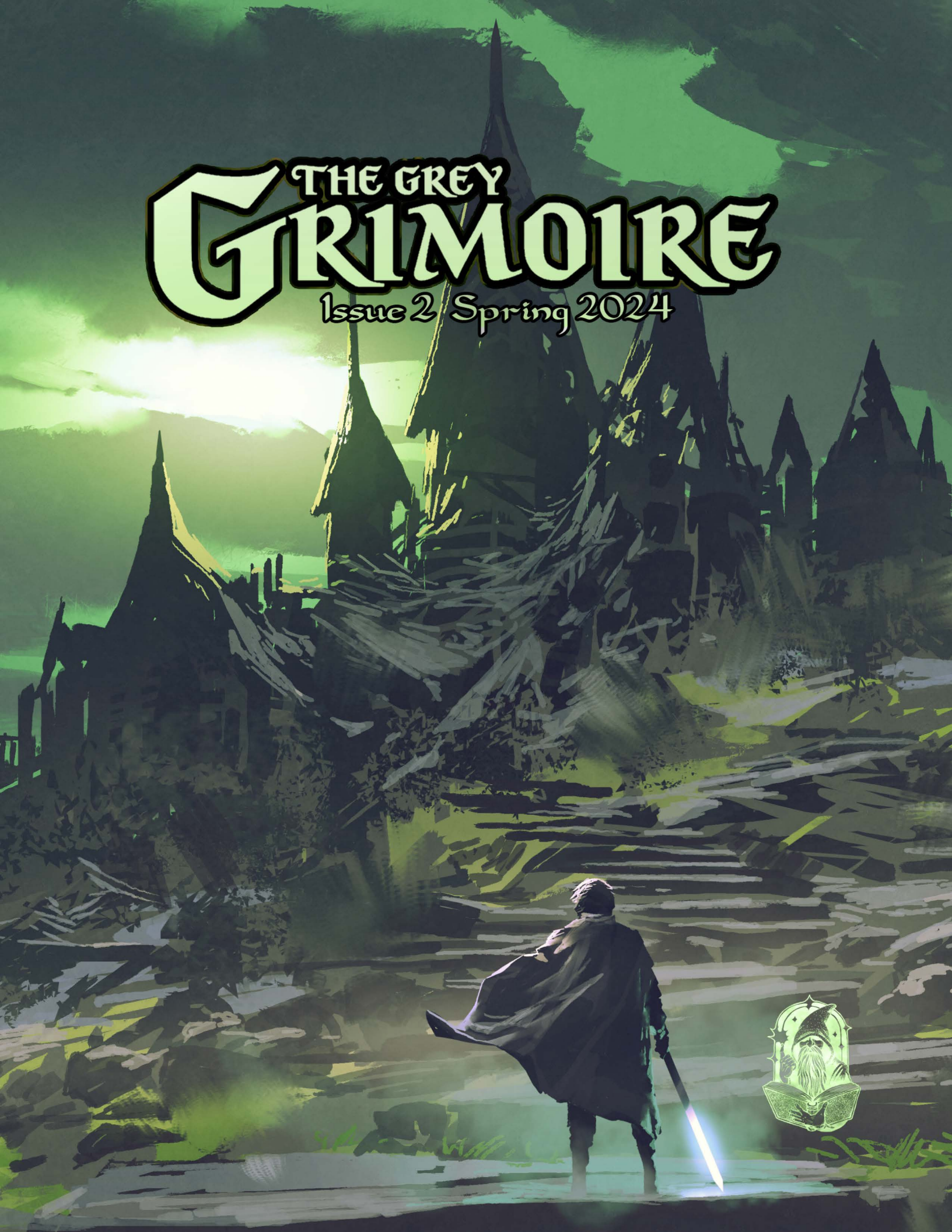


# THE GREY GRIMOIRE

Issue 2 Spring 2024



# Contents

Credits .....	2
Foreword .....	3
Oldridge.....	4
The Monks & the Princess.....	16
The Tunnel Below .....	18
Beyond the Flanaess: Maritime Development On Oerth.....	23
The Hamlet of Willow Wood Brook.....	28
Across the Banner Hills .....	30
Wise Woman .....	31
The White Rose of the Suel Imperium .....	32
Whispers of the Great Serpent: .....	37
The Hidden Empire of the Serpent-Men .....	37
Detect Life: The Ingundi.....	41
Oath of the Scourge of the Seas .....	43
Yhad, The Sea-Beast Hunter of Scant.....	44
The Earldom of Chull.....	45
Gods of the Baklunish .....	46
Rogues Gallery: Arrilon .....	48

# Credits

**Editor in Chief:** Ewan Cummins  
**Assistant Editors:** Gary Francisco, Samuel Weiss  
**Content Editor:** Rick ‘Duicarthan’ Miller  
**Layout & Design:** Lee “Savage Baron” Schaidle  
**Readers:** Paul Jurdeczka, Matthew Fenn, Les Reno, Mike Bridges, Stuart Kerrigan, Eric Bailey, Boyd  
**Cartography** by Paul Beel, Glynn Seal, Anna B. Meyer  
**Cover Art:** Liuzishan  
**Interior Art:** Dan Smith, William ‘Giantstomp,’ Dvorak, Andrew deFelice, Lee “Savage Baron” Schaidle, m-delcambre, phoenixrisingstock, istrandar, jenniferkearney, andisreinbergs, margaritaylita, diego-grandi, FabrikaPhoto, duallogic, digitalstormcinema, photocreo , mkstock, camilkuo, TsuneoMP, Good-LightHunting. Majorgaine

*Special thanks to Troy Alleman, and David ‘Big Mac’ Shepherd.*

# THE GREY GRIMOIRE



# Foreword

by Ewan “Norker” Cummins

Greetings, Greyhawkers! Welcome to the second issue of The Grey Grimoire, a fanzine dedicated to the World of Greyhawk. \*

It’s been a very productive winter. Our team finished not just this second issue, but the third issue is edited and ready for additional artwork and the layout and design stage. It will feature an adventure module, new monsters, new magic items, characters for the World of Greyhawk, and more.

On a related note, Sam Weiss wrote so much material on the races of the Flanaess that TGG couldn’t possibly publish all the articles without dedicating two entire issues just to it or serializing it for several years, so Sam and I have instead made all this material available on our WordPress site as a no-frills netbook. It is edited and revised but lacks the high-quality layout and artwork you can expect in our zine issues.

