the telesponder. If the GM wants to present an even greater challenge, he may also add Wrog's henchmen to the fray provided that they were not killed during a previous encounter. Naturally, if the PC's do not survive the encounter, Wrog takes control of the telesponder but soon faces the wrath of Haiel. If the party defeats Wrog but does not destroy the telesponder, Haiel strongly chastises the player characters before leveling the building. If the PC's decide to use the telesponder for their own purposes, they also face the fury of the blade of the green.

Dammia: Utilizing her abilities to magically observe the PC's actions, the cunning sorceress gauges the situation carefully. If the PC's willingly decide to return to Penumbra to claim their reward, she awaits their arrival and then prepares an ambush for them upon their return to her chamber. If they attempt to destroy the telesponder or otherwise thwart her plans to control it, she immediately casts a *teleport* spell and engages the party for control of the telesponder along with her lover Bala and any other allies she can muster. As previously mentioned, if Dammia acquires control of the telesponder, Haiel and his allies swiftly react, destroying the telesponder along with its new master.

In any case, the party may decide not to enter the building housing the telesponder at all, instead choosing to return to Penumbra and confirm its existence. In this case, the interested party may send the PC's back to the location to secure the use of the device, or they may send in a different party. In any case, once the device is activated Haiel understands its potential to threaten his domain. Not only can it unbalance the flow of trade through Wildwood, but it can also make it far easier for loggers to fell trees and then instantly move the lumber from Wildwood to Penance or a number of other cities where the merchant can fetch a relatively high price for the timber. Haiel realizes his folly in not destroying this place, so he comes here personally to destroy it. If the party enters the telesponder and either releases the crystalline entity or otherwise finds a way to destroy the device, Haiel is uncharacteristically grateful for their intervention and he awards each of them with an earned gift (chosen from any of the Oathbound books). In either case the telesponder is destroyed, either by the party's actions or Haiel's.

Appendix A: Stats

Episode 1: The Mission Revealed

Dardan Neraggamos Human Aristocrat 6/Bard 8: CR 13, Medium Humanoid (human); HD 6d8+12 plus 8d6+16; hp 92; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (+2 Dex, +3 deflection, +6 armor) touch 15, flatfooted 19; BAB +10; Grapple +11; Atk +3 *flaming dagger* +15 melee (1d4+4 plus 1d6 fire/19-20); Full Atk +3 *flaming dagger* +15/+10 melee (1d4+4 plus 1d6 fire/19-20); SQ Bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, *fascinate*, inspire courage +2, inspire competence, *suggestion*; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +17; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 19, Wis 19, Cha 21.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +18, Bluff +24, City Lore +9, Diplomacy + 22, Forgery +8, Gather Information +17, Handle Animal +9, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (local) (Wildwood) +18, Knowledge (history)(Wildwood) +12, Listen +12, Perform (oratory) +5, Ride +6, Search +10, Sense Motive +19, Spot +13, Survival +9, Use Magic Device +15; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Quick Draw, Track, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Canine, Common (Forge), Draconic, Elven, Green.

Bard Spells Known (*Bard spells per day* 3/5/4/2); base save DC 15 + spell level; 0-level—*daze, detect magic, light, mending, message, read magic*; 1st—*disguise self, lesser confusion, sleep, ventriloquism*; 2nd—*heroism, mirror image, sound burst, whispering wind*; 3rd—*dispel magic, scrying, slow*.

Possessions: +3 *flaming dagger*, +2 *chain shirt*, *ring of protection* +3, *ring of major energy resistance (fire)*, *rod of thunder and lightning*, *crystal ball*; 3 potions-*blur*, *cure moderate wounds*, *invisibility*, (1) 5,000 gp diamond, pouch of 13 100 gp opals and 935 gp.

Mind reading (earned) You can read the minds of other beings as if you had cast the spell *detect thoughts*. You can use this spell-like, mind-affecting ability up to three times per day. Your character level serves as the caster level and the saving throw DC against the effect is 10 + ½ your character level + your Cha modifier.

Wrog Dover Barbarian 13: CR 13, Medium Humanoid (canine); HD 13d12+39; hp 136; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 22 (+1 Dex, +2 deflection, +2 natural, +7 armor) touch 15, flatfooted 21; BAB +13; Grapple +17; Atk +3 *greataxe* +20 melee (1d12+9) or bite +17 melee (1d6+4); Full Atk +3 *greataxe* +20/+15/+10 melee (1d12+9); SA Rage 4/day, greater rage; SQ Scent, fast movement, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge, damage reduction 3/--, trap sense +4; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +18, Intimidate +18, Jump +16, Listen +20, Survival +16; Cleave, Dodge, Improved Critical (greataxe), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Languages: Canine, Common.

Possessions: +3 *greataxe*, +1 *composite longbow*, *shatterspike*, *20 +1 arrows*, +2 *chainmail*, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *ring of protection* +2; 4 potions-*cure moderate wounds x2*, *delay poison x2*, 1,985 gp.

Gifts: Last Stand, Savage (earned).

Dammia Zolachar Female High Elf Sorcerer 13: CR 13, Medium Humanoid (elf); HD 13d4+12; hp 45; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +2 deflection, +3 armor, +1 natural) touch 18, flatfooted 16; BAB +6; Grapple +7; Atk +1 *dagger* +8 melee (1d4+2/19-20); Full Atk +1 *dagger* +8/+3 melee (1d4+2/19-20); SQ elf traits; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +13, Concentration +17, Craft (Alchemy) +10, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (local) (Wildwood) +5, Listen +4, Search +5, Spellcraft +17, Spot +4; Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus, Improved Counterspell, Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Penetration.

Languages: Elven, Common, Draconic, Gnoll, Sylvan

Sorcerer Spells Known (*Sorcerer spells per day* 6/7/7/7/7/6/4); base save DC 14 + spell level; 0-level—*arcane mark, detect magic, detect poison, mending, message, ray of frost, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*cause fear, charm person, feather fall, hold portal, magic missile*; 2nd—*continual flame, darkvision, invisibility, knock, acid arrow*; 3rd—*fireball, haste, hold person, magic circle against evil*; 4th—*dimension door, lesser globe of invulnerability, scrying*; 5th—*feeblemind, teleport, telepathic bond*; 6th—*greater dispel magic, stone of flesh*.

Possessions: +1 *dagger, bracers of armor* +3, *ring of protection* +2, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of charisma* +2, *ring of freedom of movement, staff of fire (24 charges)*, scroll-*displacement, flame arrow, slow*.

Gifts: Lost Knowledge, Undetectable (earned).

Bala Wild Elf Ranger 5/Pathfinder 6: CR 11, Medium Humanoid (elf); HD 5d8+10 plus 6d8+12; hp 78; Init +6; Spd 40 ft. (see fleet-footed); AC 21 (+6 Dex, +5 armor) touch 16, flatfooted 15; BAB +9; Grapple +12; Atk +2 *seeking longbow* +17 ranged (1d8+2/19-20 x3) or +2 *whip* +16 melee (1d3+5); Full Atk +2 *seeking longbow* +17/+12 ranged (1d8+2/19-20 x3) or +2 *whip* +16/+11 melee (1d3+5); SA Whip mastery; SQ Wild empathy, favored enemies [humanoid (elf), humanoid (human)], animal companion, trailblazer, archaeologist, fleet-footed, woodland senses, ancient secrets, elf traits; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +15, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 22, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +5, Concentration +6, Decipher Script +9, Handle Animal +8, Heal +7, Hide +17, Jump +6, Knowledge (geography)(Wildwood) +17, Knowledge (history) (Wildwood) +10, Knowledge (local)(Wildwood) +10, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +11, Move Silently +15, Ride +8, Search +11, Spot +10, Survival +9 (+12 follow tracks), Swim +4; Endurance, Greater Weapon Focus (whip), Improved Critical (longbow), Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (whip).

Languages: Canine, Common, Druidic, Elven, Feline, Green, Sylvan.

Ranger Spells Prepared (*Ranger spells per day* 1); base save DC 13 + spell level; 1st—*speak with animals*.

Possessions: +2 *seeking longbow*, +2 *whip*, 40 arrows, +3 *leather armor*, *slaying arrow (humanoid, human)*, *instant cage*, 3 potions—*cure serious wounds*, *haste*, *spider climb*.

Episode 1: Foes Revealed

Marrallo Dubois, Male Human Rog 10: CR 10, Medium Humanoid (human); HD 10d6+20; hp 66; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +2 armor, +1 deflection, +3 buckler) touch 14, flatfooted 16; BAB +7; Grapple +9; Atk +2 *rapier* +12 melee (1d6+4/18-20) or +1 *light crossbow* +11 ranged (1d8+1/19-20); Full Atk +2 *rapier* +12/+7 melee (1d6+4/18-20) or +1 *light crossbow* +11 ranged (1d8+1/19-20; SA Sneak attack +5d6; SQ trapfinding, evasion, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge, opportunist; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +17, Climb +7, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +12, Disable Device +14, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +16, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +14, Search +16, Sense Motive +16, Spot +15, Tumble +16, Use Magic Device +13, Use Rope +13; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Metallic, Orc

Possessions: +2 *rapier*, +1 *light crossbow*, +2 *buckler*, *bracers of armor* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *everburning torch*, *bead of force*, *feather token, tree,* potion-*charisma*, merchant's cloak—500 gp, necklace and pendant—1,500 gp, two rings—750 gp each, 20 bolts.

Gifts: Dreamwalking (earned): Once per day, you can enter another creature's subconscious mind as if you had cast a *dream* or *nightmare* spell (your choice). The spell's caster level is the same as your character level, and saving throw DC against this ability is 10 + ½ you character level + your Cha modifier. This is a mind-affecting spell-like ability.

Varak Azmorash, Male Faust Barbarian 7: CR 10, Medium Humanoid (goblin); HD 7d12+14; hp 67; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 27 (+5 Dex, +2 deflection, +4 armor, +6 natural) touch 17, flatfooted 22; BAB +7; Grapple +11; Atk +1 *anarchic greataxe* +13 melee (1d12+7 plus 2d6 vs. lawful opponents) or composite longbow +12 ranged (1d8/x3) or claw +11 melee (1d8+4); Full Atk +1 *anarchic greataxe* +13/+8 melee (1d12+7 plus 2d6 vs. lawful opponents) or composite longbow +12/+7 ranged (1d8/x3) or 2 claws +11 melee (1d8+4) and bite +6 melee (2d4+2); SA Rage 2/day, greater rage; SQ darkvision, fast movement, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge, damage reduction 1/--, trap sense +2; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 21, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +15, Intimidate +9, Jump +13, Listen +13, Survival +8; Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Languages: Common, Goblin.

Possessions: +1 *anarchic greataxe,* composite longbow, 20 arrows, dagger, +2 *leather armor, ring of protection* +2, *boots of speed,* 2 potions—*cure moderate wounds, delay poison*, 568 gp, 2 100 gp amethysts.

Gifts: Brave (arrival) [+4 morale bonus to saves versus fear].

Pellator, Male High Elf Ranger 10: CR 10, Medium Humanoid (elf); HD 10d8+10; hp 61; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+3 Dex, +6 armor, +1 shield) touch 13, flatfooted 17; BAB +10; Grapple +12; Atk +2 *keen dagger* +16 melee (1d4+2/17-20) or +1 *composite longbow* +14 ranged (1d8+1/x3); Full Atk +2 *keen dagger* +14/+9 melee (1d4+2/17-20) and adamantine dagger +12/+7 melee (1d4+1/17-20) or +1 *composite longbow* +14/+9 ranged (1d8+1/x3; SQ low-light vision, elf traits, favored enemies [magical beasts +4, humanoid (human) +4, dragons +2], wild empathy, woodland stride, swift tracker, evasion; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +7; Str 15, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Climb +7, Handle Animal +13, Heal +7, Hide +18, Jump +10, Listen +12, Move Silently +16, Ride +12, Search +12, Sense Motive +5, Spot +11, Survival +12, Swim +4; Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Track, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger).

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant.

Ranger Spells Prepared (*Ranger spells per day* 2/2); base save DC 12 + spell level; 1st—*charm animal, magic fang;* 2nd—*barkskin, owl's wisdom*.

Possessions: +2 *keen dagger, +1 composite longbow, +3 studded leather armor, gloves of dexterity +2, ring of chameleon power, boots of elvenkind, chime of open, cloak of resistance* +2, adamantine dagger, 40 arrows, 100 gp.

Gifts: Last Stand (earned).

(4) Male Human Rangers 7: CR 7, Medium Humanoid (human); HD 7d8+14; hp 52, 52, 52, 52; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+3 Dex, +5 armor, +1 shield, +1 natural) touch 13, flatfooted 17; BAB +7; Grapple +9; Atk +1 *short sword* +12 melee (1d6+3/19-20) or +1 *composite longbow* +11 ranged (1d8+1/x3); Full Atk +1 *short sword* +10/+5 melee (1d6+3/19-20) and +1 *short sword* +10/+5 melee (1d6+1/19-20) or +1 *composite longbow* +11/+6 ranged (1d8+1/x3); SQ favored enemies [humanoid (human) +4, dragons +2], wild empathy, woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Handle Animal +10, Heal +8, Hide +9, Jump +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Ride +10, Search +8, Spot +9, Survival +11; Endurance, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Track, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Languages: Common, Elven.

Ranger Spells Prepared (*Ranger spells per day* 2); base save DC 11 + spell level; 1st—*longstrider, magic fang*.

Possessions: +1 *composite longbow, (2) +1 short swords, +1 chain shirt, amulet of natural armor +1,* 2 potions—*heroism, vision*, aquamarine 500 gp, 123 gp.

Episode 2: Under Attack

Use the statistics provided for the combatants in Foes Revealed.

Episode 2: Hunting Party

(6) Trolls: CR 5, Large giant; HD 6d8+36; hp 69, 69, 67, 65, 65, 65; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural) touch 11, flat-footed 14; BAB +4; Grapple +14; Atk Claw +9 melee (1d6+6); Full Atk 2 claws +9 melee (1d6+6) and bite +4 melee (1d6+3); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Rend; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., low-light vision, regeneration 5, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 23, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills & Feats: Listen +5, Spot +6; Alertness, Iron Will, Track.

Episode 3: River Alluun

Asherake Ftr 3: CR 5; Large Monstrous Humanoid (avian); HD 2d8+4 plus 3d10+6 (Fighter); hp 34 (average); Init +6; Spd 30, Fly, Average 60; AC 20, Flatfooted 19, Touch 10; Base Atk +5; Full Attack +9 (2d8+4, large bastard sword) or +8 (1d6+4, 2 claws) and +3 (1d6+2, bite) or +6 ranged (1d10, heavy crossbow); SA: Snatch (Ex); SQ Scent; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +0, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +3, Jump -1, Ride +5, Swim -16.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (heavy), Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Shield Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Focus: Sword, bastard.

Possessions: Masterwork bastard sword, heavy Crossbow, full plate armor, heavy steel shield.

Loc, Adult Green Dragon: CR 12; Huge Dragon (Air); HD 20d12+100 (Dragon); hp 230; Init +0; Spd 40, Swim 40, Fly, Poor 150; AC 27; (Flatfooted:27, Touch:8); Atk +26 base melee, +18 base ranged; +26/+21/+21/+21 (2d8+8, Bite; 2d6+4, 2 Claws; 1d8+4, 2 Wings; 2d6+4, Tail slap); +26 (2d8+12, Crush); +26 (12d6, Breath Weapon); SA: Spells Sorcerer 5 , Spell-like Abilities Suggestion 3/day , Breath Weapon (Su) , Breath Weapon DC: 25 , Breath Weapon Type: 50 ft. Cone of Corrosive Gas , Frightful Presence (Ex) , Frightful Presence DC: 23 , Frightful Presence Radius: 180 ft. ; SQ: Keen Senses (Ex), Immunity: Paralysis (Ex), Immunity: Sleep Effects (Ex), Immunity: Acid (Ex), Water Breathing (Ex), Blindsense (Ex): 60 ft., Darkvision (Ex): 120 ft., Damage Reduction (Su): 5/ Magic, Spell Resistance (Ex): 21; AL LE; SV Fort +17, Ref +12, Will +15; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +20, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +15, Hide +0, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (Arcana) +18, Knowledge (Nature) +18, Listen +25, Move Silently +20, Search +23, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +25, Spot +25, Swim +16.

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Natural Attack: Bite, Power Attack, Wingover.

Spells Known (SA Spells: Sor 6/7/5): 0 -- *arcane mark, detect magic, ghost sound, prestidigitation, ray of frost, resistance*; 1st -- *burning hands, charm person, color ppray, identify, magic missile, protection from good, true strike*; 2nd -- *blindness/deafness, blur, detect thoughts, flaming sphere, see invisibility*.

Possessions: +2 battleaxe, violet garnet (700 gp), rock crystal (clear quartz) (50 gp), jade (120 gp) iolite (60 gp), Everburning *Torch, potion of cure Serious wounds* (5), 2125 gp.

Thaddeus, Male Human Drd9: CR 9; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 9d8+27; hp 90; Init +2; Spd 30; AC 17 (Flatfooted:15, Touch:15); Atk +7/2 base melee, +8/3 base ranged; +11/6 (1d8+5, +4 longsword); AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +15, Handle Animal +13, Listen +10, Spellcraft +13, Spot +11, Survival +17, Swim +3.

Feats: Armor Proficiency: light, Armor Proficiency: medium, Enlarge Spell, Heighten Spell, Lightning Reflexes, Martial Weapon Proficiency: Longsword, Shield Proficiency, Track, Weapon Focus (Bite).

Spells Prepared (Drd 6/5/5/4/2/1): 0 - *create water, cure minor wounds, detect magic, know direction, light, purify food and drink*; 1st - *cure light wounds, entangle, goodberry,obscuring mist, speak with animals*; 2nd - *blindsight, bull`s strength, delay poison, resist energy, summon swarm*; 3rd - *cure moderate wounds, daylight, magic fang, greater, water breathing*; 4th - *cure serious wounds, dispel magic*; 5th - *call lightning storm*.

Possessions: +4 *longsword*, +3 *leather armor, bag of holding, (type I), boots of levitation, cloak of resistance* +3, *folding boat, glove of storing, ioun stone (clear spindle)*.

Episode 4: Tamurasott

Savragos, Male Human (Shapechanger, werewolf) barbarian 7: Medium Humanoid; CR 10; HD 7d12+7(Barbarian) plus 2d8 +2 (werewolf); hp 72; Init +2; Spd 40; AC 12(Flatfooted:10, Touch:12); Atk +12 base melee, +11 base ranged; +11 melee (1d8, Longbow, composite); or +12 (1d4+3/ 2 claws) and +7 melee (1d6+3/ Bite); or +14 melee (1d12+5, +1 Greataxe); SA curse of lycanthropy; SQ alternate form; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Climb +16, Intimidate +10, Jump +14, Listen +12, Survival +11; Armor Proficiency: light, Armor Proficiency: medium, Cleave, Dodge, Power Attack, Shield Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Focus: Greataxe.