I am now accepting material for the fourth zine issue. If you want to see your original Greyhawk writing or artwork in the pages of The Grey Grimoire, submit your work to the zine by emailing [thegreygrimore@gmail.com](mailto:thegreygrimore@gmail.com).

Do not send any AI-generated text or images. You can find complete guidelines on the zine’s home website, [thegreygrimore1.wordpress.com](http://thegreygrimore1.wordpress.com).

Sincerely,

*Ewan Cummins*

Editor in Chief, The Grey Grimoire

\* *Greyhawk* and *Dungeons & Dragons* are the property of Wizards of the Coast. Nothing in *The Grey Grimoire* challenges or lays claim to that company’s rights, intellectual property, or trademarks. The zine is noncommercial, fan-written, staffed by volunteers, and freely distributed.



# Oldridge

by Rick “Duicarthan” Miller

Oldridge sits at the junction of trade routes connecting the old Great Kingdom to the Free City of Greyhawk. A remnant of the Knights Protector of the Great Kingdom patrols the nearby roads. Within Oldridge proper, the cobblestone dirawaen flanked by fields gives way to gravel streets and dirt alleys lined by houses of black granite.

The town is a rough and lively place. Steel-clad mercenaries and hard-eyed thugs walk the streets, watched but seldom interfered with by the well-armed city guard. Back alley brawls spill out from dingy taverns. Criminals leech off of the desperation of the town’s inhabitants and the money of unsuspecting travelers. But peddlers and merchants come to the market anyway, seeking profit. Many cults and sects have established themselves here, aiding the locals or taking advantage of their hometown naiveté. Over half the town’s populace works in the nearby quarry, the mines, or the farms in the countryside.

The Council of Six governs Oldridge. It considers the opinions of other notables of town and anyone paying a councilor a hefty bribe. Aristocrats grudgingly share power with crime bosses. Oldridge follows much of the criminal code of Rel Deven. Oldridge punishes its criminals in four ways: labor, exile, execution, fining, and imprisonment. The city’s jail retains few prisoners as many go to Rel Deven, Kalstrand, or Jalpa.

Historians debate the exact date of the founding of Oldridge. Most early records were lost when most of the town burned down in CY 203. Some scholars believe agents of the Knarren family destroyed these records to conceal secrets related to the infamous Death Knight, Sir Oslan Knarren.

## Oldridge

Small town: Conventional

**AL** Neutral **GP Limit** 2,000gp **Assets** unknown

**Population** 1,521 Mixed (Human 79%, Half-elf 2%, Elf 1%, Dwarf 1%, Gnome 1%, Halfling 1%, Half-orc 1%, Orc 0.5%, other ~0.1%).

## Authority Figures:

*Council of Six:*

**Duke Livuanis of House Cranden** (N human male fighter 8 battle master)

**Idris Wrynn**, Marshall (LN human male fighter 8),

**Merfyn Fyndor**, Gambling hall headmaster at Den of Ubiquitous Iniquity (N human male rogue 9)

**Eldrik Bregan** (LN human male cleric of Zilchus 5 Order Domain)

**Gwyaynnar Tyravaar** (LE human male warlock 8 fiend)

**Bantam Grinef** (NE human male rogue 12 mastermind)

## Important Characters

**Halantas Vir**, Commandant of the Knights of the Great Kingdom (LN human male paladin 9 oath of the crown)

**Mama Myssamaa**, crime lord (NE human female rogue (phantom))

## Adventure Hooks in Oldridge

- Hundreds of ancient books and manuscripts were uncovered in the attic of the Sagely Scriptorium by an acolyte of Delleb after the Mass of Knowledge during Needfest. The texts date back to the beginning of the first century. Secrets revealed in the books threaten the interests of noble families in the region, and multiple parties are interested in suppressing or publicizing this information.
- Bodies wrapped in tarps and left in an abandoned shaft in the Stonnard Ridge Mines have been turned over to authorities by the workers who made the discovery. Local clerics suspect the bodies may have been victims of the Red Death several years back. Fear of contagion has paralyzed mine operations.
- A young couple discovered Judge Kritus Pelinor’s signet ring in a ravine several miles from town. While bandits scour the countryside in search of the ring, a corrupt clerk seeks the lost item for his scheme to forge land grants for a crime boss.
- The Academy of Eldritch Arts seeks a missing apprentice who disappeared after emerging from the Plane of Shadow. The apprentice, Ishvantul Notellu (N shadar-kai male wizard 3- necromancy), has information regarding translated Ur-Flan tablets.
- An inquisitor of Pholtus from the Theocracy of the Pale, a twitchy elder called Gnynoani Eloha (LN human male cleric 5 of Pholtus), has come to town seeking information regarding the history of the Knarren estate. He haunts the halls of the Sagely Scriptorium during the day, poring over old records. During the wee hours, he snoops about the Knarren estate grounds. The Knarrens want him gone but fear angering the temple of Pholtus by acting directly.



CROSSROADS T.C.M.N  
 HEX LOCATION: X, X  
 SCALE: 1 inch = 30ft.  
 By Rick "Duicarthan" Mille

## Lighting and Patrols in Oldridge

Oil lamps illuminate the more heavily trafficked streets at night. Hourly patrols watch out for criminal activity in all neighborhoods except Tenement Row, day and night.

## Architecture

With the Lumberyard in town, most buildings, including the homes of commoners, are of sturdy wooden construction, roofed with clay tiles from Potto's Pottery. Those of high status will have lower stories built of black granite from Knarren Quarry, while the wealthiest and grandest structures have middle and upper stories of such stone. These buildings also likely have roofs reinforced with metal sheeting from Smyth's Metalworks and glass windows made in the Radiant Citadel.

### 1.) Hunter's Lodge

*A large log cabin with attached stables stands secluded among the trees north of town.*

A handful of rangers led by **Azryhel** (CG wood elf female ranger 8 beast master) run this hunting camp. Though friendly with the townsfolk, they do not abide trespassers. The rangers bring their excess game to market in trade for other goods.

### 2.) Druid Grove and Orchards

*Apple, pear, and peach trees surround the ring of standing stones far outside town. Produce stands rest beside the dirt road by their border.*

Awakened trees, treants, and other plant creatures inhabit the grove area. The druid, **Cerridwen Fionna** (avariel

elf female druid 13 – Circle of the Land), maintains the orchards with her initiates. Each harvest, the druids permit the townsfolk to the groves to gather produce. The druids do not exchange coinage but accept barter or donations in kind. The druids donate the excess produce to Tabernacle Corner clerics, who distribute it amongst those most in need.

### 3.) Abandoned Tower

*Tall ash trees line the path to a ruined tower with a blackened dome. A caved-in iron door with a grasping fist carved on its face hangs askew in the arched entrance.*

Bigby left his tower over a decade ago, fleeing black-robed invaders and fiends that pillaged all in pursuit of him. Years of plunder, weathering, and salvage have ruined the interior. Upon scrutiny, several secret arcane locked doors lead to an unspoiled subterranean complex containing abandoned arcane lore. Primary among these is a door resembling the Unopenable Doors within the Great Hall of Maure Castle. Rumors tell of planar gates, only accessible during rare celestial conjunctions.

A spell of forgetfulness lies upon the area. Some victims wander the woods in a catatonic amnesiac state.

A gangly, raspy-voiced white-haired troll lives in the lower levels of the ruin. **Tazz'divyn** (NG troll wizard 5 - abjuration) was once an apprentice of Bigby. He remains behind to warn his master of incursions into the tower or those seeking him bearing ill will.

### 4.) Stonnard Ridge Mines

*A dirt and gravel path leads up to a cliff-face mine shaft with mining carts lined up on rails.*

Mine manager **Valyria Stonnard** (LN human fe-



male fighter 3 - champion) oversees a team of 200 miners, teamsters, and laborers. The miners extract iron ore from underground deposits of magnetite and hematite. Once mined, ore is transported by wagon to either the foundry or one of the metalworkers in town.

## 5.) Knarren Quarry

---

*Dirt and gravel paths descend into a deep basin of black granite and shimmering quartz. Water fills the center of the floor. A broad channel cut in the rock runs from the lakelet east into the basin face. Several shafts set above the waterline lead underground. Piles of unworked stone and crates of uncut gems cover much of the ground surrounding a military tent near the main shaft entrance.*

The Knarren family has operated the quarry for centuries. The present overseer, **Myles Knarren** (LN human male fighter 2), supervises a team of over 100 miners. The miners extract black granite, smoky quartz, and basalt, which have been the staple building blocks of the area for centuries.

Pit ponies drag mine carts along wooden tracks. Continual flame torches equip each mining cart. A twenty-foot-deep drainage ditch runs eastward from the artificial lake to empty a mile away from town. Rubble and nailed-up boards block several shafts.

## 6.) Foundry

---

*A fetor of pitch lingers in the air around the foundry. Coal tar stains the stone walls. A spiral tower rises from the northwest corner of the building, crowned with a brass spire.*

During the height of the Great Kingdom, this foundry employed many famous smiths.

As the empire declined, so did the foundry's productivity. It fell into disuse and remained abandoned until the Greyhawk Wars when the Ironhand family reopened it to bolster their business. **Thelena Ironhand** (N dwarf female artificer - Alchemist 2), the daughter of Khur, runs the foundry with **Eld Stigandr** (CG fire genasi male cleric 3 of Joramy Forge Domain). The pair supervise a team of ten ironworkers.

The tower on the building serves as the living quarters for the pair, while a hall across the road houses the ironworkers.

## 7.) Delver's Dive

---

*The ramshackle tavern squats along a muddy path near the mines.*

The Delver's Dive caters to local miners and visiting bandits and adventurers. The place is well known for bar fights. The Dive features a well-stocked bar with sturdy tables and chairs strewn throughout the chamber, save for the area near the ill-kept hearth, where hot coals sometimes spill onto the floor.

**Heilyn** (N human male fighter 3 champion), a ruddy-faced, stocky man with enormous arms that seem to erupt from under his leather apron, runs the Dive. He offers room and board to men without funds who will put in a good day's work for him. Heilyn's business may be rowdy,

but he does not let things get too far and will wade into the middle of a fight while his tavern hands run to summon the town guards.

## 8.) Hansel's Hostelry

---

*Worn clay tiles cover the roof of a cracked stone and mortar building. Loose wooden shutters hang from the walls, swinging open at the slightest breeze.*

Many a weary traveler or drunken oaf has stumbled into this run-down hostel. A traveler can get one meal and a bed for the night for five copper coins.

The current owner, **Hansel** (LN human male rogue 1), obtained the hostel in a dice game. He runs the hostel with a small team of physically disabled porters, maids, and cooks. Hansel has little experience as an innkeeper and often takes in downtrodden souls to keep the place afloat.

## 9.) Smyth's Metal Works

---

*Several chimneys rise from a metal roof that protects a reinforced granite building with an attached open awning.*

Once a mercenary, the current craftsman, **Reynard Smyth** (LN human male fighter 4 -Champion), retired to Oldridge following the Greyhawk Wars. He took over the dilapidated building that once belonged to his father, taking on several apprentices from the town's urchins. Over the last few years, the business has flourished as Reynard has expanded to compete with Potto's Pottery's clay tile roofing. Reynard fabricates metal sheeting that reinforces the roofing of a building.

## 10.) Sagely Scriptorium

---

*Polished black Corinthian columns support a black granite roof resembling an open book facing down. A rune-carved black oak door with a brass phoenix-feather quill knocker lies at the top of the polished black granite stairs.*

The scriptorium houses a library that anyone in town can peruse. The clerics of Delleb offer transcription of texts, including notary services for legal documents. Adventurers and locals may buy or sell books here or purchase inks, paper, or bound books at reasonable rates. The scriptorium also acts as a school. The clerics teach a gamut of topics from history to mathematics to languages.

**Grand Tomesage Danis** (LG/LN human male cleric 11 of Delleb) oversees the scriptorium's clerics and all services. The white-haired, blue-eyed, venerable scholar walks through the library at odd hours, sorting and shelving books.