Possessions: +1 greataxe, arrows, composite longbow, +1 breastplate, climbers kit, identicard, potion of *cure moderate wounds* (3), potion of *delay poison* (4).

Werwolf Guards human (Shapechanger, werewolf) Barbarian 5: Medium Humanoid ; HD 5d12+5(Barbarian) plus 2d8 +2 (werewolf); hp 55; Init +2; Spd 40; AC 12 (Flatfooted:10, Touch:12); Atk

+10 base melee, +9 base ranged; +9 melee (1d8, Longbow, composite); or +10 (1d4+3/ 2 claws) and +5 melee (1d6+3/ Bite); or +12 melee (1d12+5, +1 Greataxe); SA curse of lycanthropy; SQ alternate form; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Climb +13, Intimidate +8, Jump +12, Listen +10, Survival +10; Armor Proficiency: light, Armor Proficiency: medium, Dodge, Power Attack, Shield Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Focus (Bite), Weapon Focus: Greataxe.

Possessions: Masterwork greataxe, arrows (20), composite longbow, dagger (2 gp), +1 breastplate, potion of *cure moderate wounds* (3), potion *of delay poison* (4).

Werewolves (standard): see the *MM*.

Episode 5: Telesponder

Depending upon the characters' employer, use the statistics provided under Episode 1 to adjudicate any combat between the party and Dardan, Wrog or Dammia.

Appendix B: Core and Prestige Classes

Not surprisingly, Wildwood's most prevalent and potent classes require a close affinity and understanding of the natural world and the feral domain's mysterious history. The only new core class presented here, the feral warrior, adopts the attack forms and defensive abilities of the bestial predators that it imitates. The hunter is the wilderness' most deadly predator, while the pathfinder often functions as a guide for traveling adventurers or as a self-employed fortune seeker. The *sekara* is a prestige class only available to elves that allows them to master the ancient and highly secretive art of fusing martial prowess and the forces of nature.

Feral Warrior

Humanoids dwelling within the untamed forests and jungles realize that they must coexist with the natural world to survive, but some members of their ranks take this adage a step further. While druids, rangers and to a lesser extent barbarians forge alliances with the land's wild denizens, the elusive feral warrior actually becomes a part of the ecosystem, assuming a position within the natural hierarchy just like any other predator. Unlike the aforementioned classes, the feral warrior actively avoids all contact with civilization, a feat easily accomplished in Haiel's primordial domain. As a result, the prevailing view amongst most humanoids residing within Wildwood's scattered towns and villages holds that the feral warrior is a half-man, half-beast with the mentality of an animal and no regard for well being of his kindred. Although it is true that these "wild men of the woods" as they are sometimes called generally disdain society and its contrived trappings, the dominant perception does more to intensify the aura of fear surrounding them rather than provide an accurate description or assessment of the feral warrior and his outlook. In the minds of the overwhelming majority of Wildwood's indigenous humanoids, the feral warrior is nothing more than a savage, primitive version of the commonly encountered druid and ranger gone terribly awry.

Undoubtedly, Haiel's Chosen as they are known in some circles, share several characteristics and features with their natural brethren that foster this belief. Like his cousins, the feral warrior lives off the land and can communicate with the native wildlife as well as move through difficult terrain virtually unimpeded. Similarly, they also strive to preserve the sanctity of their environment from the ravages of progress and the encroachment of civilization. Yet, they differ from their more civilized counterparts in a number of important respects. While druids and rangers frequently assume the role of nature's caretaker, the feral warrior rejects the notion that he is superior to his fellow residents, i.e. the animals and beasts that also roam the wilderness. In his eyes, the relationship between a ranger or druid and his animal companion is that of a master and his slave. Furthermore, the concept of employing magic to summon the aid of animals and plants is another example of humanoids subjugating the indigenous creatures for their own betterment. The feral warrior believes that he is no better or more important in the grand scheme of things than even the humblest ant. In furtherance of this ideology, he relies exclusively upon the gifts bestowed unto him by nature, refusing to wield any type of weapons or armor. Thick skin and steely bones provide protection, whereas jagged teeth complemented by hardened fists and sharpened cuticles bludgeon and tear the flesh of his foes. To survive without these implements of civilization, the feral warrior hones the dormant evolutionary traits commonly neglected by sedentary humanoids. Over the course of time, his senses steadily improve as does his ability to fend off physical damage, fatigue and the ravages of the elements. Previously recessive features come to the forefront, enabling the feral warrior to thrive in his harsh and unforgiving environment.

Although feral warriors do not utilize the wondrous crafts forged by civilized societies, they are not mindless, half-naked brutes. Their ranks are predominantly comprised of humanoids that abandoned their lives in the towns and villages scattered throughout Wildwood on a personal quest to achieve true oneness with nature. Contrary to popular belief, the development of their previously latent abilities and anatomical features does not diminish their intellect. Bereft of the responsibilities commonly associated with urban life, the nomadic and often solitary feral warrior spends a good portion of his time in philosophical pursuits, contemplating the intricacies and wonders of the natural world rather than devoting his attention to accumulating wealth or the rigors of providing for a family. However, constantly witnessing the primeval life and death struggle between Wildwood's predators and prey necessitates the sense of detachment commonly associated with a disinterested observer. As a result, other humanoids interacting with a feral warrior mistake his neutrality for apathy.

Even though the feral warrior disdains civilization, he is not averse to cooperating with other humanoids to achieve a common goal. Despite the fact that he disagrees with the druid and ranger's relationship with an animal companion and is more than willing to voice his displeasure about it, he feels most comfortable around members of these two professions. He also holds barbarians and clerics worshipping a deity associated with nature in high regard, whereas he displays a casual indifference to virtually everyone else. Regardless of his attitude toward others, the feral warrior's companions soon learn that the stereotypes surrounding the "wild man of the woods" are grossly inaccurate.

Alignment: Any neutral
Race: Any humanoid
Hit Die: d12

Class Skills

The feral warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (any that utilizes natural materials) (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geography)(Wildwood)(Int), Knowledge (local)(Wildwood)(Int), Knowledge (nature)(Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (any nature-related occupation) (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The feral warriors's class features include all of the following abilities and benefits.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Feral warriors are not proficient with any weapons, and they are prohibited from using any type of armor or shield, although they can derive armor or shield bonuses from another source, such as *bracers of armor* or a *ring of force shield*. A feral warrior that wears armor or employs a shield suffers an armor check penalty to all of his attack rolls when using his natural weaponry even if he is proficient with these devices.

Natural Weapon (Ex): At 1st level, the feral warrior can employ his hands and bite as natural weapons. When he acquires this ability, he must designate one of the aforementioned weapon types as his primary weapon and the other as his secondary weapon. He cannot change this designation at a later time. The typical feral warrior makes three attacks per round, two claw attacks and a bite. The character adds his Strength bonus to all damage dealt by his primary attack(s), but his secondary attack(s) are less effective resulting in a -5 penalty to his attack roll and the addition of only half his Strength bonus to damage.

Unlike other character classes, the feral warrior does not gain additional attacks when his base attack bonus increases; however the damage dealt by his natural weapons does improve as he goes up in level. At 1st level, a Medium-sized feral warrior deals 1d6 points of damage with his primary attack(s) and 1d4 points of damage with his secondary attack(s). The damage progression for a Medium-sized feral warrior appears on the table at the end of this section. The first entry details the damage inflicted by the primary attack, while the figure appearing after the slash provides the damage dealt by the feral warrior's secondary attack. Small and Large feral warriors utilize the following chart to determine the damage caused by their attacks.

Level	Damage (Small)	Damage (Large)
1st-3rd	1d4/1d3	1d8/1d6
4th-7th	1d6/1d4	1d10/1d8
8th-11th	1d8/1d6	2d6/1d10
12th-15th	1d10/1d8	2d8/2d6
16th-19th	2d6/1d10	3d6/2d8
20th	2d8/2d6	3d8/3d6

If the character gains a prestige racial level that bestows natural weaponry to a feral warrior, he gains the Improved Natural Attack feat to his primary and secondary attacks instead. Furthermore, if the prestige racial level improves the threat range or critical

The Feral Warrior

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Natural Weapon Damage	Natural Armor Bonus	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	1d6/1d4	+0	Natural weapon, wild empathy
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	1d6/1d4	+1	Natural armor, woodland stride
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	1d6/1d4	+1	Eyes of the night
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	1d8/1d6	+1	Awareness
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	1d8/1d6	+2	Wilding
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	1d8/1d6	+2	Multiattack
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	1d8/1d6	+2	Imbue natural weaponry (magic)
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	1d10/1d8	+3	Scent
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	1d10/1d8	+3	Lick wounds
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	1d10/1d8	+3	Wilding 2/day
11th	+11	+7	+7	+3	1d10/1d8	+4	Weathered
12th	+12	+8	+8	+4	2d6/1d10	+4	
13th	+13	+8	+8	+4	2d6/1d10	+4	Imbue Natural Weaponry (see above)
14th	+14	+9	+9	+4	2d6/1d10	+5	Chameleon
15th	+15	+9	+9	+5	2d6/1d10	+5	Wilding 3/day
16th	+16	+10	+10	+5	2d8/2d6	+5	Blindsense
17th	+17	+10	+10	+5	2d8/2d6	+6	Vanish
18th	+18	+11	+11	+6	2d8/2d6	+6	
19th	+19	+11	+11	+6	2d8/2d6	+6	Imbue Natural Weaponry (see above)
20th	+20	+12	+12	+6	2d10/2d8	+7	Wilding 4/day

multiplier for a natural weapon that he already possesses, he gains those benefits as well.

Wild Empathy (Ex): The feral warrior is highly skilled at communicating his intentions to an animal without the usage of a spoken language. Utilizing a variety of methods readily at his disposal such as gesture, sounds and demeanor he can improve the animal's attitude toward him. This ability follows the same rules as described under the druid and ranger entries.

Natural Armor (Ex): By emulating the defensive actions of numerous animals as well as braving the hardships of life in the wilderness, the feral warrior acquires a +1 natural armor bonus at 2nd level. This bonus increases by +1 for every three additional levels that the feral warrior gains; therefore his natural armor bonus improves to +2 at 5th level, +3 at 8th level and so on.

Woodland Stride (Ex): At 2nd level, the feral warrior has developed the ability to move through the undergrowth at his normal speed. This ability adheres to the rules provided under the druid entry.

Eyes of the Night (Ex): Living without the benefit of artificial light sources, the feral warrior becomes more adept at discerning details in conditions of near darkness. The feral warrior gains the benefits of low-light vision. If the character already possesses low-light vision, he gains darkvision up to 60 ft. or increases the range of his darkvision by 30 ft.

Awareness (Ex): Seemingly imbued with an uncanny knack for sensing danger, the feral warrior adds his Wisdom bonus to all Reflex saves made to avoid traps and gains the benefits of the Alertness feat. The preceding abilities are only effective whenever the feral warrior is in a wilderness setting devoid of construction or settlement.

Wilding (Ex): At 5th level, the feral warrior acquires the ability to attack his melee opponent with an intense ferocity rarely witnessed by intelligent creatures. He can utilize this ability once per day, although he gains additional usages for every five additional levels thereafter; hence he can employ this effect twice per day at 10th level. Initiating the ability is a free action, and it lasts a number of rounds equal to the feral warrior's Constitution bonus plus one round for every 5 feral warrior levels while bestowing the following effects.

The feral warrior forfeits all bonuses to AC except for armor, deflection and natural armor bonuses as well as any AC bonuses derived from a force effect, such as a *shield* spell, effectively fighting as if Flat-footed. In exchange for his reckless abandon, he adds 1 ½ times his Strength modifier to all damage dealt by his primary attack(s), while he adds his full Strength modifier to all damage dealt by his secondary attacks. Furthermore, his multiplier for critical hits is increased by 1. Therefore, the damage caused by a Medium-sized 5th level feral warrior with a Strength score of 18 is increased from 1d8+4/1d6+2 to 1d8+6/1d6+4 while his critical hit multiplier also improves from x2 to x3.

In addition, if he scores a critical hit against an opponent, he can immediately make an extra attack against that foe using the same attack bonus as the original attack. He cannot gain another attack if the extra attack scores another critical hit. Whenever a feral warrior in this state inflicts a critical hit on a creature with an Intelligence score of 3 or more, that creature must make a Will save (DC damage dealt); otherwise the foe is shaken. If a shaken opponent sustains another critical hit at the hands of the feral warrior, another failed Will save causes him to become frightened. A frightened opponent that fails a third Will save is panicked. The fear effects last for 2d4 rounds. A creature that makes its initial Will save is immune to this effect for the next 24 hours. Obviously, the latter effect has no impact on creatures immune to critical hits or those impervious to mind-affecting fear effects.

Multiattack (Ex): At 6th level, the feral warrior gains the Multiattack feat. If he already possesses the Multiattack feat, he may choose one of the following feats instead even if the character does not meet the feat's prerequisites: Alertness, Cornered, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Critical or Natural Surroundings. (The feats Cornered and Natural Surroundings are in this sourcebook.)

Imbue Natural Weaponry (Su): At 7th level, the feral warrior's natural weapons are considered magical weapons for the purpose of dealing damage to opponents with damage reduction. The source enabling the feral warrior to utilize this ability remains unknown, but many of them firmly believe that Haiel is responsible for this unusual anomaly. Nevertheless, this power continues to improve as the feral warrior increases in level. At 13th and 19th level, he can permanently imbue his natural weapons with one of the following properties for the purpose of dealing damage to foes with damage reduction. His choices include adamantine, alchemical silver or cold iron. Once he selects one of these options, he cannot change it at a later time.

Scent (Ex): At 8th level, the feral warrior acquires the Scent ability.

Lick Wounds (Ex): Following the example of the wilderness' indigenous denizens, the feral warrior acquires the ability to restore hit points by literally licking his wounds. During the course of a single day, he can utilize this ability to heal a number of hit points equal to his Wisdom modifier multiplied by ½ his feral warrior levels. For every round spent tending to his injuries, he regains one lost hit point. He can spread this healing over several uses, but he cannot lick the wounds of another creature. Lick wounds does not cure nonlethal damage. This ability is a full round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Weathered (Ex): Constant exposure to the ravages of the elements enables him to withstand the debilitating effects of heat and cold. As a result, the feral warrior gains resistance to cold and fire 5. Furthermore, he is only required to make Fortitude saves when exposed to severe cold or heat.

Chameleon (Ex): At 14th level, the feral warrior acquires the ability to blend into any natural setting where construction and/or settlement are not the

terrain's dominant feature and make himself virtually undetectable with incredible ease. As a full round action, a feral warrior can make a Hide skill check even if there is no cover or concealment , and treat the result as if he "took 10". He cannot use chameleon while distracted, threatened or directly observed, otherwise this ability abides by all of the other rules governing "taking 10".

Blindsense (Ex): At 16th level, the feral warrior's awareness of his surroundings reaches such a level of expertise that he gains blindsense up to a range of 60 feet.

Vanish (Ex): At 17th level, the feral warrior's ability to hide in any natural setting has improved to such a degree that he can make a Hide skill check as a full round action and treat the result as if he "took 20". With the exception of the reduced amount of time necessary to undertake this action, this ability must abide by all of the other rules governing "taking 20". A feral warrior can utilize this power even when directly observed.

Hunter

Deep in the desolate heart of Wildwood's expansive wilderness, a solitary, shadowy figure silently stalks the tangled jungles and dense forests in search of his next victim. Unlike typical predators, this lone killer hunts his quarry primarily for the thrill of the chase rather than the need for sustenance. In most cases, sentient beings, particularly humanoids, top his list of chosen prey, although he is not adverse to matching wits with terrifying beasts or Wildwood's monstrous denizens. Relying upon a lethal combination of stealth and precision, the hunter patiently observes his target from afar, waiting for him to fall into a carefully arranged trap or for the opportune moment to launch a devastating surprise attack. Taking aim with his frighteningly accurate sighted crossbow, the concealed hunter slowly pulls the weapon's trigger, letting fly a powerful, barbed bolt that screams towards its intended destination. The missile's potent impact rips through soft flesh and shatters bone, frequently felling the creature with a single shot. To relive the experience and brag about his exploits, the hunter always garners a grisly trophy from his slain victim. In virtually all cases, he decapitates the conquered foe and mounts the severed head in the confines of his residence, using the gruesome souvenir as a constant reminder of his hunting skills.

Hunters always begin their careers as rangers, acquiring the prerequisite abilities necessary to master their chosen specialty before diverging along a different path. However, the split from their former profession is not gentle or amicable. The hunter abandons his love and respect for nature and instead assumes the role of its despoiler, mercilessly preying upon its constituents rather than protecting them. As a result, the members of the prestige class sunder their symbiotic relationship with the natural world and its inhabitants, resulting in the permanent loss of their animal companion and spellcasting abilities. More importantly, they retain and augment their combat prowess against a select number of specific adversaries in addition to dealing additional damage with a ranged weapon against unsuspecting opponents.

Humans comprise the majority of the prestige class' proponents followed by several other varieties of humanoids including gnolls and the musai plus an assortment of other monstrous denizens. On the other hand, elves, dovers, thorns and even wild frey cannot reconcile their reverence for nature with the class' diametrically opposed philosophy. In accordance with the hunters' unique ideology, they are predominantly neutral or lawful neutral, although monstrous hunters are often evil.

Hit Die: d8

Requirements

Characters wishing to become hunters must fulfill all of the following requirements.

Base Attack Bonus: +8

Alignment: Any non-good.

Skills: Craft (trapmaking) 8 ranks, Hide 11 ranks, Move Silently 11 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 8 ranks, Survival 8 ranks.

Feats: Alertness, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Other: At least two favored enemies and the abilities swift tracker and woodland stride.

The Hunter

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Abandonment, expert tracker, favored enemy, ranged sneak attack +1d6
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Ambush
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Dead eye
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Decoy
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Ranged sneak attack +2d6
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Improved dead eye
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Blend with surroundings
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Anticipate prey
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Gain the upper hand
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Greater dead eye, ranged sneak attack +3d6

Class Skills

The hunter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (trapmaking)(Int), Disable Device (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geography)(Anvil, Arena or Wildwood)(Int), Knowledge (nature)(Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (any)(Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str) and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier

Class Features

All of the following abilities are class features of the hunter prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The hunter is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and all light armor. He is not proficient with shields.

Abandonment: The hunter permanently loses the services of his animal companion and all divine spellcasting abilities derived from any druid or ranger levels that the character possesses.