## 11.) Temple of the Omniscient Eye

---

*Black polished granite steps ascend to twin black granite halls flanking a domed central tower. Metal plating, tinted purple, covers the dome and the roofs of the buildings. Hexagonal violet windows pierce the walls of all three structures.*

**Daumantas the Indifferent** (N human male cleric 14) dotes about the church most days. Long silver-white hair drapes over the aged priest's broad shoulders. He dress-



es in deep violet robes and leans on a sturdy staff adorned with a gold hexagon at the top. Daumantas oversees several clerics of the faith of Boccob. The dormitory hall stands on the northeast side. The other hall acts as an alchemical and magical research laboratory where the clerics conduct experiments. Workers there produced the alchemically-tinted glass for the window panes and the copper-antimony alloy used for the roof covering.

## 12.) Rovan's Rustlers Rest

*Scents of straw, mud, and dung waft from a large two-story stone barn.*

**Rovan Rovest** (N firbolg male druid 8 Circle of the Shepherd) offers the best service in the area. His mounts outperform all local breeders and stables for miles around. A simple, kindly fellow who often falls into melancholy when his stables are empty, Rovan treats all creatures with kindness. He has pets that bring him news from throughout the area. His stables are always well kept with clean bedding, fresh oats, and pure water.

## 13.) The Flowing Flagon

*The peculiar barrel-shaped wooden building smells of hops and malt.*

An association of brewers directed by a snooty white-haired man named **Al'vino** (N human male artificer 3 alchemist). He dresses in stained workman's clothing with a thick leather apron. Al'vino has run the brewery with his brethren for twenty-two years.

The brewery distills ales, beers, wines, and strong whiskeys in their shop. The cellar stores could last the town of Oldrige through seven winters. The brewery provides drinks

to all the local inns and taverns, runs a stall in the market, and ships its wares through Ahlissa and beyond to Irongate.

## 14.) Rummage Sack

*The wooden sign above the entrance to the run-down building shows a basket of produce beside a filled sack. Sections of tarp cover holes in the thatched roof.*

**Lugh Hul** (LE orog male fighter 5 champion) looms over the counter of the Rummage Sack while his associates create baskets, bags, tarps, and other traveling provisions. Merchandise spills over the crooked wooden shelves of the store. Barrels filled with imported alcohol line the walls under these shelves. A tarp separates the storefront from the workbenches in the back. The staff lives in a loft above the store, though Lugh prefers to sleep in the old wine cellar.

A towering gray-green orog with a topknot of graying black hair and a stubbled chin, the indomitable Lugh hails from the Bone March. The orog sizes up anyone entering the doors. He attempts to identify those who may resemble a threat or an authority figure. Once a champion of the Bone March, he fled those lands following a fight with a Northern Kingdom noble. Lugh killed the noble, upsetting the tenuous alliance between the Bone March and the North Kingdom. While in the Adri Forest, The Sentinels of the Coldwood captured Lugh and escorted him to the southern border. A petty lord found him wandering the countryside and forced him into servitude as a fighter in his army. The servants taught him how to read, weave baskets, and sew burlap into sacks. When his master made a gambit of seizing power during the fall of Rauxes, he left Lugh behind to guard the camp with these servants. After weeks without word from their master, the servants abandoned the camp. Lugh and a few others escaped into the wilds near



Oldridge. The group survived the winter of 586 CY before emerging from the wilderness. Lugh and his fellow servants disguised themselves as traveling merchants, Lugh being their caravan guard. The entourage plied their trade in the market before finally purchasing a run-down hut as their home and storefront outside the market.

### 15.) Townhall

*Rocking chairs sit on the front deck of a weathered timber building.*

Inside, carved wooden benches lead up to a lectern box, behind which several padded chairs rest upon a polished wooden dais. Once a month, the town holds meetings within this hall to sort out local issues. Duke Livuanis and Idris Wrynn attend the meetings to discuss issues brought to the town elders before any laws are created or modified.

### 16. The Contingent Coin

*The gilded spires and roofs of a Gothic temple rise high over the far eastern side of the market. Immense gold doors blazoned with a pair of hands clutching a coin purse stand at the top of polished black granite stairs.*

Construction of the Contingent Coin finished a few years before the sale of Tabernacle Corner. The Contingent Coin acts as a bank, moneylender, and currency exchange.

A balding man whose pale complexion looks unhealthy in contrast to his usual purple vestments, **Eldrik Bregan** (LN human male cleric of Zilchus 5 - Order Domain) oversees twenty acolytes. Though he has a reputation as a miser, merchants seek his advice in money matters.

### 17.) Town Well

*The well's stone circular wall measures twenty feet wide and three feet high. Engraved silver sigils line the ring of the well.*

The water pulls from an aquifer thirty feet below the surface, fed by an underground river. Local druids inspect the water daily to ensure it stays potable.

*NOTE:* Poisoning or otherwise contaminating the well in any way is a grave crime. Anyone who attempts to do so faces the wrath of the law and the hostility of townsfolk and the local druids. These druids have no qualms about executing anyone who defiles the lifeblood of the people and wildlife of the region.

### 18.) Town Square Market

*Bright fabric tents, wooden stalls, and vendor wagons clutter the town square surrounding the town well.*

Goods sold at the market come from throughout the town and the surrounding region. The market remains open from dawn through dusk.

### 19.) Radiant Citadel of Pelor

*A shining quartz roof reinforced with brass supports rests upon the heavy granite walls of the temple. The image of the sun marks the heavy brass doors.*

The temple roof and windows glow softly by night. By day, the doors stand open to admit parishioners. Inside, leaded stained glass windows with images of the sun illuminate the polished granite floor covered with carved crystal and brass benches. The Radiant Citadel of Pelor features two



side wings where the town's candlemakers and glassblowers produce their wares. Artisans tithe a portion of their sales to the citadel in three ways: materials, money, or services.

The elderly **Meredydd the Shining Oracle** (NG human male cleric 10 - Life Domain) oversees the temple and assists the junior clerics in other matters, including commerce. He has been the senior cleric in Oldridge for over forty years, training the young clerics in the wisdom of his Radiant Essence, Pelor. Meredydd is kind to those he meets, though he does not tolerate bullying, violence, or blasphemy within the citadel or in his presence.