Expert Tracker (Ex): Whenever the hunter fails his Survival skill check to locate or follow tracks, he may roll his skill check again to determine the outcome. If this result also fails, he may not try again for one hour outdoors or ten minutes indoors.

Favored Enemy (Ex): The hunter acquires a new favored enemy and augments his existing ability whenever his combined ranger and hunter levels equal 10, 15 and 20. Therefore, an 8th-level ranger, 2nd-level hunter acquires a new favored enemy and receives a +2 bonus on Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot and Survival skill checks and weapon damage rolls against that particular enemy. The hunter also increases any of his favored enemy bonuses (including the one he just received) by +2. The description of favored enemy appears under the ranger entry in the *Player's Handbook*.

Ranged Sneak Attack (Ex): The hunter's ranged attack strikes a vulnerable location whenever his target is denied his Dexterity bonus to AC (irrespective of whether he actually benefits from one). The attack deals an additional 1d6 points of damage at 1st level and +2d6 at 5th level before reaching its maximum of +3d6 at 10th level. The ability is only effective against targets within 60 feet of the hunter, but the additional damage does stack with sneak attack damage acquired from another source such as rogue levels. Otherwise, the ability is identical to the sneak attack ability described under the rogue entry in the *Player's Handbook*.

Ambush (Ex): Blessed with incredibly acute senses and an uncanny awareness of his surroundings, the hunter adds his Wisdom modifier to all initiative checks. Furthermore, whenever a creature falls prey to one of the hunter's traps, the hunter automatically surprises the victim, provided that the hunter remains in visual or auditory range of the trap and his presence went unnoticed by the victim.

Dead Eye (Ex): The hunter can employ his ranged sneak attack ability against any target within 80 feet of his position. If he remains stationary and spends a full round action aiming his shot before firing at his target, he gains a +1 bonus to his next attack roll against that target.

Decoy (Ex): Using his uncanny ability to mimic sounds, the hunter projects his voice and any appropriate noises to make it appear that they are originating from another location within 30 feet of his actual location. Naturally, the hunter's decoy ability only works against creatures that can hear the sounds and as long as the hunter remains concealed or hidden from the listener. To determine success, the foes can either (enemy's option) make an opposed Knowledge (nature) skill check or an opposed Survival skill check. Success enables the listener to ascertain the hunter's actual location; however failure momentarily distracts the listener, negating his Dexterity bonus to AC against the hunter's attacks for the remainder of the round. Decoy counts as a free action; therefore the hunter can employ the extraordinary ability and then take any actions normally available to him. The hunter can only employ this ability once per combat encounter.

Improved Dead Eye (Ex): The hunter can employ his ranged sneak attack ability against any target within 100 feet of his position. If he remains stationary and spends a full round action aiming his shot before firing at his target, he gains a +2 bonus to his next attack roll against that target.

Blend with Surroundings (Ex): Foes find it virtually impossible to distinguish the hunter from his natural surroundings. As a result, all ranged attacks directly targeting the hunter suffer a 20% miss chance. This ability is only effective in wooded areas such as forests, jungles, woods and swamps, and it does not function in areas where construction or settlement replaced the natural environment. This bonus stacks with any type of concealment except for total concealment, such as invisibility or total darkness. Therefore, if used in concert with the spell *blur*, ranged attacks against the hunter suffer a 40% miss chance.

Anticipate Prey (Ex): At the beginning of any combat with one of his favored enemies, the hunter can make an opposed Wisdom check against that particular creature. (If there is more than one favored enemy present, he must designate a specific target.) This check is made at the same time as the initiative check. If the hunter wins, he adds his Wisdom bonus to his AC against all attacks from that particular enemy for the next 1d4 rounds. If he loses, his foe adds his Wisdom bonus to his attack rolls against the hunter for 1d4 rounds. Usage and activation of this ability is a free action.

Gain the Upper Hand (Ex): The hunter is an expert at finishing off wounded foes. Once per encounter, the hunter can attempt to take an additional attack against an opponent that he just hit in melee combat if he wins a base attack bonus check (d20 + the hunter's base attack bonus + his Wis modifier versus DC 10 + the enemy's base attack bonus + his Wis modifier). Success grants the hunter another attack at the same attack bonus as his previous attack, while failure

gives the opponent an immediate attack of opportunity against the hunter.

Greater Dead Eye (Ex): The hunter can employ his ranged sneak attack ability against any target within 120 feet of his position. If he remains stationary and spends a full round action aiming his shot before firing at his target, he gains a +3 bonus to attack roll against that target.

Pathfinder

An experienced and knowledgeable pathfinder is a necessity for any rasher venturing into Wildwood's unknown and savage wilderness. Deadly natural hazards and ferocious predators lurk throughout the domain's complex labyrinth of gigantic trees and overgrown greenery. The intrepid chaperon's intimate familiarity with the hostile environment and its terrifying denizens often spells the difference between life and death for adventurers unaccustomed to the lethal hardships posed by Wildwood's unforgiving terrain and voracious hunters. Rashers foolish enough to enter the perilous forests without the accompaniment of an expert woodsman almost never return to relay the tale.

In addition to their expertise as foresters, pathfinders also possess a remarkable ability to speak multiple languages and recall some information about the location, former inhabitants and hidden secrets of the countless abandoned ruins littering its verdant landscape. Their fluency in the various tongues enables them to effectively communicate with their clients as well as obtain valuable insight and current news from Wildwood's indigenous residents. Despite their important role as interpreters, the vast majority of daring explorers hire their services to help unlock the ancient mysteries and treasures concealed within the foreboding remnants of the domain's failed civilizations. Inside of their imposing stone walls lay the accumulated material and magical wealth of the doomed society, stoically waiting for their discovery by rapacious adventurers. Much to the chagrin of these entrepreneurs, the ghosts of the past rarely relinquish their prizes without a struggle. Wickedly ingenious traps and terrifying guardians await anyone attempting to wrest these invaluable riches from their unrelenting grasp. The pathfinder's assistance in this precarious endeavor proves instrumental in determining the ultimate success of the mission.

Despite their generally universal characteristics, pathfinders hail from a number of diverse backgrounds. Most begin their careers as rangers and druids, two classes with an inseparable bond to the natural world. A smaller but still noteworthy percentage start out as rogues, barbarians and bards with the remaining classes accounting for a miniscule portion of the pathfinder population. Racially, elves, including half-elves, comprise the largest percentage of the prestige class' numbers followed closely by dovers, humans, thorns and wild frey respectively. Other races infrequently embark on the journey to becoming a pathfinder, but their constituency lags far behind the membership of the aforementioned races.

Hit Die: d8

Requirements

Characters wishing to become pathfinders must fulfill all of the following requirements.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Track, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (whip)

Skills: Knowledge (geography)(Wildwood) 8 ranks, Knowledge (history)(Wildwood) 4 ranks, Survival 8 ranks.

Class Skills

The pathfinder's class skills (and the key ability for each) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (any) (Int), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geography)(Wildwood)(Int), Knowledge (history)(Wildwood)(Int), Knowledge (local)(Int), Knowledge (nature)(Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (any) (Wis), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str) and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier

Class Features

All of the following abilities are class features of the pathfinder prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The pathfinder is proficient with all simple weapons, the whip and all light armor. He is not proficient with shields.

Fluency (Ex): In addition to the languages normally available to the character, the pathfinder is also fluent in an additional number of languages equal to his Intelligence modifier. The pathfinder must select these bonus languages from among the following

The Pathfinder

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+2	+0	Fluency, skill focus (Survival), trailblazer
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+0	Archaeologist
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+1	Fleet-footed
4th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Whip mastery
5th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Woodland senses
6th	+4	+5	+5	+2	Ancient secrets
7th	+5	+5	+5	+2	Woodland cover
8th	+6	+6	+6	+2	Evasion
9th	+6	+6	+6	+3	Dancing whips
10th	+7	+7	+7	+3	Ancient insight

choices: Aquan, Canine, Draconic, Druidic, Elven, Feline, Green and Sylvan.

Skill Focus (Survival): At 1st level, the pathfinder receives a +3 bonus to his Survival skill check whenever he looks for or follows tracks left in the wilderness. If he already has this feat, he may instead choose one of the following feats: Alertness, Skill Focus (Listen), Skill Focus (Search) or Skill Focus (Spot).

Trailblazer (Ex): At 1st level, pathfinders wearing light or no armor acquire the ability to pass through all forms of natural vegetation without any impediment to their movement. This ability enables the pathfinder to move through jungle terrain at his normal speed; however his speed is still reduced while traveling through plant growth affected by spells such as *entangle*, while moving uphill or while swimming or walking through water. In addition, a number of allies equal to the character's pathfinder level can follow his lead and reduce their movement penalty in half. Therefore, allies following the pathfinder through a trackless section of jungle terrain move at three-quarters speed rather than the normal half-speed. Anyone following the pathfinder in this manner must remain within 50 feet of the pathfinder at all times; otherwise they lose the benefits of this ability.

Archaeologist (Ex): The pathfinder is an expert in the study of ancient ruins and lost civilizations. Whenever he searches for or encounters an abandoned settlement, the pathfinder may make an archaeologist check to ascertain information about the locale. He is limited to one check per day, and he cannot take 10 or 20 on this check. The character's archaeologist check is equal to his pathfinder level + Int modifier.

Difficulty Class	Types of Information
10	General location of hidden ruins (narrow search to a 10-square mile area) and general characteristics of the ruins' former inhabitants.
20	Specific location of hidden ruins (narrow search to a 1-square mile area) and identify type and purpose of abandoned structure. Provide details about the civilization including political, social and economic systems.
25	Pinpoint exact location of ruins and provide a broad overview of the site's history including recollection of specific events.
30	Obtain obscure facts such as the precise location of the civilization's treasure or its tombs.

Fleet-footed (Ex): As long as the pathfinder wears light or no armor and is not carrying a heavy load, his land-based speed increases by +10 feet, and he receives a +2 bonus to all Climb and Swim skill checks. The pathfinder does not receive the benefit of this ability if he moves through any type of terrain that would normally impede movement such as a trackless jungle.

Whip Mastery (Ex): At 4th level, the pathfinder gains the feat Greater Weapon Focus (whip), and he can deal nonlethalor lethal damage with the weapon without penalty. The pathfinder can also use his whip as a grappling hook, treating the attempt as a Use Rope skill check except that the character uses his whip attack roll in lieu of a Use Rope skill check.

Woodland Senses (Ex): The pathfinder is always entitled to an action during a surprise round while in any wooded environment including forests, woods, swamps and jungles. In addition, he can also make attacks of opportunity while flat-footed, although he still loses his Dex bonus to AC.

Ancient Secrets (Ex): The pathfinder's extensive knowledge of neglected civilizations grants him the rogue's trapfinding ability and a +3 bonus to all Search checks made to locate traps or secret doors on ruined structures.

Woodland Cover (Ex): The pathfinder positions his body in such a manner that the surrounding vegetation grants him a +2 cover bonus to AC against ranged attacks directly targeting him. This ability is only effective in wooded areas such as forests, jungles, woods and swamps, and it does not function in areas where construction or settlement replaced the natural environment.

Evasion (Ex): The pathfinder gains the rogue's evasion ability. If the character already possesses evasion, he instead acquires the rogue's special ability, improved evasion.

Dancing Whips (Ex): Whenever the pathfinder fights with a whip in each hand, he gains the benefits of the Two-Weapon Fighting and Two-Weapon Defense feats even if he does not possess the prerequisites for either feat.

Ancient Insight (Ex): Whenever the pathfinder passes within 20 feet of a secret door, concealed door or a trap affixed to an abandoned or ruined structure, he automatically receives a Search check to notice the door or trap, as if actively searching for it. In addition, the pathfinder also gains a +2 bonus on Reflex saves to avoid traps found within the ruins and a +2 dodge bonus to AC against attacks made by the same types of traps.

Sekara

Throughout Wildwood, a handful of frail, elderly masters carefully guard the secret techniques and philosophy of the ancient elven martial art of *ranaseer karymatha*, translated roughly into the Common tongue as "courageous weapon". Unknown even to most elves, the existence of this unusual style of combat persists as one of the last great mysteries of this time-honored bloodline. To ensure the preservation and purity of this lost combat style, the keepers of this mystical tradition secretly cull the brightest and wisest pupils from elven villages and towns. Commencing their training shortly after their 100th birthday, most disciples of the fighting discipline spend the next five decades honing their

craft through study, repetition and attunement with the art's spiritual philosophies. After passing the final test of mind and body, young apprentices finally achieve the title of *sekara*, a shortened version of its elf name.

Ranaseer karymatha occupies a unique niche in the universe of armed conflict. The discipline synthesizes philosophy, physicality and magic into a seamless combination of the three radically different elements. Simplistically, philosophy guides the warrior's physical movements to create magical energy; therefore bonding the three distinct entities into a single harmonious union. Its core belief preaches that elves, like all other natural beings, must mimic nature in all aspects of life. Attunement with the natural world unlocks the gate to a realm of limitless and seemingly impossible realities. Carefully studying and duplicating the motions of a graceful hawk eventually empowers the practitioner to fly in the same manner as the desired animal. Adopting the passive demeanor of a gentle, rolling stream bestows tranquility in one's personal life, while mirroring the irrepressible force of an overflowing river unleashes a torrent of pure force. The rigid philosophy demands impartial detachment from the affairs of irrational beings.

Elves exclude all other races from practicing the ancient martial art, including half-elves. Rangers and fighters are best suited to follow the path of *ranaseer karymatha*, however rogues, druids and even sorcerers also display a propensity for the fighting discipline. Practitioners never discuss the order's secrets with outsiders, although they may freely display the martial art without fear of reprisal. Instead, they refer to themselves as *sekaras*, and describe their unique fighting technique as a lost form of magic.

Hit Die: d8

Requirements

To qualify as a sekara, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Race: Elf
Alignment: Lawful neutral or neutral
Abilities: Intelligence 15+, Wisdom 15+
Base Attack Bonus: +5
Feats: Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Quarterstaff)
Skills: Concentration 5 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks.

Class Skills

The sekara's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana)(Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Profession (any) (Int), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str) and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following abilities are features of the *sekara* prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: *Sekaras* gain no weapon or shield proficiencies, however they are proficient with light armor and elven chain armor. Most utilize a suit of armor and a magical quarterstaff bequeathed to them by their master or a close family member.

Channel Force (Su): The *sekara*'s philosophy strikes a unique balance between the physical forces of the natural world and the intangible energies of the mystical arts. At will any wooden quarterstaff that he is in physical contact with can be changed into a petrified weapon as a free action dealing 1d8/1d8 points of damage on a successful hit. He can utilize this ability to transform magical weapons; however this power has no effect on artifacts. While petrified, the weapon's weight doubles, while its hardness and hp increase to 10 and 20 respectively. This effect persists for one round after it leaves the *sekara*'s grasp.

Deflect Critical (Ex): *Sekaras* are very adept at minimizing the effects of a crippling blow; therefore they have a variable chance of negating a critical hit scored against them. Whenever an opponent scores a critical hit against him, the *sekara* makes an attack roll with his quarterstaff adding only his base attack bonus and the weapon's enhancement bonus to this roll if any. If his roll equals or exceeds his opponent's attack roll that confirmed the critical hit, then the critical hit is negated, but the attack still deals normal damage. This ability is only effective when the *sekara* is wielding his quarterstaff.

Example: A 6th level fighter/2nd level *sekara* is fighting with a +2 *quarterstaff* against an 8th level human fighter armed with a long sword. The fighter swings his blade at the *sekara* and rolls a natural 20, a result that falls within the fighter's threat range for a critical hit. The fighter makes another attack roll to confirm the threat and this time he rolls a fifteen. He adds his base attack bonus of +8, his +4 Strength modifier and the +2 enhancement bonus of the weapon to

The Sekara

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Channel force
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Deflect critical
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Boomerang
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Bird of prey
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Symbiosis
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	Dance on clouds
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Blend
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6	Funnel cloud
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	Force of nature
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	*Ravinilis*

yield a total of 29. The *sekara* has an AC of 24; therefore this would normally score a critical hit. However, the *sekara* can negate this critical hit if the results of his modified attack roll equal or exceed 29. In contrast to a normal attack roll, the *sekara* only adds his base attack bonus of +8 and the +2 enhancement bonus of his quarterstaff to this roll; hence he needs to roll at least a 19 to negate this critical hit. Fortunately for the *sekara* luck is on his side as he rolls a 20, negating the critical hit. Although he avoided the critical hit, he still takes normal damage from his opponent's successful attack.

Boomerang (Su): As a full attack action, the *sekara* can hurl his quarterstaff at an opponent, enabling the weapon to strike its target with both of its heads. When employed in this manner, the quarterstaff is treated as a hurled weapon with a range increment of 10 feet. Unlike normal ranged weapons, the quarterstaff strikes its opponent with both heads necessitating two ranged attack rolls. If the quarterstaff strikes its target at least once, it returns to its owner's hands at the end of his turn; otherwise the quarterstaff lands in a randomly determined location 1d6 feet from its intended target.

Bird of Prey (Su): Mimicking the fluid motion of a flying predator, the *sekara* briefly takes flight gaining perfect maneuverability, although he maintains his normal speed and ascends no higher than five feet above the ground. As long as he remains aloft and is above his enemies, he receives a +1 bonus to his attack rolls. Furthermore, because his movements are more unpredictable, he gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC as long as he remains aloft. He can fly for a number of rounds equal to twice his Strength modifier and can employ Bird of Prey as many times per day as his Constitution modifier, minimum of 1 use.

Symbiosis (Su): The *sekara* achieves harmonious union with nature, allowing him to cure damage. Opening the channel with the natural world requires a successful Concentration check (DC 15). If he makes it, the *sekara* spends one minute in silent contemplation, fusing his body and psyche with his natural surroundings. Failure does not count as a usage, but he must wait ten minutes before trying again. Symbiosis heals 1d8 points of damage plus one point per *sekara* level. Symbiosis functions once per day, however it proves ineffective whenever construction or settlement has replaced the natural surroundings.

Dance on Clouds (Ex): When utilizing the Bird of Prey ability, the *sekara* receives the benefits of the Spring Attack feat. Dance on Clouds functions exclusively with the Bird of Prey ability.

Blend (Ex): The *sekara*'s remarkable affinity with nature enables him to effectively camouflage himself against the natural background. Blend functions continuously in a wilderness environment; however it proves ineffective whenever construction or settlement has replaced the natural surroundings. While in this setting, ranged attacks directly targeting the *sekara* suffer a 20% miss chance, and he receives a +2 bonus to all Hide and Move Silently checks.

Funnel Cloud (Su): Initiating funnel cloud is a free action. While employing this ability, the *sekara* levitates at will, rising and descending as much as 20 ft. per round during his move action, up to a maximum height of 20 ft. The *sekara*'s body resembles a gyroscope, spinning rapidly around a central axis as it whirls around him at a dizzying speed, allowing him to attack his enemies as if he possessed the Whirlwind Attack feat. While employing this ability, his horizontal movement is limited to a 5-foot step. If he undertakes an action, such as casting a spell, that normally requires a Concentration check to perform while being threatened or attacked, he must also succeed at a Concentration check to perform the action while using this ability. If a condition exists that already requires him to make a Concentration check, such as casting a spell while being threatened, the check's DC is increased by +5. He may use Funnel Cloud as many times per day as his Wisdom modifier, minimum 1 usage. The ability lasts a number of rounds equal to double his Wisdom modifier. When the ability ends, he gently floats back to the ground in a manner identical to the spell *feather fall*.

Force of Nature (Su): In lieu of his normal attack routine, the *sekara* momentarily concentrates before unleashing his inner strength with one terrifying strike. This mighty blow necessitates the usage of a standard action preventing him from making more than one attack during the round; however in exchange it increases his quarterstaff's critical threat range by 2, triples his Strength modifier to damage and also knocks his opponent prone on a successful hit unless he rolls a successful Reflex save (DC damage dealt). Opponents larger than the *sekara* receive a +4 bonus to the preceding Reflex saving throw per size category of difference. *Sekaras* may employ this ability as many times per day as twice their Constitution modifier, minimum 1 usage. He may only utilize this ability with any melee attack made with his quarterstaff.

***Ravinilis* (Su)**: The *sekara*'s remarkable attunement with the natural world bestows the ability to alter his body into a form of flexible wood. The transformation requires a standard action, and it remains in effect for one minute. The *sekara* gains a +5 natural armor bonus to AC and is immune to critical hits and sneak attacks; however he suffers a -4 penalty to Dexterity. He may employ this ability as many times per day as his Wisdom modifier.

Appendix C: Spells and Magic Items

Over the course of countless millenniums, Wildwood's innovative spellcasters devised a comprehensive inventory of incantations and devices in an attempt to tame its feral wilderness or harness the domain's immense natural energies. The following collection of spells and magic items represents its pioneering inventors' greatest achievements in pursuit of these lofty endeavors.

Spells

In a primordial world where nature reigns supreme, it is no surprise that druidic spells comprise the overwhelming majority of Wildwood's new spells. Most spells work in conjunction with the potent forces of nature, augmenting the attributes of living creatures or bestowing innate abilities to the spellcaster and his allies, although there are a few notable exceptions. Regardless of the spells' purpose or intention, most are an integral component in the magical repertoires of indigenous druids and rangers.

Arboreal Sanctuary

Transmutation
Level: Drd 2, Rgr 2
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 free action
Range: Personal and touch
Target: One touched tree
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: No
Casting this spell requires nothing more than a brief utterance. The recitation expends a free action and counts toward your limit of one quickened spell per round. The touched tree acts as a conduit for travel, causing you to instantly disappear and then reappear at any point in space in direct contact with another portion of the tree. Creatures observing you lose track of your position, although they can attempt to visually locate you after you reappear. The spell enables you to position yourself in any manner as long as some part of your body maintains physical contact with the tree and the contact point is strong enough to support your weight. Therefore you can touch the tree's trunk and immediately reappear standing atop one of the tree's branches 100 feet off the ground. It is possible to travel through the tree's roots if there is enough adjacent empty space for you to safely reappear such as a subterranean chamber. Druids and rangers typically employ this spell to elude pursuers or to gain a tactical advantage over their opponents.

Bond of the Beast

Transmutation
Level: Drd 1, Rgr 1
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes
The creature touched acquires a natural weapon specifically chosen at the time of casting. The type of weapon must conform with an already existing anatomical feature, such as bestowing a bite attack to a creature with teeth or a claw attack to a creature with hands and fingernails. The spell only provides one weapon; therefore a creature with two hands only acquires one claw attack. The following chart provides the natural attack form's damage.

Size of Creature	Damage
Diminutive or smaller	None
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge or bigger	1d10

The natural weapon conforms to all of the rules for natural weapons. As the caster progresses in level, the spell grants additional benefits as described in the subsequent chart.

Caster Level	Additional Benefit
5th	2nd natural weapon
10th	+1 enhancement bonus
15th	Multiattack feat
20th	+2 enhancement bonus

The enhancement applies to the natural weapon's attack and damage rolls. Spellcasters acquiring a natural weapon experience some difficulty casting spells with the affected body part. There is a 10% chance of miscasting a spell for each spell component impacted by the affected creature's natural attack mode. Therefore, a druid with a claw and a bite attack miscasts a spell requiring a verbal and somatic component 20% of the time.

Callastrope's Cocoon

Conjuration (Healing)
Level: Drd 4, Rgr 4
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 8 hours
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes
Thin strands of silky, web material encapsulate your entire body, wrapping you inside an artificially constructed cocoon. If you spend a full night resting within the confines of the cocoon, (i.e. 8 hours), you recover a number of hit points per caster level equal to your Wisdom modifier in lieu of the standard 1 hit point per character level gained from a full night's

rest. In addition, the spell also repairs ability damage equal to your Wisdom modifier. For instance, an 8th level caster with a Wisdom modifier of +4 recovers 32 hit points and 4 points of ability damage rather than the normal 8 hit points and 1 point of ability damage. If your sleep is interrupted, you only recover a pro rata share of your hit points and ability damage from the spell and from normal rest. Using the preceding example, four hours of peaceful rest only recoups 16 hit points and 2 points of ability damage instead of 32 hit points and 4 points of ability damage from the spell, while allowing the character to regain 4 hit points and no points of ability damage for the remaining four hours. Breaking out of the cocoon takes only a single round; however you must spend an additional round removing the cocoon's sticky remnants from your body or else you suffer a -2 penalty to Dexterity for the following minute.

Carapace

Conjuration (Creation)
Level: Drd 6
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No
A hard shell encapsulates your entire torso, affording you additional protection against all forms of attack. The carapace provides a natural armor bonus of +5 and DR 3/- that increases by +1 for every 3 levels after 11th (up to a maximum of natural armor +8 and DR 6/- at 20th level respectively) as well as resistance to acid, cold, fire and lightning 5. Although the shell provides openings for your head and other appendages, its added weight and tight fit restrict your movement negating your Dex bonus to AC while imposing a -4 penalty to all skill checks where Dexterity is the key ability and reducing your speed in half. Furthermore, items stored on your person require a full round to retrieve, and there is a 10% chance that you miscast spells with a somatic component.

Companion's Vengeance

Transmutation
Level: Drd 3, Rgr 3
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Your animal companion touched
Duration: 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes
Whenever your touched animal companion suffers damage at the hands of your enemies, either you or your animal companion (your choice) receives a morale bonus to his next attack and damage roll against that specific foe based upon the figures provided in the following chart. The bonus to the damage roll is only applied to its or your next attack; therefore a miss provides no benefit.

Damage	Morale bonus
1-10 hp	+1
11-20 hp	+2
21-30 hp	+3
31-40 hp	+4
41+ hp	+5

If more than one opponent hits your animal companion prior to its or your next attack roll, you can grant you and your animal companion the aforementioned morale bonus, but neither party can gain more than one morale bonus in a single round. If you voluntarily end the spell before its effects expire, your companion recovers one hit point of damage per caster level (up to a maximum of +20).

Echo

Abjuration
Level: Drd 1, Rgr 1
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: 60 ft.-radius emanation centered on a point in space
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No
This spell greatly amplifies all sound within the spell's area of effect, imposing a -10 penalty to all Move Silently skill checks made by creatures passing through the affected area. In addition, the spell also increases sonic damage dealt within the spell's area of effect by one point per caster level. Druids and rangers typically utilize this spell to detect the presence of prey and in conjunction with a previously constructed pit or snare.

Fell Tree

Transmutation
Level: Sor 5/Wiz 5
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One tree; see text
Saving Throw: Reflex negates
Spell Resistance: None
You cause a single tree with a height no greater than 10 ft. per caster level to uproot and fall in a designated direction. Creatures and objects in the path of the falling tree suffer 1d6 points of damage per ten foot increment of the tree's height. The tree affects a line equal to its height with a width equal to one-quarter its height. Therefore, a 100 ft. tree affects an area 100 ft. long and 25 ft. wide and deals 10d6 points of damage to creatures and objects that fail a Reflex saving throw. Naturally, the surrounding terrain and intervening natural obstacles, such as other trees

and dense underbrush lessen the tree's impact. The subsequent chart describes their effects.

Type of Terrain	Multiply damage by
Jungle	¾
Mountains	¾
Swamp	¾

Creatures that fail their saving throw not only take damage, but may also find themselves pinned beneath the tree. If the character rolls a natural "1" on his Reflex saving throw, the character is pinned beneath the tree. He remains pinned until help arrives or he extricates himself by making a Strength check (DC 25) or an Escape Artist check (DC 30). While pinned he takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute until he falls unconscious. Once unconscious, he must make a Constitution check (DC 15) every minute. If he fails, he takes 1d6 points of lethal damage per minute until the character is freed or dies. Spellcasters under the employ of timber companies from Penance and warlords from Arena originally invented this spell to facilitate logging before discovering the aforementioned alternative use for this spell.

Hidden Danger

Transmutation
Level: Drd 2, Rgr 2
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes
The creature touched becomes more acutely aware of his natural surroundings, enhancing his ability to avoid concealed dangers blending in with the natural environment. The spell's beneficiary gains a +1 bonus to all Listen, Search and Spot skill checks as well as a +1 bonus to all Reflex saves to avoid natural hazards, such as quicksand, as well as traps designed to blend in with the environment such as pits and snares. The aforementioned bonuses increase by 1 for every three additional levels above 3rd level up to a maximum bonus of +5. The recipient only benefits from the aforementioned bonuses in areas where construction and settlement did not replace the natural surroundings.

Instinct

Transmutation
Level: Drd 2, Rgr 2
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Living creature touched
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes
The touched creature abandons logic and reason, and instead relies upon his innate instincts to guide his actions. The recipient adds his Wisdom modifier or penalty (in the case of an unwilling target) to his AC, attack rolls, skill checks or saving throws for the duration of the spell (caster's choice). Because the character depends upon instinct in lieu of intellect, he finds it difficult to perform tasks requiring tremendous thought and concentration. As a result, actions such as casting spells, activating a magic item, formulating a complex plan or other tasks that the GM determines require higher thought now take a full round to successfully complete. Druids and rangers predominantly use the spell to augment their defenses or aid in attacking their foes.

Pine Needles

Evocation
Level: Drd 4
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: 30 ft.
Area: Cone-shaped burst
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Spell Resistance: Yes
A barrage of sharp, green needles springs from your outstretched hands and extends outward in a cone. Creatures in the area of effect take 5 points of piercing damage per caster level (up to a maximum of 75 points) minus the creature's AC. Creatures making their saving throws take half damage after subtracting their AC from the damage total.

Stumble

Transmutation
Level: Drd 0
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 free action
Range: 25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels
Target: One creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex negates
Spell Resistance: Yes
You cause a creature moving through a natural environment to stumble and fall to the ground. The spell requires that the creature's form of locomotion must make actual contact with the ground beneath it; therefore the spell is ineffective against flying creatures or incorporeal foes. You must cast this spell while the creature is moving; therefore you must cast the spell at the beginning of the target's turn as part of a ready action. However, you cannot cast the spell while flat-footed or surprised.

Trail of Blood

Transmutation
Level: Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch

Target: Slashing weapon touched
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (object)
Spell Resistance: Yes
The weapon's blade becomes serrated and glows with an eerily yellow light. Whenever the weapon strikes a living opponent, its jagged edges tear its victim's flesh, dealing an additional 1d6 points of damage on a successful hit. In addition to the hit point damage, the creature's spilt blood emits an unearthly phosphorescent aura granting a +20 circumstance bonus to all Survival skill checks make to track the creature. Although the weapon only retains its jagged edge and radiant glow for 1 round/level, the victim's blood glows for 1 day/level. The victim continues to slowly bleed, (but does not sustain additional damage), until the additional damage dealt by the enchanted weapon is cured. For instance, if the weapon struck the victim three times during the encounter and dealt an additional 12 points of damage because of the spell, the bleeding stops when the victim recovers the 12 lost hit points. The spell only works against living creatures with blood; hence it is ineffective against constructs, oozes, plants and undead.

Material Component: A whisker from a large, predatory feline or canine.

Tribal Drums

Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 2
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: 40 ft.
Area: All allies within a 40 ft.-radius burst centered on you; see text
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes
The pulsating beat of drums resounds throughout the area, slowly building up to a frenzied crescendo. All allies within the spell's area of effect gain a +4 bonus to Survival skill checks to find and follow tracks. In addition, whenever more than one of the bard's allies threatens the same opponent, each ally receives a +1 morale bonus to attack and weapon damage rolls against that foe and their critical threat ranges also improve by 1. Allies only receive the preceding benefits if they can hear the drums; therefore the spell does not influence deafened creatures.

Arcane Focus: A percussion instrument.

Wall of Vines

Conjuration (Creation)
Level: Drd 2, Rgr 2, Plant 2
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: Anchored plane of tangled vines up to 10 ft. long/level (S)
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No
You conjure a dense wall of twisting vines standing 20 feet high and measuring up to 10 ft. long/level and one inch thick/level. The wall requires two vertical anchor points, and it is unaffected by intervening objects. As a result of this unusual property, the wall weaves its way around natural obstacles, practically incorporating them into its physical structure. The same principle applies to creatures; therefore any creatures in the wall's area of effect find themselves encapsulated by the tangled web of stringy plant material but they do not take any damage. Creatures trapped in this manner are considered grappled until they break free. A creature can tear its way through the wall by making a Strength check as a full round action with a Difficulty Class of 20 + caster's level (up to a maximum of +10) or by dealing damage to the wall. Each 10 ft. square of wall possess 5 hp per inch of thickness, and characters automatically hit the wall with each attack. When the section's hit points drop to 0, the wall is breached. Creatures can also circumvent the wall by climbing over it; a task requiring at least one successful Climb skill check (DC 15). Druids and rangers typically cast the spell to buy some time to escape from pursuers or slow the charge of an onrushing opponent.

Magic Items

Blessed with a bountiful supply of natural materials, the native inhabitants craft a diverse variety of items intended to aid intrepid adventurers on their travails into the unexplored depths of the domain's bestial wilderness. Druids construct a sizeable portion of magic items unique to Wildwood, but practitioners of arcane magic also lend a significant hand in the formulation of this wondrous collection of mystical treasures. Although its inexhaustible supply of raw materials typically attracts the interest of avaricious merchants, the dark recesses of its remote woodlands conceal hoards of magnificent riches and terrible artifacts far more valuable than any expansive tract of timber or exotic commodity.

Magic Armor and Shield Special Abilities

Bereft of metallurgical equipment and expertise, Wildwood's craftsmen rely upon readily available organic materials to craft suits of armor and wooden shields. Commensurate with the devices' protective nature, they typically ward the wearer against the omnipresent natural dangers and monstrous denizens lurking throughout the primordial realm.

Floating: Despite their weight or composite material, suits of armor bestowed with this property demonstrate remarkable buoyancy, preventing the wearer from drowning. Although it does not enable the wearer to breathe water, the armor does not restrict his full range of motion while submersed in any body of liquid thus negating any armor check penalties to Swim checks.

Moderate transmutation; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *freedom of movement*; Price +1 bonus.

Repellent: Armor and shields possessing this quality continually emit olfactory and chemical agents repugnant to animals, animated plants and vermin, affording the wearer additional protection against these types of creatures. Whenever possible, the aforementioned categories of living entities avoid contact with the item's owner unless subjected to any form of attack or obvious provocation from the wearer and his allies. Because of their reluctance to combat him, animals, animated plants and vermin suffer a -2 penalty to melee attack and damage rolls made against the warded creature. As an added benefit, the protective device prevents the wearer from contracting diseases spread by ordinary insects such as flies and mosquitoes, although it does not immunize the wearer against diseases resulting from actual injury. For instance, repellent armor protects the wearer against naturally occurring diseases indigenous to the immediate environment such as malaria and yellow fever, but it does not make him invulnerable to the infectious bite of a dire rat.

Moderate abjuration; CL 8th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *antiplant shell*, *hold animal*, *repel vermin*; Price +1 bonus.

Survival: Typically worn by druids and rangers, leather, hide and other armors constructed from natural materials are most often imbued with this unusual property. While seemingly unremarkable upon casual viewing, a closer inspection reveals the presence of small pockets that hold a variety of items useful for wilderness survival without adding additional weight or bulkiness to the armor. In actuality, the openings allow the wearer to access a small recess of extradimensional space where the items are stored and replenished on a daily basis. The pockets contain the following items.

- *potion of cure light wounds* (1d8+5)
- *potion of neutralize poison*
- 2 one quart flasks of water and trail rations (one day supply)
- sunrod, bedroll and 50 ft. of silk rope

The suit of armor restocks these supplies at dawn every morning. Unspent items simultaneously disappear regardless of whether the wearer stores them within the armor's pockets or in another location.

Moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *fabricate*, *secret chest*; Price +1 bonus.

Vine: Up to three times per day, the bearer of this type of wooden shield can command the protective device to sprout a thick, braided vine with a 15-ft. reach. The vine remains affixed to the shield, allowing its wielder to direct its attack as a free action every round. The vine attacks once per round, using its owner's base attack bonus +1 for attack rolls or its owner's base attack bonus +5 for grapple checks, while dealing 1d6+2 points of damage on a successful hit. The vine remains in existence for one minute per activation or until it destroyed. It possesses an AC of 15 and 40 hp, and it is considered a Large-sized plant.

Moderate conjuration; CL 5th; Craft Arms and Armor, plant growth, summon nature's ally; Price +2 bonus.

Magic Weapons Special Abilities

Unlike the preceding examples, magic weapons draw their inspiration and power from the land's violent, predatory nature. Wicked blades sate their gluttonous appetite for blood from the porous wounds of their hapless foes, while others impart insight and wisdom gained over the course of countless generations.

Instinctive: Instinctive weapons tap the wielder's previously dormant intuition, enabling him to employ the weapon while relying upon his inner wisdom and guidance rather than brute force and hand-eye coordination. Instinctive weapons add the wielder's Wisdom modifier rather than his Strength modifier to his attack roll with the weapon, although his Strength modifier still applies to the weapon's damage. This property only applies to melee weapons.

Moderate transmutation; CL 12th; Craft Arms and Armor, *owl's wisdom*, *transformation*; Price +3 bonus.

Killing: Bows and crossbows enchanted with this powerful incantation confer the weapon's benefit on its ammunition. Whenever the weapon scores a critical hit with a ranged sneak attack the weapon grants its wielder an additional ranged sneak attack against the injured foe at the same attack bonus as the previous hit. Subsequent critical hits against the same opponent do not provide any additional benefits. Needless to say, members of the hunter prestige class salaciously covet this terrifying weapon.