## 20.) Sanctuary of the Recalcitrant Avenger

---

*A silver triskelion surrounding a rune of pursuit marks the bell tower of the Sanctuary. A metal sheet roof covers the recently refurbished granite building. Grand stairs lead up to silver doors with spear-shaped handles.*

A growing number of refugees from Almor seek asylum within the sanctuary. As a result, its once small congregation has grown in recent years. The Sanctuary provides food and shelter for those in need. The clerics ask that refugees work and pull their fair weight. Several guards patrol the grounds and halls of the sanctuary, on guard against those who might attempt to seize those within.

Stocky, middle-aged man **Nelleb Vorn** (CG human male paladin 7 of Trithereon - Oath of Vengeance) is an exile from Chathold and sympathizes with the plight of outcasts and refugees.

## 21.) Nightingale in the Golden Cage

---

*An oak sign depicting a platinum nightingale in a golden cage hangs in front of the doors to a house of black granite walls. Stone cherubs look down from the eaves of the clay tile roof.*

The owner keeps the doors and the carved, dark-stained shutters closed except on hot summer days. Within the Nightingale, a polished black granite staircase leads to carved wooden doors decorated with elaborate brass fittings. Inside, heavy tapestries hang in the hallways. Padded chairs surround white table-clothed tables decorated with a brass candelabrum at each table. The Nightingale features a full kitchen, a well-appointed bar, a casino in the back, and rooms upstairs for honored guests. The cellar stores salted meats, wine, and fine cheeses. A hidden passage beneath the club leads to an underground passage inside the Contingent Coin.

**Gwyaynnar Tyravaar** (LE human male warlock 8 fiend) runs this with the help of cultists of Asmodeus. The warlock bribes the Marshal and the chief Zilchan cleric to ensure their noninterference in the operations of the coven. Gwyaynnar dresses in somber but fancy clothing like black velvet robes with embroidered gold vines. Questioned about rumors of devilry in the town, the man will express grave concern and ask to know more about these disturbing tales—fishing for information he can use to protect his cult and advance his sinister schemes.

Two tall, brutish men with cropped hair, dressed in leather armor, called **Thommend** and **Byggy** (LE human male fighter 2/rogue 2 champion/inquisitive), bar entry to anyone not dressed in fine clothing. A 50gp bribe for one person or a 200gp bribe for a group may persuade the bully-boys to make an exception.

## 22.) Warehouses

---

*Four imposing masonry warehouses with iron-barred windows border the south side of the garrison grounds.*

Foundations sunk below the frost line allow for cold storage of preserved foods. Rows of crates, barrels, and shelving filled with food, fuel, and other supplies fill these warehouses. Pulley elevators allow access to all floors, including the wine cellar and cold storage areas.

The Knight Protectors and the town guard mount separate hourly patrols of the grounds.

## 23.) Knights of the Great Kingdom Garrison

---

*A compound of fortified, plain clay-tile-roofed granite buildings stands along the northern side of the town wall.*

The barracks have space for over 100 men, but the post is only half-filled. The remaining buildings include a great hall with a mess kitchen, stables, the commandant's office, an armory, and a training hall near the archery range.

A rough middle-aged man with short-cropped brown hair, a shaven face, and weary green eyes dressed in reworked dark gray field plate armor patrols the garrison grounds daily. The Commandant of the Knights of the Great Kingdom, **Halantas Vir** (LN human male paladin 9 Oath of the Crown), stops to speak to each of his charges to check that they are performing their duties. Halantas saw the devastation of Almor and Medegia in person, though he does not speak of either instance. The Commandant has seen battle numerous times as a veteran of the Greyhawk Wars. A lifelong military officer, he values information, hard work, and bravery. He has little use for tomfoolery or games, though he does enjoy a good-natured practical joke from time to time.

## 24.) Lumber Yard

---

*Bound piles of logs cover much of a well-kept lumberyard. A wagon house adjoins the yard next to the sawmill.*

A team of lumberjacks and carpenters operates the yard. A glowering, gangly man with a balding crown, **Nýr Elmiral** (CN half-elf ranger 4-hunter) has managed this operation for ten years. He often shouts orders to his team. He wears leather armor covering faded blue pants with a brown tunic. Nýr has his hand in all of the business operations at all times. When not on the job, he frequents the taverns.

## 25.) Academy of the Eldritch Arts

---

*A starry amethyst dome covers the center tower of a black granite split-gallery building. Black polished granite stairs ascend to two heavy silver double doors covered with arcane symbols.*



The Academy offers rudimentary training in the arcane arts with several instructors available for prospective students, including sorcerers and warlocks. As students progress, they transfer to Rel Deven, Rel Astra, or seek employment in their field of expertise.

A dapper gentleman dressed in tight dark gray robes with silver trim known as **Edwynn the Edifier** (N half-elf wizard 16 war magic) has been the Academy's headmaster for decades. His cousin, **Nessus Dreven** (NG half-elf male artificer 5 - alchemist), operates a lab within the Academy. Nessus sells his alchemical concoctions at the local market.

## 26.) Spinster's Wheel

---

*A wood slat roof covers a rugged masonry building with lace curtains hanging in the open windows. A clothesline strung with colored garments hangs out back.*

**Gwynfor Gretch** (NG human female commoner Guild Artisan: tailor), a gray-haired matron who always dresses in fashionable garments and favors a violet scarf, has run her storefront for fifty years. Her family assists in the tasks of what has now become a booming family business. Gwynfor intends for her daughter **Gylendra** (CG human female bard 3 - College of Creation) to take over when she dies. Gylendra designs many of the items that go to market.

## 27.) Potto's Pottery

---

*A charcoal odor comes from a two-story black granite building covered with a tile roof.*

An absent-minded old gnomish woman, **Potto Peddler** (CG rock gnome female commoner - Guild Artisan: potter), creates all of her pottery for sale in her shop and the market. Her grandson **Pyp** (NG rock gnome male rogue 1) helps deliver wares to the market. Potto enjoys teaching others her craft.

## 28.) The Game and Sundry

---

*Racks with stretched hides line the front of a stonework shop. The unpleasant odor of tanning vats hangs in the air.*

A short, skinny young woman with shoulder-length red hair runs this combination of tannery, taxidermy, and leatherworker's shop. She wears red and white garments.