Moderate transmutation; CL 15th; Craft Arms and Armor, 10 ranks in Survival, *finger of death*; Price +2 bonus.

Primeval: Harkening back to the barbarous days before the advent of civilization, primeval weapons enable their users to abandon reason and intellect for unbridled savagery and carnage. Activating the weapon's special power immediately results in 1d4 points of Intelligence damage to its wielder. In exchange, the wielder adds the damage to his attack and damage rolls for one minute per point of Intelligence damage suffered; therefore a character sustaining 3 points of Intelligence damage adds a +3 bonus to his attack and damage rolls for the next 3 minutes. In addition, he also gains an additional attack at his highest attack bonus whenever he employs the full attack action, although he loses his Dexterity and dodge bonuses to AC in such circumstances. Primeval weapons enjoy tremendous popularity amongst Wildwood's monstrous humanoids, especially gnolls. Intelligence damage suffered as the result of this special ability is recovered at a rate of 1 point per hour.

Moderate transmutation; CL 12th; Craft Arms and Armor, *baleful polymorph*, *haste*; Price +3 bonus.

Thirsty: These slashing weapons attribute their unusual moniker to the item's sickening lust for blood. Whenever a weapon enchanted with this power scores a critical hit, the weapon's wielder must make a Will save where the Difficulty Class equals the weapon's base critical damage plus its enhancement bonus. For

instance, if a +2 *thirsty longsword* scores a critical hit, the saving throw's DC is 2d8 (the weapon's base damage) +2 (its enhancement bonus). If he makes the saving throw, he gains an immediate attack of opportunity against that foe while adding a +1 morale bonus to his attack and weapon damage roll. If he fails the Will save, the blade's thirst for blood overcomes him, as he swings with reckless abandon, directing all of his subsequent attacks against that same enemy. He still receives an immediate attack of opportunity against his injured opponent; but he suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls and saving throws as well as losing any Dexterity or dodge bonuses to AC. Furthermore, whenever he misses, he leaves himself extremely vulnerable to counterattacks, entitling his threatening opponents to make attacks of opportunity against him. Once he fails his saving throw, he gains no additional benefits if he scores another critical hit. The aforementioned penalties remain in effect until he slays his opponent or the wielder falls in combat. Most seasoned warriors refer to thirsty weapons as double-edged blades.

Moderate enchantment; CL 12th; Craft Arms and Armor, *heroism*, *rage*; Price +3 bonus.

Rings

Consistent with most of Wildwood's other magical equipment, the domain's designers typically fashion rings from the abundant organic materials such as bone and wood. Because of their affinity with these natural components, druids create the vast majority of rings exclusively encountered in Wildwood. Unlike typical examples of magical rings, most inexplicably function only as a matched set.

Rings of the Dual Moons: This odd duo of wildly different rings consists of a translucent band crafted from ice and a grayish circlet constructed from stone rich in iron deposits. The rings only operate in tandem; therefore they are nearly always found together. Scholars frequently refer to the frozen ring as Anahita, an obvious reference to the Forge's watery moon, while its counterpart goes by the name Zadkiel, in honor of the Forge's other moon. When worn in concert, they grant the wearer resistance to cold 5 and a +2 natural armor bonus. In addition, each ring possesses the ability to generate any combination of the following spell or spell-like abilities up to a total of 3 times per day.

Anahita
- *Ice storm*
- *Sleet storm* (DC 14)
- *Water breathing*

Zadkiel
- *Spike stones*
- *Stone shape*
- *Stoneskin*

The leaders of druidic circles and powerful rangers are the most frequent owners of this potent set of rings.

Moderate evocation and transmutation; CL 12th; Forge Ring, *ice storm*, *sleet storm*, *spike stones*, *stone shape*, *stoneskin*, *water breathing*; Price 68,000 gp (pair).

Rings of the Dual Suns: Inspired by their druidic brethren, Wildwood's resident clerics created this equally impressive pair of metallic rings as a tribute to the Forge's dual suns. Like its previous counterpart, the rings of the dual suns function exclusively as a team; therefore the owner must wear both rings to utilize their powers. The simple golden band is known as Crux, while its sister, Storm, consists of a silver circlet embedded with red, ruby chips. When worn in concert, the rings grant the wearer resistance to fire 5 and sheds permanent *daylight* as per the spell. (At the wearer's command, he can deactivate the latter function.) In addition, each ring possesses the ability to generate any combination of the following spell or spell-like abilities up to a total of 3 times per day.

Crux
- *Blindness/deafness* (DC 14)
- *Remove blindness/deafness*
- *Searing light*

Storm
- *Fire shield*
- *Flame strike* (DC 17)
- *Wall of fire* (DC 16)

Moderate conjuration and evocation; CL 12th; Forge Ring, *blindness/deafness*, *fire shield*, *flame strike*, *remove blindness/deafness*, *searing light*, *wall of fire*; Price 70,000 gp (pair).

Rings of the Mount: This unorthodox pair of bone rings creates a subconscious, telepathic link between a mount and its rider. The rider wears one of the rings on his hand, while the matching band pierces the mount's nostrils. The mental conduit between the two living beings greatly facilitates communication, resulting in improved cohesiveness on the battlefield. The rider gains a +4 bonus to his Ride skill checks as well as a +1 bonus on all mounted melee attack rolls. Furthermore, he is no longer required to make a Ride skill check to guide his mount with his knees; the mount automatically obeys his telepathic commands. The mount benefits from its rider's guidance and intuition, enabling it to use its rider's Will saving throw in lieu of its own. Once the rider and mount are bonded in this fashion, the rings are exclusively attuned to these two individuals until one of them dies. If either party deliberately causes the death of the other, the rings no longer function for the culprit.

Moderate enchantment; CL 6th; Forge Ring, *dominate animal*, *speak with animal*; Price 11,600 gp.

Ring of Rebirth: Novice adventurers often assume that this simple band of twisted, green vine is nothing more than a token of affection given to the wearer by a spouse or dear friend. On many occasions, owners acquire the coveted piece of jewelry in this manner; however the ring serves as more than a symbol of undying love or companionship. Dovers and elves gift the ring to a loved one on the eve of battle for its innocuous fibers store potent restorative magic. Within 1d4 hours after dying, the ring brings its wearer back to life as if a cleric cast *raise dead* on him.

In the process, the ring withers, rendering it completely useless and inert.

Moderate conjuration; CL 10th; Forge Ring, *gentle repose*, *raise dead*; Price 12,500 gp.

Staffs

Unlike staffs originating from other worlds, staffs hailing from Wildwood are typically comprised of wood or bone rather than metal or other inorganic substances. Druidic staffs dominate the domain's indigenous staffs, but practitioners of arcane magic are also represented in this category of magical inventory.

Felling: A pine cone always sits atop this potent offensive staff constructed from pine. It allows its wielder to utilize the following abilities.

- *Magic stone* (1 charge)
- *Fell tree* (2 charges)
- *Fire seeds* (2 charges)
- *Pine needles* (2 charges)

Moderate evocation and transmutation; CL 12th; Craft Staff, *fell tree*, *fire seeds*, *magic stone*, *pine needles*; Price 57,000 gp.

Inspiring: The Forge's bards attach a miniature, percussion instrument to the tip of this wooden staff. The staff empowers its owner to wield the following powers.

- *Heroism* (1 charge)
- *Rage* (1 charge)
- *Tribal drums* (1 charge)

Moderate enchantment; CL 8th; Craft Staff, *heroism*, *rage*, *tribal drums*; Price 24,000 gp.

Natural Armor: Druids always craft this staff from petrified wood. It possesses the following abilities.

- *Barkskin* (1 charge)
- *Carapace* (2 charges)

Moderate transmutation; CL 11th; Craft Staff, *barkskin*, *carapace*; Price 33,000 gp.

Plant Travel: Carved from oak or another common variety of deciduous wood, this staff appears identical to a weathered walking stick topped with a large acorn. It allows its wielder to cast the following spells.

- *Arboreal sanctuary* (1 charge)
- *Tree stride* (2 charges)
- *Transport via plants* (2 charges)

Moderate transmutation; CL 12th; Craft Staff, *arboreal sanctuary*, *tree stride*, *transport via plants*; Price 52,500 gp.

Traps: This staff consists of a wooden core completely wrapped in hemp fibers. It grants the following powers to its owner.

- *Detect snares and pits* (1 charge)
- *Hidden danger* (1 charge)
- *Snare* (2 charges)

Moderate divination and transmutation; CL 8th; Craft Staff, *detect snares and pits*, *hidden danger*, *snare*; Price 24,750 gp.

Wild: These primitive staffs are always constructed from the spine or thigh bone of a large, fearsome predator. They enable the wielder to cast the following spells.

- *Bond of the beast* (1 charge)
- *Instinct* (1 charge)
- *Magic fang* (1 charge)

Faint transmutation; CL 8th; Craft Staff, *bond of the beast*, *instinct*, *magic fang*; Price 18,000 gp.

Wondrous Items

In addition to the previously mentioned specific categories, Wildwood boasts an extensive stock of innovative and useful gear. As usual, the items' designers rely upon inspirations and materials procured from the natural world.

Baneful Quiver: Hunters and rangers prize this oddly colored green leather quiver bearing several rows of black stripes. The storage device converts any combination of 20 masterwork and magical arrows into bane arrows. The metamorphosis begins at the hour of Shroud and takes eight hours to complete. The arrows retain their magical property until the subsequent Shroud when they return to their original state. The transformation only occurs if the quiver is full. The quiver always creates the following assortment of bane arrows.

(1) Aberrations
(2) Animals
(1) Dragons
(2) Fey
(1) Giants
(1) Humanoids, canine
(1) Humanoids, elf
(1) Humanoids, feline
(1) Humanoids, goblinoid
(1) Humanoids, human
(2) Magical beasts
(1) Monstrous humanoids
(2) Plants
(2) Undead
(1) Vermin

Moderate conjuration; CL 8th; Craft Wondrous Item, *summon monster I*; Price 8,000 gp.

Bern Headdress: Unable to hear or converse in a conventional manner, berns rely upon this strange device to vocally communicate with other sentient races. The contraption consists of a leather helmet that fits snugly atop its head with several small holes that enable the berns' antennae to penetrate its surface. One end of a curved piece of wood is attached to the helmet's lower right side while the other end is positioned a few inches in front of its mouth. This end of the apparatus projects the berns' artificial voice up to a distance of 60 feet. The wondrous item enables berns to speak and comprehend any spoken language.

Moderate divination and illusion; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *tongues*, *ventriloquism*; Price 15,000 gp; Weight 2 lb.

Instant Cage: Constructed from flexible but sturdy varieties of wood, this item resembles an elaborate puzzle box or a child's toy more than a portable prison. It appears as a densely packed 3-inch cube of small sticks lashed together by a thin strap of amazingly strong and durable vines. The cage's owner can hurl the device at any Huge or smaller target within 60 feet, causing the cage to rapidly expand and attempt to entrap its victim with a successful hit on a ranged

touch attack. The cage completely encapsulates the victim if it fails a Reflex saving throw (DC = wielder's modified attack roll minus 10 or DC 14 whichever is higher); otherwise the victim eludes capture but the cage still expands to its intended size. For example, if item's wielder hits his target with a total attack roll of 23, the opponent's Reflex saving throw is DC 14 because it is higher than his modified attack roll minus 10. The cage is just large enough to tightly confine its prisoner, restricting his movement as if he were grappled. After ensnaring its victim, the cage and its contents magically float a few inches above the ground, enabling the owner to easily transport his victim to another location. Despite its relatively flimsy appearance, the cage proves astounding resistant to escape attempts as its bars possess a hardness of 10 and 60 hp. In addition to dealing physical damage to the cage, a Strength check (DC 28) or an Escape Artist skill check (DC 30) enables the captive to break free from the magical cell. The item functions up to 3 times per day, although it can confine the same foe indefinitely. Returning the cage to its compact form requires the usage of a command word and a full round action. Druids, hunters and rangers employ this device to capture rather than kill their intended prey.

Moderate transmutation; CL 12th; Craft Wondrous Item, *ironwood*, *snare*, *wood shape*; Price 55,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Jungle Goggles: This strange piece of eyewear consists of two multifaceted, rose-colored crystalline lenses bound together by a thin strap of leather that wraps around the wearer's head. Under normal lighting conditions, the goggles distort colors according to the item's texture, temperature and composition, allowing the viewer to easily distinguish objects or creatures normally benefiting from camouflage. Whenever the wearer makes a Spot skill check opposed by his target's Hide skill check, the subject does not benefit from any racial or circumstance bonuses to his Hide skill check attributable to its coloration. In addition, jungle goggles also bestow the Blind-Fight feat, although this ability is only effective against partially visible foes and not invisible enemies. As previously noted, the wearer only receives the aforementioned abilities under normal lighting conditions; therefore jungle goggles provide no benefit in total darkness or if the wearer is relying upon abilities such as blindsight or darkvision to see.

Moderate divination; CL 12th; Craft Wondrous Item, *color spray*, *true seeing*; Price 18,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Woodland Boots: This pair of supple leather boots enables its wearer to move through any type of natural terrain at his normal speed without leaving a discernable trail. The boots also augment his ability to avoid natural and manmade hazards and traps triggered by movement, such as falling into quicksand and stepping onto a concealed pit, granting him a +4 bonus to his Reflex save against such dangers. The boots are specifically attuned to recognize danger in the wilderness; therefore they do not function in locales where construction and settlements replaced the natural surroundings.

Faint divination and transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *detect snares and pits*, *pass without trace*; Price 18,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Appendix D: Monsters

Over the course of millions of years, Haiel has pulled a diverse array of unique monsters into his unruly kingdom. The following creatures represent a well rounded sampling of the domain's vicious denizens.

Arboreal Defender (Template)

Once powerful warriors or leaders, arboreal defenders are hopelessly cursed beings. Trapped inside their decaying carcasses, they are forced to do Haiel's bidding as punishment for the atrocities they committed against the forest during their lives. Their numbers are small. Haiel keeps only between 10 and 15 of these at any given time. Their purpose is to seek out others who would rape the land for their own benefit and destroy them.



The arboreal defenders are undead, though it is sometimes difficult to tell by their appearance. Their bodies are encased in a chitinous plant that provides natural armor and pumps fluids into their dead tissue, keeping them in a state resembling life. The plant runs from their legs, up their torsos and it encases their heads. It is similar to scale mail in appearance. The plant leaves their faces open, allowing them to be seen and they have a pigmentation that looks almost alive and healthy, though their eyes are cloudy. Strangely, the tops of their skulls are open, revealing the pulsating gray matter of their brain within. These creatures are a force to be reckoned with, drawing upon the power and the magic of the forest to strike against their enemies.

Creating an Arboreal Defender

Arboreal defender is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid or monstrous humanoid creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature). An arboreal defender uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities, except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to undead (augmented humanoid or monstrous humanoid). Do not recalculate the creature's base attack bonus, saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

Hit Dice: Increase all current and future hit dice to d12's.

Speed: Same as the base creature. If the base creature has a fly or swim speed, the arboreal defender retains the ability to fly or swim.

Armor Class: The base creature's armor is encased in the plant-like covering the arboreal defender is encased in, so it retains its original armor class and its natural armor increases by +5. This increase stacks with any existing natural armor the base creature may have possessed during its previous existence.

Attack: Arboreal defenders retain all of the attacks of the base creature. Arboreal Defenders attack using martial or ranged weapons. If the base creature lacked the ability to use martial weapons, the Martial Weapon Proficiency feat is gained upon transformation.

Full Attack: Arboreal defenders fighting without weapons typically use their spell-like abilities, or a touch attack (as described below).

Special Attacks: An arboreal defender retains all of the special attacks of the base creature and gains those described below. Saves have a DC of 10 + ½ the arboreal defender's HD + its Cha modifier unless noted otherwise.

Acid Sphere (Su): As a standard action, an arboreal defender may produce a sphere of acid in one of its hands. It may throw this sphere at any target within 30 feet + 5 feet per hit die. This attack requires a ranged touch attack and results in acid damage equaling 2d6 plus an additional one point per hit die.

Fear Aura (Su): Arboreal defenders are shrouded in a dreadful fear aura of foreboding and evil. Creatures of less than 7 HD within 20 feet of an arboreal defender must succeed at a Will save (DC 10 + ½ arboreal defender's HD + arboreal defender's Charisma modifier) or be affected as though by a *fear* spell cast by a sorcerer of the arboreal defender's level.

Necrotic Needles (Su): As a full attack action, the arboreal defender's plant armor produces thousands of tiny needles, which it launches at all creatures in a thirty foot circle around it. The arboreal defender must make a separate touch attack against each defender in the area. Upon a successful hit, the needles deal 1d4 hit points of damage, and the struck creature must succeed at a Fortitude save. If the struck creature fails its save, it suffers 1d4 points of Strength damage.

Sonic discharge (Su): Once per day an arboreal defender can unleash a powerful thundering blast that mercilessly rips through its opponents. The discharge fills a 20-foot-radius spread anywhere within 200 feet + 20 feet per HD of the arboreal defender. The discharge deals 1d6 points of sonic damage per hit die of the arboreal defender (maximum 20d6). A successful Reflex save reduces the damage by half.

Special Qualities: An arboreal defender retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains those described below:

Damage Reduction (Su): An arboreal defender has damage reduction 10/sonic.

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Deadshape (Su): This works in the same way as a druid's wildshape ability, except that the arboreal defender transforms into the undead version of an animal. The arboreal defender may use the undead shape ability a number of times per day as a druid can use wildshape with each of the arboreal defender's hit dice counting as a druid level. The animal the arboreal defender can deadshape into is identical to the base animal except that it possesses undead traits.

Immunities(Ex): Arboreal defenders are immune to cold, electricity, and fire in addition to the immunities possessed by undead.

Summon Mount(Su): An arboreal defender has the ability to summon a mount, typically an undead dire wolf, though it may be an undead version of any creature typically used as a mount. The mount may have no more hit dice than the arboreal defender. If the mount is lost or killed, the arboreal defender may summon another one after a year and a day.

Turn Immunity (Su): An arboreal defender cannot be turned.

Undead Traits: An arboreal defender is immune to mind affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. It is not subject to critical hits, nonlethaldamage, ability damage, ability drain, or death from massive damage. An arboreal defender cannot be raised or resurrected unless Haiel is willing to release it from service. The creature has darkvision (60-foot range)

Spell-like Abilities: At will: *detect magic, know direction, read magic*; once per day: *Animal growth, call lightning storm, ice storm, scrying, transmute rock to mud*; twice per day: animate dead, *dispel magic, call lightning, poison, protection from energy, rusting grasp, wind wall*; three times per day: *charm animal, chill metal, entangle, heat metal, jump, obscuring mist, speak with animals warp wood, wood shape*.

Abilities: An arboreal defender gains +4 to Strength, -2 to Dexterity, and +2 to Wisdom.

Skills: Arboreal defenders gain a +8 racial adjustment to Handle Animal, Knowledge (nature), Ride, and Survival.

Feats: Arboreal defenders gain any of the following feats if they did not previously possess them: Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (character's choice), Great Cleave, Martial Weapon Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, and Tracking.

Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary or group (2 to 15)
Challenge Rating: Same as base creature +5
Treasure: Double standard
Alignment: Always evil (any)
Advancement: By character class
Level adjustment: same as the base creature +5

Sample Arboreal Defender – Sevyron

In life Sevyron was a warlord originally from Arena. See the Lake of Sorrows described in Chapter 5 for additional details regarding Sevyron's life and current activities.

Sevyron is the most powerful arboreal defender in the service of Haiel. He is their recognized leader, and can call upon them and their undead allies if needed. He answers directly to Haiel and is frequently called upon to wreak vengeance upon those who would invade the domain of Wildwood and attempt to drastically modify it to suit their desires or attempt to harvest large amounts of it for their own profit, as Sevyron once did himself.

He is a cursed individual who despises his plight, yet he is powerless to escape. The only way for him to escape his undead coil is to allow his own destruction. He is well aware of this, yet he is unwilling to do this for fear that Haiel will be able to reach whatever remains of his spirit and continue his torture. Aside from that, he believes that one day a fate will befall Haiel, and he will be free to do his own bidding. In the meantime he continues to do his master's bidding in leading the other arboreal defenders.

This example uses an 18th level human barbarian as the base creature.

Arboreal Defender, 18th level Human barbarian
Hit Dice: 18d12 (108 hp)
Initiative: +6
Speed: 30 ft.
Armor Class: 23 (+2 Dex, +4 scalemail, +2 heavy steel shield, +5 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 21
Base Attack/Grapple: +18/+25
Attack: +5 *shocking battleaxe* +32 melee (1d8+12 +1d6 electricity/19-20 X3) or +3 longbow +23 ranged (1d8 +3/19-20 X3)
Full Attack: +5 shocking battleaxe +32/+27/+22/+17 melee (1d8+12 +1d6 electricity/19-20 X3) or +3 longbow +23/+17/+12/+7 ranged (1d8+3/ 19-20X3)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5ft.
Special Attacks: Acid sphere, fear aura, necrotic needles, sonic discharge.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/sonic, dead shape, fast movement, greater rage, illiteracy, immunity to cold, electricity, and fire, improved uncanny dodge, indomitable will, rage 5/day, summon mount, tireless rage, trap sense +5, turn immunity, undead traits.
Saves: Fort: +11, Ref +8, Will +9
Abilities: Str 24, Dex 14, Con -, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 16
Skills: Climb +23, Craft (weaponsmithing) +15, Handle Animal +18, Intimidate +16, Jump +21, Listen +17, Ride +16, Survival +17, Swim +19
Feats: Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Great Cleave, Improved Critical (battleaxe), Improved Critical (longbow), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)
Environment: Any Forest
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 23
Treasure: Double Standard
Alignment: Chaotic Evil
Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: +7

Bayowulf	Bayowulf Huntmaster
Large Magical Beast	Huge Magical Beast
Hit Dice: 7d10 + 28 (66 hp)	15d10 + 60 (135 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)
Speed: 50 ft.; swim 40 ft.	50 ft.; swim 40 ft.
Armor Class: 18 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +7 natural), touch 11, flat footed 16	20 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +10 natural), touch 10, flat footed 18
Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+15	+15/+26
Attack: Bite +11 melee (1d8+4 plus disease)	Bite +21 melee (2d6+7 plus disease)
Full Attack: Bite +11/+6 melee (1d8+4 plus disease)	Bite +21/+16/+11 melee (2d6+7 plus disease)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.	15 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: disease, breath of the moor, howl	disease, breath of the moor, howl
Special Qualities: Scent	Scent
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +3	Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +6
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10	Str 24, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10
Skills: Climb +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +5, Hide +5, Spot +4	Climb +14, Listen +13, Move Silently +8, Hide +7, Spot +7
Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (claw)	Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)
Environment: Warm forest and marsh	Warm forest and marsh
Organization: Solitary or pack (4-10)	Solitary or pair
Challenge Rating: 6	11
Treasure: 1/10 coins; 25% goods; 50% items.	1/10 coins; 25% goods; standard items.
Alignment: Always neutral evil	Always neutral evil
Advancement: 8-11 HD (Large); 12-18 HD (Huge)	-
Level Adjustment: +2	-

To the uninitiated, the sudden appearance of a billowing cloud of rolling, gray fog seems a strange but natural phenomenon; however natives of Wildwood's jungles and swamps realize that the mysterious mist often signals the presence of a ravenous pack of bayowulfs. These savage predators, equally adept at hunting on land or in shallow water, nomadically wander an expansive area in an unending search for prey. Their name implies a lupine heritage, yet they share no ancestry with wolves and bear only a superficial resemblance to them. They actually descend from a species of fresh water seal, although it remains uncertain whether they naturally evolved into their present state or whether magical intervention played a role in their transformation. Regardless of the evolutionary mechanism, bayowulfs adapted extremely well to their environment, establishing a niche near the summit of the ecological food chain.

Bayowulfs stand approximately six feet high at the shoulder and measure roughly nine feet in length from snout to hindquarters with a thin, wiry tail extending another three feet behind them. They possess short, stubby ears, protruding jaws bearing rows of narrow, pointed teeth, thin, brown whiskers and luminescent, yellow eyes emitting an unnerving, malevolent glow. Their four legs culminate in oddly shaped, polydactyl, webbed paws tipped with jagged, calcified claws. Their short, brown fur glistens with an oily sheen, presumably waterproofing and cooling their bodies while wading in the warm, murky waters of their habitat. Unfortunately for the bayowulf, these versatile properties render them as a valuable source of leather, making them a prized target of trappers and poachers. Although unproved, some sages speculate that bayowulfs hunt humanoids in preference to other species as a deliberate response to the commercial harvesting of their skin.



Bayowulf society mirrors that of a wolf pack with a fiercely contested and rigid hierarchy. Savage, occasionally lethal combat determines its pecking order, although unlike normal wolf packs gender plays no role in ascertaining the alpha (leadership) position within the pack. The alpha and beta (second in command) positions are always held by bayowulfs of the same sex,

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while the remaining members of the pack consist of bayowulfs of the opposite sex.

Bayowulfs speak Common and Aquan.

Combat

Bayowulfs rely upon their ability to generate fog as their first line of defense. In addition to providing some concealment, the billowing mists also enable the creatures to utilize their Scent ability and Blind-Fight feat to effectively surround and flank their adversaries. Although extremely ferocious, bayowulfs flee underwater when seriously threatened, opting to regroup and attack again at a more advantageous time.

Disease (Ex): Bayou rot -- bite, Fortitude save (DC 13), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d4 temporary Strength. Creatures failing the save must succeed at another Fortitude save on each subsequent day or suffer 1 point of permanent Strength drain.

Breath of the Moor (Su): At will, the exhalation of air from the bayowulfs' lungs creates a thick, billowing cloud of fog, obscuring all vision within the area of effect. The mists fill a stationary, thirty-foot cube centered on the bayowulf, lingering for 2d4 rounds before dissipating. The heavy vapors bestow one-half concealment to creatures five feet away and total concealment to creatures at a distance greater than five feet. A moderate wind (11+ mph) reduces the haze's duration by fifty percent, while a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the fog in a single round. Magical and non-magical fire immediately evaporates the mists within the inflammatory source's area of effect.

Howl (Su): In lieu of a bite attack, the bayowulf lets out a terrifying howl affecting all living creatures within 20 feet of it. Resisting the effects of this horrific yelp requires a successful Will save (DC 13); otherwise failure leaves the victim in a shaken state for the remainder of the combat (-2 morale penalty on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls and saving throws). A successful save against a bayowulf's howl immunizes the creature against the howls of other bayowulf's for the duration of the battle. The DC of the saving throw is Charisma-based.

Skills: Bayowulfs receive a +2 racial bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently and Swim skill checks. They also benefit from a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore skill checks while tracking by scent.

Bayowulf Huntmaster: Bayowulfs that do not succumb to disease and predators over the course of many years eventually increase in size and become fiercer. This transformation is slow, and normally those who achieve this size have long since taken the dominant position within their pack. Other than their increased size and improved combat statistics, bayowulf huntmaters are identical to their smaller relatives.

Bloodfrog

Diminutive Animal (Swarm)

Hit Dice: 8d8+8 (44 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 15 ft.

AC: 19 (+4 Size, +5 Dex), touch 19, flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +6/-

Attack: Swarm (2d6 plus drain blood)

Full Attack: Swarm (2d6 plus drain blood)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: Distraction, drain blood, poison

Special Qualities: Amphibious, low-light vision, immune to weapon damage, swarm traits

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +3

Abilities: Str 2, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2

Skills: Jump +21, Listen +12, Move Silently +18, Hide +16, Spot +5, Swim +19

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Stealthy

Environment: Warm forests

Organization: Solitary, pack (2-4 swarms) or plague (5-8 swarms)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always Neutral

Advancement: None

Level Adjustment: --

One of the more upsetting realities of the jungle is that even the stoutest and bravest of men sometimes fall to an opponent as humble as a tiny tree frog. Of course, the bloodfrog is no helpless amphibian, but a highly specialized predator, equipped with razor sharp fangs dripping with virulent venom. The bloodfrog's deadliness lies in the fact that it hunts in massive swarms, easily capable of bringing down even the largest creatures in the jungle. They are typically found in the jungle of southern Wildwood in close proximity to the rivers and streams winding their way through the lush, tropical forest.

The bloodfrog, as an individual, is a small, bright-red, shiny, amphibian about two inches long, one inch wide, and one inch high. The frog's brilliant color comes from its strict diet of blood, preferably reptilian blood but any variety will suffice. The frog obtains blood by slicing its prey with its razor-sharp jaws and then sucking on the wound. In addition to its offensive weaponry, the amphibian's skin secretes a stupefying contact poison.

Combat

Bloodfrogs cling en masse to the branches of trees in the jungle, waiting for suitable prey to pass within range. The frogs are able to hide in plain sight by this method, appearing like small red fruits. This ruse frequently entices creatures to approach the infested tree in an effort to gather the illusory fruit.

When the frogs spot prey the swarm practically leaps off the tree and onto the creature, literally covering it from head to toe, incessantly biting and draining blood from its overwhelmed foe. Skin contact with the frogs also takes its toll on its victims, causing them to suffer from debilitating hallucinations that render its prey virtually helpless. At this point, the fight is essentially over, and the bloodfrogs drain the limp creature of its remaining blood before returning to their tree.

Distraction (Ex): Any living creature that begins its turn with a bloodfrog swarm in its space must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Drain Blood (Ex): Whenever a swarm of bloodfrogs inflict damage to a living victim, the swarm drains its foe of blood, dealing 1 point of Constitution drain. In addition, the ravenous amphibians gain 2 temporary hit points for every point of Constitution drained in this manner.

Poison (Ex): Contact, Fortitude DC 15, initial and secondary damage 1d2 Int. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills: A bloodfrog swarm has a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Jump and Swim skill check. A bloodfrog swarm uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Jump and Swim checks.

In addition to its racial bonus, a bloodfrog swarm can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if rushed or threatened.

Coobachara

Large magical beast

Hit Dice: 8d10 + 24 (68 hp)

Initiative: +4

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft. (4 squares)

AC: 18 (+4 Dex, -1 size, +5 natural) touch 13, flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+16

Attack: Claw +11 melee (1d6+4)

Full Attack: 2 claws +11 melee (1d6+4) and bite +9 melee (1d8+2 plus bloody mess)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Bloody mess, feast on fear

Special Qualities: darkvision 60 ft., scent, spell resistance 19

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +5

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 10

Skills: Balance +5, Climb +16*, Hide +15*, Jump +10*, Move Silently +14*, Spot +5, Survival +5

Feats: Blind-Fight, Multiattack, Run

Environment: Warm forests

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: Standard, no coins (all magic or gear)

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 9-14 HD (Large); 15-24 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: --

According to popular humanoid folklore, the name coobachara literally translates as "eater of terror" in a long forgotten and probably extinct language. The moniker is certainly apropos as the malevolent creatures draw strength from their victims' fear, making their opportunistic assaults more deadly while allowing them to withstand additional physical punishment from their foes. The loathsome monsters arrived in Wildwood less than a thousand years ago, and they quickly made a lasting impression amongst the sentient population. The stealthy hunters discovered that their foul bite inexplicably triggered a biochemical reaction in humanoids and monstrous humanoids that left their victims at a tremendous disadvantage while augmenting their powers. As a result, experienced adventurers traveling through the coobacharas' territory always keep a wary eye on the pervasive foliage, looking for even the slightest clue indicating their presence.

While the monsters' exact lineage remains in doubt, their anatomical and facial features belie a simian origin. When standing upright, the beasts' gangly, elongated arms extend well below the knee and culminate in furry hands with four digits bearing jagged, dirt-encrusted claws and an opposable thumb. Coobacharas are normally bipedal; however when

pursuing quarry through labyrinths of vegetation they often adopt a quadruped stance by using their knuckles as a second pair of feet. This approach gives them additional traction as they negotiate tight corners and sharp curves when chasing prey. A thick coat of coarse, olive green fur covers their limbs and torso with the densest layers concentrated on their lanky but muscular chest. A large head with rounded earlobes, brown eyes, a disproportionately small nose and a protrusive upper and lower jaw bearing tightly packed rows of filthy, needlelike teeth sits atop their wiry, chiseled body. The coobacharas' faces are completely hairless, yet a gray mane covers their entire neck and the lower portion of their scalp up to the top of their forehead. They stand almost 8 feet tall, but weigh a meager 275 pounds. Their communication skills are extremely limited, enabling them to converse with other members of their species through body language and approximately fifty different sounds.



Renowned for their prolific reproduction, coobacharas have spread throughout the jungle of southern Wildwood and are even beginning to make some inroads into the deciduous forest and swampland of central Wildwood. Although the reclusive creature resides high in the trees, it spends the majority of its time near the surface, stalking its land-based prey. Like most of Wildwood's predators the ape-like beasts are extremely territorial and always hunt alone or with a mate. In addition to defending their hunting grounds against rivals, male coobacharas display the same proprietary attitude in regards to females, fiercely staving off the unwanted advances of other males. Even though they only mate on a semiannual basis, every year the average female gives birth to six offspring.

Combat

Coobacharas typically track their opponents from a distance, utilizing their ability to blend into the surrounding foliage and quietly move through the trees while observing their potential victims from a position of safety. When an opportune moment arrives, the vicious predator leaps down upon its target and attacks with its filthy claws and disgusting teeth. Coobacharas never flee from combat as long as one of its opponents displays fear.

Bloody Mess (Ex): Whenever the coobachara bites a humanoid or monstrous humanoid opponent, an enzyme in its saliva causes the victim to hallucinate unless he makes a Will saving throw (DC 14). Adversaries failing this saving throw believe that copious amounts of blood are pouring out from the open wound created by the coobachara's wretched teeth. The gory sight leaves the character shaken for 2d4 rounds and compels him to tend to the grotesque injury immediately using whatever means are available, such as first aid, a spell or a potion. The affected being is so obsessed with the need to expeditiously cure itself that it undertakes these actions irrespective of the consequences, thus provoking attacks of opportunity from foes threatening them. Similarly, the results are irrelevant as the creature believes that his curative measures succeeded even if they actually failed. Victims must deal with each hit individually; hence creatures struck by the coobachara while tending to their wounds must make another Will save and react in accordance with the saving throw's outcome. Additional bites during the same encounter do not worsen the victim's condition from shaken, but the character must perform whatever action he deems necessary to halt the bleeding. Bloody mess is a mind-affecting ability, and the save is Charisma based.

Feast on Fear (Ex): Coobacharas innately smell fear in the air and draw strength from it. As a result, the creatures receive a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls as well as saving throws if any creature within a 30-foot radius of the creature is shaken, frightened or panicked. Furthermore, the coobachara recovers an equal number of lost hit points at the beginning of each turn as if it possessed the fast healing ability. The bonus progressively increases; therefore if there are two creatures in the area, the

Illustrated by Jeff Ward

bonus increases to +2, at three creatures it improves to +4, at four creatures it jumps to +7 up to a maximum of +11 at five or more affected opponents.
Skills: Coobacharas have a +8 racial bonus to Climb, Hide and Move Silently skill checks, and a +4 racial bonus to Jump skill checks. Their Hide and Move Silently bonuses are only effective in a wooded area such as a forest, jungle or swamp.

Death Moss

Large Plant

Hit Dice: 15d8+45 (112 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

AC: 21 (-1 size, +12 natural) touch 9, flat-footed 21

Base Attack/Grapple: +11/+21

Attack: Bite +17 melee (2d6+6 plus inject seed)

Full Attack: Bite +17 melee (2d6+6 plus inject seed)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Debris field, inject seed

Special Qualities: Blindsight 60 ft., DR 5/slashing and piercing, plant traits, split body

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

Skills: Hide +22*, Listen +4, Move Silently +22*

Feats: Ability focus (debris field), Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack, Killer Instinct, Sprinter, Weapon Focus (bite)

Environment: Any forest

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: 1/10th coins; 50% goods, 50% items

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 16-24 HD (Large); 25-32 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: --

Novice explorers venturing through Wildwood's untamed forests often make the fatal mistake of dismissing one of the feral domain's most frightening creatures for a harmless clump of vegetation. Although the cagey predator belongs to the same family as its benign cousin, its frightening name is a testament to its exceptional hunting prowess. Utilizing its coloration and texture to inconspicuously blend into the surrounding terrain, the crafty plant patiently waits for unsuspecting prey to wander into its carefully devised trap. When the opportune moment arises, it shrugs off its lethargy and springs into action, tearing its quarry into pieces with its dagger-like teeth or blasting its foe with a barrage of serrated, gnawed bones and heavy stones.

Anatomically, the death moss' body resembles an armored, elongated worm propelled by six identical pairs of stubby, flexible vines that effectively function as its legs. While it lacks a clearly defined head, a cluster of greenish-brown stalks surrounding a disproportionately large, circular maw lined with spindly, brown needle-like teeth at the front end of the creature's body apparently serves as the creature's sensory organs and mouth. Hard, interlocking wooden plates draped with long, stringy threads of greenish-brown vegetation cover the remainder of the creature, providing it with a lethal combination of natural armor and nearly foolproof camouflage. An average specimen is approximately nine feet long, weighs 550 pounds and generally looks like nothing more than a rotting log coated by a thin layer of disgusting plant matter. Even though it has a mouth and teeth, death moss is incapable of speech and instead relies upon an extensive vocabulary of visual signals to communicate messages to other members of its race.