**Yadia Felci** (CG human female cleric 5 of Ehlonna - Nature Domain) moved to the area in 593 CY. She took over the shop from the previous owner and retained the staff. Yadia does much of the stitching, etching, embroidering, and running the shop while the workers handle other tasks. When she is not at her shop, she accompanies the rangers of the Hunter's Lodge on their hunts. Yadia leads the local mystery cult of Ehlonna.

## 29.) Ironhands Anvil

---

*A sign painted with an iron hand striking an anvil hangs outside the squat granite building. Tin plates cover the roof.*

A black and grey-streaked bearded dwarven man who wears spectacles, **Khur Ironhand** (LN hill dwarf male artificer 3 - battle smith) spends much of his days here, toiling away at a forge with his assistants.

**Selgha Ironhand** (LN hill dwarf female rogue 3 scout), a kindly dwarven woman who wears her silver-black hair tied back in a bun, runs the front counter.

The couple has made arms and armor in their shop for twelve years. The shop caters to all customers seeking new goods or repairs on their current equipment. Etching and gem-work, they send to their cousins in either Rel Deven or Irongate. Their prices are firm and fair to all patrons. The couple does not tolerate threats or rude behavior. They refuse service to anyone acting in such a manner, reporting them to the clerics of Zilchus and the Marshal. The shop



contains shrines to Bleredd (lesser god of Metal, Mines, and Smiths) and Ulaa (intermediate goddess of Hills, Mountains, and Gemstones).

### 30.) Back on the Table

*The odor of raw meat and freshly cut hides emanates from a squat stone building.*

A gruff tan-skinned half-orc man dressed in hide armor covered by a thick apron runs this shop. **Gharbán** (CN half-orc male barbarian 4 totem warrior) took over this shop after his master perished from the Red Death in 581 CY. His meats are well-cut, clean, and wrapped daily. The Game and Sundry receives the hides of animals for tanning.

### 31.) The Pits

*Stone benches form a ring around a circular sandy depression with a large iron grate at the center. A plain, barracks-like house stands nearby.*

**Andrius Tarrenen** (N human male fighter 12- champion), a tanned man with long black hair tied back who often wears piecemeal mail and leather armor, has run the fighting pits for the last decade, offering martial training to some and entertainment to others. Every fighter permitted in the Pits must compete, though not all engage in full-contact lethal combat. Andrius does not compete in his games as he has a business to run, and ending up dead is bad for business.

### 32.) *Traveler's Wayside Inn*

*A small grove of trees shades the back of a green vine- and moss-covered two-story building. A swaying roadway sign depicting the horizon greets all travelers outside.*

A thin, tall man with long yellow hair and a forked beard, **Okarm Elathia** (CG human male cleric 8 of Fharlanghn twilight), walks with a quarterstaff to help with a gimp in his left leg. Okarm runs the inn with the intermittent aid of traveling clerics. Okarm hires help from the homeless urchins that come seeking shelter. He pays them well, feeds them, shelters them, and counsels their woes. They may leave any time they wish with his blessing.

Okarm sells accurate maps of the surrounding lands, including many beyond the Kingdom of Ahlissa. The Traveler's Wayside features a shrine to Fharlanghn (intermediate god of Horizons, Travel, and Roads) in a dirt-filled old fountain in the main room. The hearth keeps the inn warm, while the shade trees out back cool the rooms in the warmer months. The inn maintains thirty of the best-kept pest-free rooms in town.

### 33.) *Veteran's Reprieve*

*Red and blue banners hang from the balconies of a weathered stonework building.*

**Ol' Salt** (LN human male fighter 5), a dour white-haired man with a scarred face and an eyepatch, runs this drinking hole and flophouse, employing old soldiers for his staff. The crowds are rough and hearty, though they do not tolerate tomfoolery. Open fighting is prohibited. The owner keeps a shrine to Daern (the hero goddess of defenses and fortifications) above the hearth.

### 34.) *Den of Ubiquitous Iniquity*

*Granite pillars support the silver-painted tile roof of a two-story granite and oak building. Black-tinted windows show only murky shapes within.*

The Den offers food, drink, lodging, gambling, and pleasurable company (with no questions asked). The fastidious **Bantam Grinef** (NE human male rogue 12 mastermind) avoids newcomers unless they seek him out or one of the other patrons of the Den points them out to him. He does not partake of the pleasures of the brothel but does visit the harlots to gather information they have picked up, which he might put to his advantage in blackmail or business dealings. He favors dark clothing and wears his mustachios trimmed pencil-thin.

Bantam leaves the day-to-day of the inn/ tavern to **Glyn Myranjye** (CN human female cleric 7 of Olidamarra trickery) and the gambling hall to **Headmaster Merfyn Fyndor** (CN human male cleric 4/rogue 2 of Rudd trickery/ inquisitive). Traveling bards often visit. **Einar Sizyu** (CG human bard 19- College of Lore) and **Lady Godiva** (CG human female bard 7 - College of Eloquence), an opera singer and an exotic dancer, are crowd favorites.

The previous owner sold the building, then an inn, to clerics of Olidamarra (intermediate god of Music, Revels, Wine, Rogues, Humor, and Tricks) looking for a place to establish a new temple. To keep the temple from becoming dull, the Olidamarrans invited the faiths of Kuroth (hero-god of Theft and Treasure-Finding) and Rudd (demigoddess of Chance, Good Luck, and Skill) to join the enterprise. Since its purchase seven years ago, the den has flourished.

The clerics of Kuroth visit the Den seeking rumors of hidden treasures or to fleece a mark that has inconvenienced the temple. Rudd's faithful run an incredibly lucrative gambling hall in the back room of the den.

### 35.) *Tabernacle Corner*

*Veins of quartz run through the granite walls of a metal-roofed temple. At the main entrance facing the street stands a pair of double doors made with heavy oaken panels bound by strips of cold iron and decorated with silver coins.*

Once an elaborate market hall run by the moneylenders of Zilchus, Tabernacle Corner now houses shrines to Merikka (demigoddess of Agriculture, Farming, and the Home), Cyndor (lesser god of Time, Infinity, and Continuity), Lirr (lesser goddess of Prose, Poetry, Literature, and Art), Hextor (intermediate god of War, Discord, Massacres, Conflict, Fitness, and Tyranny) and Pholtus (Intermediate god of Light, Resolution, Law, Order, Inflexibility, Sun, and Moons).

Stone benches wedge between each shrine for travelers to rest. Prayer rugs lie on the floor near each shrine. Clay offering bowls sit next to each shrine.

Two guards patrol the hall during the day. While any resident may assist in patrols, most of these duties fall to the marshal's deputies or the Knights of the Great Kingdom.

**Demerikkus** (NG human female cleric 5 of Merikka) maintains the grounds with any traveling clerics of the faiths represented here—a middle-aged, tanned woman. Several local children assist her in directing worshippers to the shrines. Her mixed gray/ orange-yellow hair often draws the attention of many foreigners, whom she greets with a smile dressed in rough, dirty clothing. She is kind to all. Demerikkus suffers from debilitating headaches.

*NOTE:* Defiling or stealing from the shrines in any way is a crime. The penalty for such a crime is indentured servitude to the priests of the offended god, a fine replacing any stolen money, or a public whipping in the town square with a scourge. Anyone who defiles a shrine also faces the wrath of the law, townsfolk, and the hostility of local clerics.

### 36.) Marshal's Office

---

*A pair of spearmen in mail shirts stand watch outside a strongly built two-story house of dark stone.*

Two guards are always on duty, in regular shifts. The Marshal's Office contains living quarters for deputies, a thirty-cell basement jail, a booking office, and a mess hall.

Idris Wrynn (LN human male fighter 8 banneret), the lean, clean-shaven Marshal of Oldridge, appears honest and stern in pursuit of his duties, a rigid adherent of the hero-goddess Daern. Idris's assumption of family debts ruined his finances, and he unwisely accepted a 'gift' from the Asmodean cult. He now takes regular bribes from the warlock tavern master. He knows he has compromised himself and might suffer blackmail, but his by-the-book mentality has prevented him from taking drastic and felonious actions—like murdering the warlock. The Marshals' twenty deputies attend to the security of the town. They observe interactions between residents, interceding when matters get out of hand. **Deputy Rayn Amelda** (LE human male fighter 1/rogue 3 inquisitive) has gained power with Asmodean aid and replaced honest men with criminals and thugs. Idris only acts within the regulations, and Deputy Rayn knows how to game the rules to keep his cronies out of trouble with their commander.

### 37.) Tenement Row

---

*A district of run-down tenements envelops the southern roadway into town. Thatch roofs cover two-level tenements that have seen little or no upkeep. Unpleasant odors of refuse and other foul things issue from broken shutters in a thick wave. Muddy gravel paths connect the district to other locales. A cacophony of shouting and other loud noises oppress the neighborhood. Shady figures line the bustling streets, harrying browbeaten townsfolk and anyone else they think they might persecute.*

Before the fall of Rauxes, the Pelinor family resided here. The Pelinor family sat on the Court of Essence as judges who kept the peace between the Aerdi royal houses for centuries. The last judge was the late Kritus Pelinor, who perished in Rauxes' collapse. The estate should have passed on to his family, though no one ever claimed it. Rumors persist that his grandson, **Magnus Pelinor** (CG aasimar bard 3 – college of Lore), missing for years, still lives. In the family's absence, the estate fell into disrepair following the Greyhawk Wars. Desperate squatters used the estate as a hideout. A succession of crime bosses took over. The latest ruler of Tenement Row, the infamous **Mama Myssamaa** (NE human female rogue 9 phantom), pays bribes to the corrupt deputies and city officials to keep patrols out of her squalid fiefdom.

### 38.) Wrynn Cattle Ranch

---

*Outside the west gate and beyond a stretch of grazing land, fences mark the border of a large ranch.*

Idris Wrynn, the Marshall of the Knights of the Great Kingdom, lives here with his extended family.

The estate comprises two cattle barns, a stable, a few longhouses, a carriage house, a field house, and several

farmhouses. The ranch employs over one hundred fifty wranglers, stablemen, and farmhands.

### 39.) South Road Independent Ranches

---

*Stately old farmhouses and fancifully-decorated manses line either side of the southern road.*

Established in the years following the fall of Rauxes, the local lords divided the Naelax lands south of town to the highest bidder (often for exorbitant prices in case the previous owners were to reclaim them). Returning veterans and prosperous merchants settled in the abandoned farms.

### 40.) Branwen Estate

---

*Along the southeast side of town, the open fields give way to an extensive fenced-in farm.*

The estate contains two barns, a longhouse, a few field houses, several farmhouses, and a quaint manor house. Comparatively new on the scene, the Branwen Estate grows beans and other seasonal produce for the market. The current proprietors, **Tavus** (N human male fighter 2) and **Adyna Branwen** (N human female fighter 2) inherited the land from Adyna's grandparents (House Darmen). The couple works the land alongside Adyna's extended family. Produce from their farm frequently sells in the market during all seasons as they preserve all sorts of food for use in the winter.

### 41.) Oldridge Graveyard

---

*The dusty eastern path terminates at a towering iron-spiked fenced-in hilltop graveyard that looms over the*





countryside. Wooden plankways lined by oaks, ashes, and willows weave among the mausoleums and gravestones.

A 10-foot-high spiked iron fence deters grave robbers from defiling the consecrated grounds. Prestigious black granite mausoleums exist for every noble family within the graveyard, with rows of headstones and markers going back over five hundred years.