Often overshadowed by their more common relatives such as treants and shambling mounds, death moss is perhaps the most commonly encountered variety of carnivorous plant in Wildwood. It inhabits virtually every ecosystem in Wildwood with the exception of the cavernous regions of the extreme north and the domain's aquatic environments.

Combat

Not surprisingly, the cunning and sly predator relies on camouflage to surprise unwary prey whenever its strays too close to the ravenous plant. The death moss' tactics depend upon the size and composition of its opposition. Against a lone enemy or a small group, the deadly creature employs its debris field ability at the outbreak of hostilities and then wages in melee armed with its lethal bite. If it is grossly outnumbered, the death moss uses its second maw to bombard its foes with a seemingly constant spray of debris from two different sources. When the tide of battle turns against the death moss, the creature is not averse to using its speed and brute strength to escape the clutches of its pursuers and live to fight another day.

Debris Field (Ex): Although death moss eats just about anything, it is incapable of digesting bone, rock or metal; therefore it stores these materials in a large sac connected to its digestive tract. During its evolution, the plant developed a highly specialized group of muscles that enables it to violently expel this matter in a 20-ft. cone originating from its disgusting maw. Creatures within the area of effect must make a Reflex save (DC 22); otherwise they suffer 15d6+15 points of damage from the hard, jagged objects. A successful saving throw reduces the damage by half. Regardless of the saving throw's outcome, creatures struck by this debris subtract their armor, shield, deflection and natural armor bonuses from their damage. For instance, a debris field dealing 45 points of damage to everyone within the area of effect only inflicts 32 points of damage to a fighter with an armor bonus of +8, a shield bonus of +2, a deflection bonus of +2 and a natural armor bonus of +1. If the same individual made

his saving throw, he only loses nine points. The death moss generally stores enough material to utilize this ability 2d4 times per day before it must replenish its supply. It can use the ability every round, and the save DC is Constitution-based.

Inject Seed (Ex): The omnivorous death moss reproduces by embedding one of its seeds beneath the skin of a living victim, a task it attempts to accomplish whenever it sinks its syringe-like teeth into its target's flesh. Creatures bitten by the voracious plant must make a Fortitude save (DC 17) to resist this implantation; otherwise the soft, green seed finds a nourishing home within the body of its unwelcoming host. One hour after its arrival, the pod opens and begins to wrap its roots around the surrounding tissue, simultaneously sapping nutrients from the nearby bloodstream while killing thousands of previously healthy cells. As a result of this relentless assault, the victim suffers one point of Strength, Dexterity and Constitution damage every hour until the host dies. The death moss' hungry offspring consumes the rest of its surrogate mother's corpse before moving onto its next prey. The spells *heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle* and *wish* instantaneously destroy the invasive parasite in addition to any spell or magical effect that has a detrimental effect specifically targeting plants. The save DC is Wisdom-based.

Second Maw (Ex): As a full round action, the death moss can create a second external orifice on the opposite side of its body, shifting some of the debris stored within its internal sac toward this new location. The second maw completely lacks teeth and is entirely incapable of dealing damage or implanting a seed into a foe, but the creature can spew a cone of debris from this second maw. However, the formation of this additional mouth creates a noticeable chink in the creature's rigid armor thus reducing its natural armor bonus from +12 to +10. This reduction lowers the death moss' AC to 19 as long as it retains its second maw.

Skills: Death mosses have a +16 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently skill checks whenever they are in a wooded area such as a forest, jungle or swamp.

Lyrmir	Lyrmir Pridemaster
Large Magical Beast	Large Magical Beast
Hit Dice: 10d10 + 30 (85 hp)	20d10 + 120 (230 hp)
Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)	+8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 50 ft.	50 ft.
Armor Class: 20 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +8 natural), touch 12, flat footed 17	23 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +10 natural), touch 13, flat footed 19
Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+18	+20/+32
Attack: claw +13 melee (1d8+4) and bite +8 melee (1d8 +2), or tail +13 melee (2d6+4)	claw +28 melee (1d8) and bite +23 melee (1d8+4) or tail +28 melee (2d6+8)
Full Attack: 2 claws +13/+7 melee (1d8+4) and bite +8 melee (1d8+2) or tail +13/+7 melee (2d6+4)	2 claws +28/+23/+18/+13 melee (1d8+4) and bite +23/+17/+12 melee (1d8+2) or tail +28/+23/+18/+13 melee (2d6+8)
Space/Reach: 5-ft./5 ft.(10-ft. tail)	5-ft./5 ft.(10-ft. tail)
Special Attacks: Improved grab, swallow whole	Improved grab, swallow whole
Special Qualities: Greater Blur, DR 10/ magic, lowlight vision 60 ft.	Greater Blur, DR 10/ magic, lowlight vision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +3	Fort +18, Ref +16, Will +6
Abilities: Str 19, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 10	Str 26, Dex 18, Con 22, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills: Hide +11, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Spot +8	Hide +17, Listen +9, Move Silently +15, Spot +13
Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Power Attack	Awesome Blow, Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack
Environment: Any forest	Any forest
Organization: Solitary, or pride (3-5)	Solitary or Pair
Challenge Rating: 7	16
Treasure: Standard	Standard
Alignment: Usually Neutral Evil	Usually Neutral Evil
Advancement: Large (11-20HD), Huge (21-31HD)	-
Level Adjustment: +4	-

The lyrmir is a large feline creature with a range of different fur colors and patterns, including deep green, black, tan, and white. The colors can be lighter, darker, solid, striped, or spotted. The creature has larger claws than other great felines, and its tail is long and barbed. Lyrmir stalk the entirety of Wildwood.

Lyrmir are either solitary or they live in a pride consisting of one male and two to four females. A female that gives birth usually leaves the pride to raise its young elsewhere since males often view their own young as threats, killing them if given the chance. They typically excavate small caves or dens beneath the ground to raise their cubs.

Some creatures capture lyrmirs and use them as hunting animals or force them to fight in gladiatorial games, while others train them guard animals. Too often lyrmirs are taken from their natural habitat and transplanted into an underground environment or civilized setting. Eventually their masters may abandon them or they turn against its handlers. Forced to fend for themselves in unfamiliar settings, lyrmirs finds food wherever possible, often provoking confrontations with the local inhabitants. Lyrmirs adapt well to non-forest habitats, provided that they are able to locate ample food sources.



Combat

The lyrmir is a carnivore with indiscriminate tastes. When hunting, it silently follows its prey, waiting for its victims to stop and rest in an opportune ambush site. It first attacks with its two claws and bite. If its enemies use reach weapons against it, the lyrmir attacks with its tail. If part of a pack and the creature is not seriously threatened, the lyrmir swallows its enemy whole. Once it satiates its hunger, the lyrmir withdraws from the fray.

Like most cats large and small, lyrmirs enjoy the thrill of the hunt. When they have assured that their prey is at their mercy, they unnecessarily prolong its agony by giving it a chance to escape just so that the lyrmir can pounce on it again and again. Once the victim no longer tries to escape, the lyrmir finally ends its suffering.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the lyrmir must hit an opponent of up to Medium size with both claw attacks. If it gets a hold, it can swallow whole.

Swallow Whole (Ex): The lyrmir's jaws unhinge and its throat and stomach expand greatly, allowing it to swallow a grabbed opponent of Medium or smaller size by making a successful grapple check. Swallowing the creature is a full-round action. Once inside, the opponent takes 2d8+12 points of crushing damage plus eight points of acid damage per round from the lyrmir's stomach. A swallowed creature extricates itself by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal twenty-five points of damage to the stomach (AC 15). Once the creature exits, muscular contraction immediately closes the hole forcing another swallowed opponent to cut its own way out. The lyrmir's interior holds one Medium, two Small, four Tiny-size, or Sixteen Diminutive or smaller opponents.

Greater Blur (Su): This works in exactly the same way as the *blur* spell except for the fact that the ability remains constantly in effect, and the miss chance is 40%.

Skills: The lyrmir gains a natural +5 bonus to all of its skills because it is a feline.

Lyrmir Pridemaster: The lyrmir is capable of becoming quite powerful before increasing in size, allowing it to remain adept at Dexterity based skills without decreasing its armor class or attack bonus. Most pridemasters find themselves at the head of a pride of lyrmirs, though they often go off by themselves or with a partner. Other than their increased abilities, lyrmir pridemasters are identical to standard lyrmir.

Illustrated by Terry Pavlet


Colero

Maakantu

Large Dragon

Hit Dice: 15d12 + 60 (157 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Armor Class: 22 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +9 natural), touch 13, flat footed 19

Base Attack/Grapple: +15/+26

Attack: Bite +20 melee, sting +16 melee

Full Attack: Bite +20/+15/+10 melee (2d6+7), sting +16 melee (1d8+3 and poison)

Space/Reach: 20 ft./ 10 ft

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, poison, spells, improved grab, constrict 2d6+10

Special Qualities: Scent

Saves: Fort +13, Ref +13, Will +13

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 12

Skills: Balance +13, Climb +15, Knowledge (nature) +19, Listen +15, Move Silently +17, Hide +13, Spellcraft +18, Spot +17, Swim +15, Survival +20;

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Improved Sunder, Multiattack,

Environment: Warm forest

Organization: Solitary, pair, or clutch (3-6)

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 16-19 HD (Large), 20-30 HD (Huge)

The dreaded maakantu slithers through the jungle's dense undergrowth and trees challenging the other creatures for supremacy. Deadly jaws, poisonous breath, a venomous stinger and the ability to cast druid spells make this creature a formidable and stalwart ally of druids and rangers and a fearsome foe to all that threaten tree and glade.

A maakantu resembles a cross between a green dragon with no limbs and a massive serpent. Brown and green scales with the texture of old bark cover much of its body, while its underbelly is a dabbled green and yellow, similar to the color of fallen leaves. A green and brown-mottled fin glides down its back to the tip of its tail, culminating in a large, needle-sharp stinger. Its solid amber eyes contain no visible pupil or iris, making its terrifying gaze even more unsettling. The typical maakantu measures around 20 feet long and 3 feet in diameter, although it usually conceals its true length by coiling itself around a tree root or beneath a mass of exposed tree roots.

Maakantu regard humanoids as enemies, however they are known to befriend druids and rangers sharing the same ideology. They perceive themselves as the true guardians of the jungle, maintaining nature's precarious balance against humanoid and monster incursions. Their enmity with green dragons is legendary.

Maakantu are solitary creatures by choice, preferring the quiet loneliness of the deep jungles where they contemplate the balance of nature. Only rarely do they get the urge to mate. In such instances, the female seeks a male, accepting him only if his knowledge of nature exceeds her own. The intensive courtship takes two to five weeks before the male finally convinces her of his worthiness. She lays three to seven eggs six weeks after mating, although only seventy-five percent of them hatch after six months. These young, having only 3 HD and none of the powers of their mother, remain with her for up to five years, as they learn the ways of the jungle. They gain 1 HD per year, with abilities increasing commensurately. Eventually, the young decide they must seek solitude, and drift away, likely never to see or be seen by their mother again. Adolescent maakantu (8 HD) gain 1 HD every five years, until they reach middle age, 15 HD at age 40. They then continue to grow at a rate of 1 HD every 10 years, gaining additional spellcasting ability as they mature. They cast and receive the spells of a druid ½ their HD. Their growth slows tremendously at 140 years (25 HD) thereafter gaining 1 HD only every 100 years. The most venerable maakantus are well over 1,000 years old.

Maakantu speak Common, Draconic, and the secret language of druids.

Combat

For all its size and bulk, the maakantu is an extremely agile and supple beast, able to twist and whip its body so as to bite and sting the same target simultaneously. It also employs its druid spells to impede its opponent's movement and summon aid from nearby wildlife.

Breath Weapon (Su): Maakantus breathe a 40-ft. long cone of poisonous gas. Anyone in the area of effect must make a Fortitude save (DC 18); otherwise they suffer 2d6 points of initial and secondary temporary Dexterity damage. A Maakantu can breathe this poison once every 1d4+1 rounds. The Difficulty Class of this saving throw is based on Charisma.

Poison Sting (Ex): Sting, Fortitude save (DC 18); initial and secondary damage 2d6 temporary Constitution. The Difficulty Class of this saving throw is based on Charisma.

Spells (Sp): Maakantus cast spells as a 7th level druid, and they do not require any somatic or material components. The Difficulty Class of the saving throw is 14 + the spell level.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability the maakantu must hit with its bite attack.

Constrict (Ex): If it gets a hold, it can constrict, dealing 2d6+10 damage per round.

Skills: A maakantu receives a +4 racial bonus to Hide, Knowledge (nature), Move Silently, and Wilderness Lore. A Maakantu possesses a base number of ranks in Spellcraft equal to one-half its hit dice, rounded down.

Illustrated by Bruce Colero

Variant

The dread maakantu descends from an unnatural mating between a maakantu and a red dragon. These terrible beasts combine the best and worst of their parents, being huge winged, two-armed monstrosities that despise nature, and do all they can to destroy jungles. Their cloud of venom is poisonous to vegetation as well as to living creatures, and they use it to create great swaths of death and destruction wherever they pass. They can also breathe a line of fire that burns when it contacts flesh or foliage.

Nkoll (Wild)

Medium Monstrous Humanoid (reptilian)

Hit Dice: 8d8+16 (48 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 30 Ft.

Armor Class: 21 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, +6 (+2) chain shirt)

Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+10

Attack: Longsword +10 melee (1d8+2), bite +7 melee (1d4 + poison)

Full Attack: 2 Longswords +10 melee (1d8+2), or 2 tentacles +10 melee (1d6+2), bite +7 melee (1d4 + poison).

Space/Reach: 5 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved Grab, Constrict, Poison

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft.

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +5

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

Skills: Balance: +4, Escape Artist +5, Hide +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Spot +3

Feats: Dodge, Multiattack, Power Attack

Environment: Deciduous Forest

Organization: Individual or troup (2d4)

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually Lawful Evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +3

The nkoll are an aggressive and charismatic snakelike species that have two tentacles attached at each shoulder, which they use as limbs. They reproduce rapidly, often overrunning large areas with their spawn. They come from a world called Kasara, where they had risen to a position of dominance over all the other species.

Nkoll believe that they are the supreme species. They are haughty, quick to anger, and they hold grudges against anyone that they perceive to have wronged them. Few individuals of this species break with this philosophy, and the ones that decide to follow a different set of values are severely reprimanded and must undergo years of intensive sessions with nkoll priests who try to reeducate them. Those that leave nkoll settlements without first being given permission from the high priests are usually hunted down and killed.

The focus of the nkoll lifestyle is their worship of the god Akaya, an enormous serpent many miles long. Akaya teaches that the nkoll must rise up and conquer all who would stand against them. In return for conquering the world, they will be rewarded upon their death, at which time they will be able to acquire anything or fulfill any desire they may have. Images of snakes, tentacles, and the skulls or other mutilated body parts of their enemies are common decorations in nkoll temples. Unlike the nkoll of Penance, wild nkoll in Wildwood do not have access to the Pool of Akaya.

The nkoll of Wildwood are similar in many respects to the nkoll silently building their numbers beneath the surface of Penance, but there are some major differences. They live on the surface rather than hiding in the sunless depths below. They are hunters and each individual is more powerful than their civilized nkoll ancestors. Because of their role as hunters, they are less civilized, less refined, and prone towards barbaric behavior.

The only adventuring nkoll are ones that are on some sort of holy quest, or ones that have turned their backs on their own kind and survived their escape. Those that do escape their society are almost never foolish enough to try to come back. Those that do return must come with an army or be sacrificed to Akaya. Those few that seek out the company of other races tend to be complete opposites from the common nkoll, having a gentle and compassionate nature and the will to help others. They have turned completely away from the worship of Akaya, and often try to warn the bloodlords aboveground about the growing threat the nkoll pose to their holdings.

Combat

Nkoll normally begin combat by attempting to use their improved grab and constrict attacks. If outnumbered, they simply try to deal as much damage with their tentacles as possible, and bite, causing poison damage. Nkoll are physically capable of wielding melee and most ranged weapons, and many that take a character class do so. Nkoll troops normally contain at least one cleric.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the nkoll hits with a bite attack and at least two of the tentacle attacks, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action, doing so without provoking attacks of opportunity. No initial touch attack is required. This works against opponents of the same size category or smaller.

A nkoll has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use the part of its body it used in the improved grab to hold the opponent. If it chooses to do the latter, it takes a –20 penalty on grapple checks but is not considered grappled itself; the

nkoll does not lose its Dexterity bonus to Defense, still threatens an area, and can use its remaining attacks against other opponents.

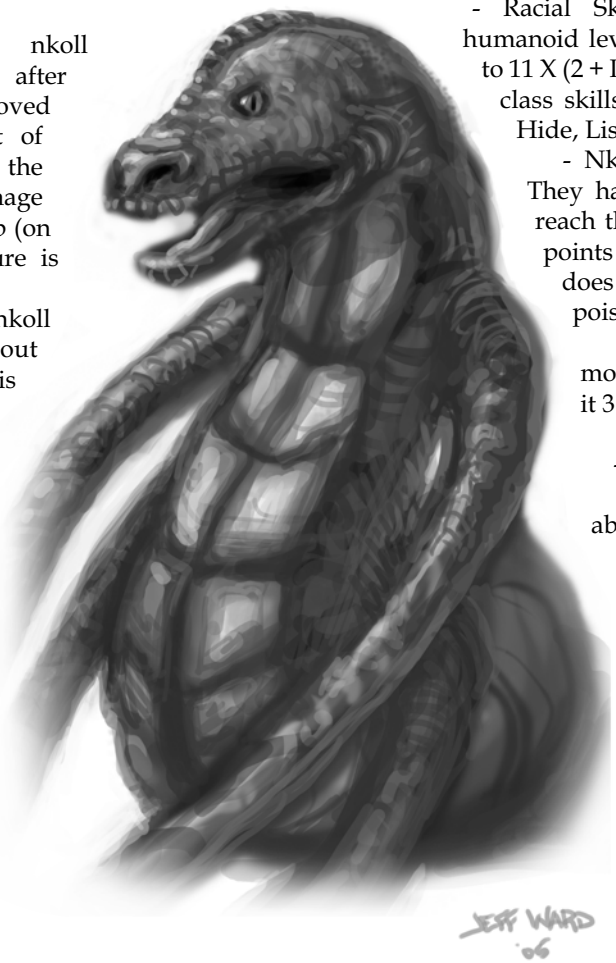
A successful hold deals additional damage based on the constrict ability (see above). If the creature does not constrict, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals the damage given for the attack that established the hold. Otherwise, it deals constrict damage as well.

When a nkoll gets a hold after an improved grab attack, it pulls the opponent into its space. This act does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The nkoll is not considered grappled while it holds the opponent, so it still threatens adjacent squares and retains its Dexterity bonus. It can even move (possibly carrying away the opponent), provided it can drag the opponent's weight.

Constrict (Ex): The nkoll crushes the opponent after making a successful Improved Grab check. The amount of damage inflicted is 1d8 + the strength bonus + the damage dealt by the improved grab (on the round that the creature is grabbed).

Darkvision (Ex): The nkoll can see in total darkness, out to 60 feet. Darkvision is black-and-white only, but is otherwise like normal light.

Poison (Ex): After a nkoll hits with a bite attack, the struck opponent must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer 1d4 points of initial Constitution damage , and an additional 1d6 points of Constitution damage 1d4 hours later.



Wild Nkoll as Characters

Wild nkoll characters possess the following racial traits.

- +4 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +4 Constitution, -2 Wisdom, +2 Charisma
- Space/Reach: 5 feet/ 10 feet
- A knoll's base sped is 30 feet.
- Darkvision: Nkoll can see in the dark up to 60 feet.
- Racial Hit Dice: A nkoll begins with 8 monstrous humanoid hit dice, which provide 8d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +8, and base saving throws of Fort +2, Ref +6, and Will +6.
- Racial Skills: A knoll's monstrous humanoid levels give it skill points equal to 11 X (2 + Int modifier [minimum 1]). Its class skills are Balance, Escape Artist, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, and Spot.
- Nkoll have natural weaponry: They have 4 tentacles with a 10 ft. reach that are capable of doing 1d6 points of damage, and a bite that does 1d4 points of damage and poison.
- Racial Feats: A knoll's monstrous humanoid levels give it 3 feats.
- +4 natural armor bonus
- Special Attacks (see above)
- Special Qualities: (see above)
- Automatic Languages: nkoll. Bonus Languages: common (the Forge), dover, draconic.
- Favored Class: Barbarian
- Level Adjustment +3

Illustrated by Jeff Ward

Shadow Stalker	Shadow Stalker Lord
Large Magical Beast	Large Magical Beast
Hit Dice: 6d10 + 18 (51 hp)	15d10+90 (165 hp)
Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)	+8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 40 ft.	40 ft.
Armor Class: 17 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural)	20 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +7 natural)
Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+10	+15/+22
Attack: Claw +10 melee (1d8+4)	Claw +22 melee (1d8+4)
Full Attack: 2 Claws +10 melee (1d8+4) and bite +4 melee (2d6+4)	2 Claws +22 melee (1d8+4) and bite +16 melee (2d6+4)
Face/Reach: 5 ft./ 10 ft.	5 ft./ 10 ft.
Special Attacks: Pounce, improved grab, rake 1d8+4	Pounce, improved grab, rake 1d8+4
Special Qualities: Chameleon, psilocin abilities, scent	Chameleon, psilocin abilities, scent
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +2	Fort +15, Ref +13, Will +5
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6	Str 24, Dex 18, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6
Skills: Climb +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +5, Hide +5, Spot +4	Climb +14, Listen +13, Move Silently +11, Hide +9, Spot +8
Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Cleave, Weapon Focus (claw)	Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)
Environment: Temperate forest, hills or mountains	Temperate forest, hills or mountains
Organization: Solitary, pair or pack (4-8)	Solitary or pair
Challenge Rating: 4	11
Treasure: None	none
Alignment: Usually Neutral	Usually Neutral
Advancement: 7-15 HD (Large), 16-18 HD (Huge)	-
Level Adjustment: +4	

Shadow stalkers are one of the most cunning creatures known to exist. They are known by many names, including ghost cat, *Diablo gato*, spectres of the forest and numerous other similar references because of the fact that they appear to attack from nowhere. Tribal legends say that the only time you ever catch a glimpse of the 'stalker from the shadows' occurs just before it sinks its fangs into your throat.

Shadow stalkers are large feline creatures that resemble black panthers but average 9 to 10 feet in length and weigh around 600 lbs. They have gold eyes and dark, nearly black coats that will naturally change colors to match its surroundings. The dark color of its fur and the fact that it hides in the deepest shadows of cover are what give a shadow stalker its name. They are carnivorous creatures with a taste for larger game animals (this also applies to unfortunate or extremely stupid adventurers) and are often found lying in wait for their prey on large tree limbs. They often cooperate with one another to bring down a quarry if it is big enough to be of interest or if it represents a threat to the pack.

It is entirely possible for the species to adapt to other climates including arctic and desert conditions. In these climates, the encounter numbers should be reduced to no more than four or five shadow stalkers in a pack.

Shadow stalkers dwell as solitary creatures, in mated pairs, or as a part of a larger pack of four to nine creatures. Because of the stalkers' size and food requirements, it is rare to encounter packs with more than nine members. An alpha female dominates the pack. She generally has one male consort but keeps one or two others in the pack to serve as a surrogate if the male consort is killed. Mating happens once a year and typically produces one or two cubs, although triplets do occasionally occur. The big cats are territorial by nature with the territory of a single pack encompassing several miles of terrain.

Shadow stalkers are highly intelligent and often use the layout of the land around them to ambush their prey. Equally, when the pack rests, they find a spot that puts them at the advantage, usually on a high rise or in a tall tree. Tree climbing is a common game among cubs when playing that sharpens the skills they need later in life for hunting and survival.

Shadow stalker cubs are highly prized as potential familiars and can command as much as 7,500 gp for one in good health. Wealthy magic users or even

whole mage guilds often employ adventuring parties to procure a live cub for training as a familiar.

Shadowstalkers speak Common and occasionally Dryad, Elven or Sylvan.

Combat

Shadow stalkers use their chameleon abilities to develop natural camouflage while they lie in wait for their prey to close within striking distance. Their highly refined sense of smell alerts them to the presence of approaching food. Once its spots its quarry, a shadow stalker uses its psilocin ability to turn invisible, granting it the ultimate form of camouflage. As soon as the cat strikes and becomes visible, it switches to its psilocin displacement ability to reduce the risk of being struck by its target.

Shadow stalkers often work together to slay large quarry. The normal method of attack consists of one cat distracting the prey by letting it see the cat from a distance. The prey typically focuses so intently on the visible shadow stalker that it remains ignorant to the presence of the others until they simultaneously attack it from one or more sides. The visible cat only joins in on the kill if absolutely necessary.

Pounce (Ex): If a shadow stalker leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the shadow stalker hits with a melee attack (either claw or bite), it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. It may then use its rake ability.

Rake (Ex): A shadow stalker can make two rake attacks (+10 melee) against a held creature with its hind legs for 1d8+4 damage each.

Psionic abilities:

Displacement – at will: The manifester appears to be about 2 feet away from his or her true location. The character benefits from a 50% miss chance as if he or she had total concealment. However, unlike actual total concealment, displacement does not prevent enemies from targeting the cat normally. *True seeing* reveals the cat's true location.

Invisibility – 2/day: The creature or object touched vanishes from sight, even from darkvision. The power ends if the shadow stalker attacks any creature. Actions directed at unattended objects do not negate the power, and causing harm indirectly does not constitute an attack. An invisible shadow stalker gains a +2 bonus on his or her attack roll (for the single attack that it is allowed before becoming visible), and the defender against such an attack loses any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.

Chameleon (Su): Shadow stalkers gain a +10 racial bonus to all Hide checks due their natural ability to blend into their surrounding environment.

Scent (Ex): A shadow stalker can detect opponents by sense of smell, generally within 30 feet. If the opponent is upwind, the range is 60 feet. If it is downwind, the range is 15 feet.

Skills: Shadow stalkers receive a +4 racial bonus to Move Silently and Spot checks.

Thageera

Large Giant

Hit Dice: 14d8+70 (133 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft. (4 squares)

AC: 25 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +15 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 24

Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+23

Attack: Huge long spear +19 melee (3d6+13/19-20 x3) or branch +11 ranged (1d8+9)

Full Attack: Huge long spear +17/+12 melee (3d6+13/19-20 x3) and 2 great clubs +16 melee (1d10+4) or branch +11/+6 ranged (1d8+9)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Hurl branches

Special Qualities: Low-light vision, rigidity

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 29, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9

Skills: Climb +17*, Hide +6, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Search +2, Spot +6, Survival +7

Feats: Improved Critical (long spear), Improved Sunder, Multiweapon Fighting, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (long spear)

Environment: Any forest

Organization: Solitary, gang (2-5), hunting party (6-9) or tribe (21-30 plus 35% noncombatants)

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +4

With the exception of trolls, thageeras are the most commonly encountered giants in Wildwood. Spread throughout the feral domain's forests, the hulking behemoths dwell in small communities consisting of little more than a few scattered wooden abodes and a comparatively large common building that serves as the hub of the settlement's activities. Like most other subspecies of giant, thageeras typically belong to a tribe comprised of closely related family members; however unlike their more recognizable cousins, their society is a matriarchy with all political and religious authority resting in the hands of an elder female druid.

Thageeras are four-armed, extremely muscular humanoids with light brown skin and steely gray eyes. Regardless of gender, they always braid their greasy, raven-colored hair into an ornate tail. Thageeras shun armor and typically wade into battle wielding a huge long spear with their upper pair of arms while grasping a pair of greatclubs with their lower set of appendages. Their distaste for protective clothing stems from their unusual physiology. From infancy, thageeras

supplement their diet with tremendous quantities of calcium, making their odd configuration of bones unbelievably hard.

Thageeras stand ten feet tall and weigh an astounding 900 pounds. They speak Giant and Common.

Combat

The thageeras' posture during combat depends upon the nature of the group's mission. Tribal members defending the homeland typically utilize their climbing prowess and assume defensive positions high in the trees, allowing them to rain a volley of gnarled branches and heavy limbs onto ground-based intruders. After barraging their foes with these crude projectiles, the surprisingly lithe giants descend from their perches and engage their adversaries in melee combat. On the other hand, thageera hunting parties provide a model of tactical sophistication rarely witnessed in Wildwood's primeval wilderness. A pair of thageeras functions as scouts, scanning the landscape from a vantage point high above the forest floor. The remaining forces form a wide perimeter and acting under the direction of their strategically positioned sentries, the unit attempts to perform a complex flanking maneuver enabling them to encircle their selected prey.

Hurl Branches (Ex): The range increment for the thageera's thrown branches is 100 feet.

Rigidity (Ex): The thageeras' unique skeletal structure affords its vital organs additional protection against potentially lethal blows. As a result, there is a 50% chance of negating any critical hit or sneak attack scored against the thageera; however the thageera still suffers normal damage from the successful attack.

Thageeras as Characters

Although blessed with the physical attributes befitting great fighters, the thageeras' reverence for nature inspires most of them to become druids and rangers. Despite their monstrous appearance, thageeras are generally well respected amongst Wildwood's indigenous humanoids races.

Thageera characters have the following racial traits.

- +18 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +10 Constitution, +2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma
- Large size. -1 penalty to AC and attack rolls, -4 penalty to Hide checks and a +4 bonus on grapple checks.
- Low-light vision
- Racial Hit Dice: Thageeras possess fourteen levels of giant, bestowing 14d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +10, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +9, Ref +4 and Will +4
- Racial Skills: The thageera's giant levels give it skill points equal to 17 x (2 + Int modifier). Its class skills are Climb, Hide, Knowledge (nature), Spot and Survival.
- Racial Feats: The thageera's giant levels grant it five racial feats. Thageeras always choose Multiweapon Fighting as one of their racial feats.
- +15 natural armor bonus
- Special Attacks (see above): Hurl branches
- Special Qualities (see above): Rigidity
- Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Thageeras are proficient with all simple and martial armor. They are not proficient with any type of armor.
- Automatic Languages: Giant. Bonus Languages: Common, Dover, Draconic, Elven, Frey, Gnoll, Thorn.
- Favored Class: Ranger
- Level adjustment +4

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Index

A

Albino worms 46
Anawal 127
Anticipation 149
Anvil 5
Anvil, Foreign Relations 40
Aquatic Creature 172
Arena 5
Arena, Foreign Relations 39
Armamen 154
Armed Creature 179
Arrival (in the Forge) 20
Arrival in Wildwood 22
Asherake 8
Astronomy 21
Attuned Creature 173
Awakened Creature 172
Awwengatta (The Path of Faith) 36

B

Barked Creature 175
Battlespeak 151
Beaconed Creature 175
Beaversnake 46
Bern 156
Black Snakeweed 45
Bladeleaf 42
Bloodstaff 152
Bodies of Water 31
Boritarra 54
Bounding Creature 169
Bounty of the Sea 136
Brachiating Creature 176
Brawler Creature 170
Brilliant Creature 175
Burly Creature 170
Burnt Creature 173

C

Canopus 58
Carrion Flyers 46
Caverns 30
Central Ocean 137
Characters in Wildwood 25
Charred Woods 70
Chase 145
Chiseled Creature 176
Circle of the Weeping Trees 85
Circulatory Creature 177
Citadel of Haiel 91
Climbing Creature 176
Conflagrated Creature 174
Coniferous Forest 27
Contort 149
Converting Existing Oathbound Characters 167
Cornered 149
Crater of Haiel 80
Crescent Falls 86
Crossbow, sighted 152
Crossing the Border 37

D

Dark Seeing Creature 173
Days of the Week 21
Deadly Creature 171
Dead Exchange 88
Deciduous Forest 26
Decimating Creature 178
Deep Creature 172
Departure (from the Forge) 20
Desperation 149
Devastating Creature 178
Devoted Creature 170
Diamestress 116
Dover 10
Draconic Creature 179
Dragons' Graveyard 75
Druids 38
Dwelling Tree 43

E

Eclipse 5
Eclipse, Foreign Relations 40
Ecology of Wildwood 41
Edanne 62
Edged Creature 171
Enlarged Creature 175
Eringall 62
Escape 147
Evasive Actions 150
Evolve 150
Exoskeleton armor 152

F

Faust 12
Feline Creature 173
Feral Creature 169
Focus of the Acrobat 168
Focus of the Beast 169
Focus of the Body 169
Focus of the Brawler 170
Focus of the Canine 170
Focus of the Claw 171
Focus of the Dark 171
Focus of the Deep 172
Focus of the Exile 172
Focus of the Feline 173
Focus of the Flame 173
Focus of the Frigid 174
Focus of the Green 174
Focus of the Huge 175
Focus of the Light 175
Focus of the Mighty 176
Focus of the Primate 176
Focus of the Senses 177
Focus of the Serpent 177
Focus of the Shadow 177
Focus of the Slayer 178
Focus of the Small 178
Focus of the Sphere 179
Focus of the Wyrm 179
Forceful Creature 176
Forests 41
Frey 13
Frozen Creature 174

G

Gainful Creature 176
Garden of Fasalai 78
Geography of Wildwood 26
Gifts 180
Gilled Creature 172
Greensuit 153
Green Creature 175
Grove of Naltanseera 82

H

Haiel 39, 89
Haiel's Avatar 92
Haiel's Secrets 90
Haiel's Sifter 23
Heart of the Nkoll 87
Hexed 98
Hsang-Tao 133

I

Icy Creature 174
Immolated Creature 174
Immunized Creature 170
Inconspicuous Creature 171
Inhabitants of Wildwood 32
Insubstantial Creature 178
Ishiraccan 121
Iumaxx 99

J

Jungle 28

K

Kansu Asammel 109
Kill 148
Killer Instinct 150
Kiln 5
Kiln, Foreign Relations 40
Koromaxx 100

L

Ladder, Grappling 153
Lake Amuwatu 137
Lake Lagusa 138
Lake of Sorrow 68
Lashu Micho 132
Laughing Creature 170
Layered Armor 152
Layered Creature 174
Legged Creature 179
Lethal Creature 171
Levels, Racial 8
Lithe Creature 173
Lost Civilizations 124
Lualla 67
Luminous Creature 175
Lunged Creature 179

M

Maneau Galle 112
Martial Creature 178
Mastuu Dargus 94
Mechanics of Hunting 144
Melodious Copse 86
Metabolized Creature 169
Molamort 105
Monndant 133
Movement 35
Musai 158
Myranda 67

N

Nagg-tuug 63
Naltanseera, Grove of 82
Narbrith Jall 55
Natural Surroundings 150
Nightling 15
Nimble Creature 169
Nkoll, Heart of the 87
Northern Ocean 136

O

Ologatu 161
Opened Creature 172
Ophelmaxx 100
Oppulammel 59
Optimized Creature 170
Outmaneuver 147
Outwit 147
Overview of Wildwood 22

P

Pack Creature 171
Penance 8
Penance, Foreign Relations 39
Penumbra 57
Peohautilan 124
Photosynthesizing Creature 175
Pimbattu 118
Pindara 50
Poison Thorns 42
Politics of Wildwood 38
Predators 89
Prestige Racial Levels 166
Prism Creature 175
Pull to Wildwood 23
Pursuit 145
Pythia 51

Q

Quaymong Monastery 134

R

Racial Levels 8
Razorclaw 119
Razor Creature 171
Reaching Creature 177
Reduced Creature 179
Relentless Pursuer 150
Religion in Wildwood 33
River Gawalagos 138
River Hebrus 139
River Malamba 139
River Tanais 140
Rowella 67
Runegates 87

S

Sadranial 53
Scaled Creature 179
Scarlet Forest 72
Scented Creature 169
Sevenil 63
Shadow Creature 178
Sharpened Creature 177
Shatch Palinaggon 122
Sinewy Creature 169
Slithering Creature 177
Special Move Actions 146
Spellbound Creature 179
Sprinter 150
Stalk 150
Stalking 144
Stealthy Creature 173
Stick, Tamer's 153
Stones of Blood 84
Sunless Creature 171
Swamp 29
Symbiotic Surgeon 185
Symbiots 183

T

Tailed Creature 169
Taming of the Wilderness 49
Tanastadt 60
Tenebrous Creature 172
Thebbylar 130
Thorn 17
Thrill of the Hunt 141
Tianna Anseera 84
Toughened Creature 170
Travel through Wildwood 34
Tressen Gonaway 102
Tumbling Creature 169
Tundra Creature 174

U

Urgoda 164

V

Vaam Ranasyr 114
Vault 8
Vault, Foreign Relations 40
Venomous Creature 177
Venturing through Wildwood 34
Vertumnos 52
Vigilant Creature 177
Vogel 20

W

Week, Days of the 21
Wilderness Equipment 151
Wildwood, General Observations 25
Wildwood, Overview 8, 22
Wildwood (area & population) 26
Wild Creature 169
Wild Frey 13
Winged Creature 179
Witch's Marsh 65