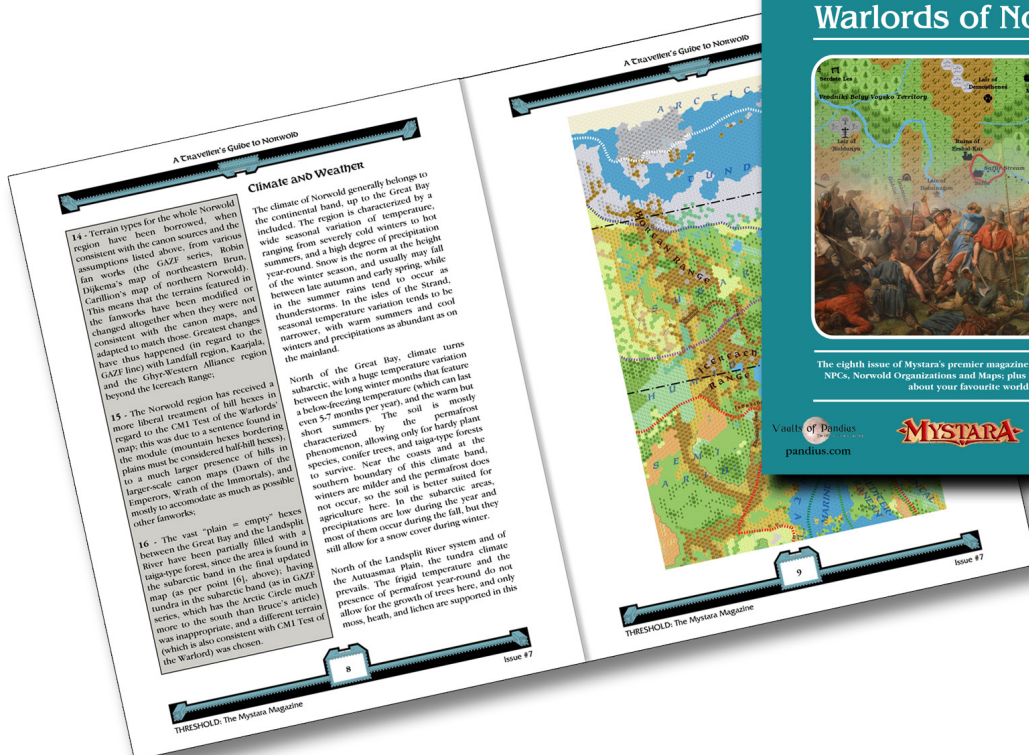
The clerics of Pelor maintain the cemetery.

## 42.) Knarren Estate and Farm

*Visible from the road, the black granite walls and gray terracotta roof of a large, ornate manor house rise high over the fence around a large estate. Fluted columns support a garden verandah set above the main doors of the home. Other buildings stand farther out on the extensive grounds.*

The Knarren holding was one of the first established in Oldridge and has expanded over the generations; much of the northeast central side of town between the two dirawaen roads outside the wall belongs to the estate. Visitors will find two barns, a granary, a longhouse, six farmhouses, a carriage house, a field house, and a majestic manor house. The crest of House Cranden marks the main doors of the manorhouse. The Knarrens claim descent from that illustrious and royal lineage. Notable members of the Knarraen family include the Death Knight, Sir Oslan Knarren, and the archmage Bigby. The current manor lord, **Duke Livuanis Knarren of House Cranden** (N human male fighter 8 - battle master), sits on the city council. Livuanis has little interest in politics nor the greed inherent in such positions. He spends his time expanding estate operations while the day-to-day work he leaves to the servants. the winter.

# Get back to the beginning in the pages of the THRESHOLD Magazine



**Threshold Magazine is the premier gaming magazine filled with expanded information on the Known Worlds, Original D&D, and Mystara. Enjoy new material for this historic D&D Setting**

**You can download the current or any back issues of Threshold Magazine at the Vaults of Pandius at [www.Pandius.com](http://www.Pandius.com), the official Mystara website.**

**Looking for more Mystara? Go to the Piazza, the D&D Worlds Discussion Forums at [www.ThePiazza.org.uk](http://www.ThePiazza.org.uk)**

**Threshold Magazine is a free, non-commercial, fan-produced magazine.**



Vaults of Pandius  
The Official Mystara Homepage



# The Monks & the Princess

by Doc Jacques

## The Monastery of Silent Devotion (north of the Caliphate of Ekbir)

The Monastery of Silent Devotion is located on a small rocky plateau almost a thousand meters above sea level, between the Yecha Hills and the Yatil Mountains. A steep and winding path runs to the gates of this gloomy, imposing, gray stone building, surrounded by a high wall. The monastery is home to an order serving Zuoken and Xan Yae. The monks practice meditation and silence for perfect harmony, seeking mastery of the Edel and the Da'shon. Abbot **Dalai-Zuo Sayed** (human LN, 13th Cleric of Xan Yae) leads the monks. The monastery has a hidden library of ancient books and parchments. Princess Nour (human LG, 11th level monk) assists him.

The monastery welcomes visitors, but Abbot Sayed is the only one who can authorize anyone to consult books or order a copy of manuscripts.

*Monastic tradition: the Way of the Four Elements is a variant of the Monk class presented in the D&D 5th edition, Player's Handbook, pages 80 to 81, ©2014 Wizards of the Coast LLC*

## Princess Nour

Princess Nour is the fourth daughter of Xargun, the Caliph of Ekbir. Following Ekbirian custom, the Caliph promised Nour to the son of a rich and powerful noble family of Ekbir, allies of the royal house for generations. Nour is a beautiful young woman with green eyes and black hair. She is intelligent, athletic, and strong-willed. The princess was reluctant to marry a man so much older than she. She managed to postpone marriage until the day she met a handsome young man during a horseback ride. They fell madly in love, but Ameer ben Ramdhan's family was frowned upon at court since the Al'Akbar schism. The offended Caliph decreed the exile of Ameer, and Nour was locked up in the Monastery of the Silent Devotion to become a priestess of Xan Yae. Nour was not keen on clerical studies and soon surprised her tutors with her growing interest in the martial arts. She looked to Zuoken for her ideal of physical and mental achievement. Her progress amazed her teachers. Nour poured all her energy into becoming the best at all techniques, sublimating her feelings of loss and love into the drive to perfect herself. She became a mistress of Edel and Da'shon. After a decade of training and testing, Nour now

teaches the Way of the Four Elements to the young monks and serves as chief assistant to the Abbot, Master Sayed. Her principled, compassionate moral outlook remains out of balance with the contemplative neutrality endorsed by the monastery's patron powers, and she has engaged visiting clerics of Xan Yae and Zuoken in spirited debates over the years. She regards it as her duty to care for the monastery's inhabitants and visitors.

## Princess Nour

*Medium Humanoid Female (Baklunish), 11th level Monk, Lawful Good*

**Armor Class** 11 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 80 (11 d8 +22)

**Speed** 30 ft., 50 ft. (unarmored)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throws** STR +5\* DEX +8\* CON +2 INT +2 WIS +4

**Skills** Acrobatics (+8), History\* (+6), Insight (+8), Persuasion\* (+4)

**Senses** Passive Perception 14

**Languages** Common, Ancient Baklunish, Old Oeridian\*

**Ki Points** 11

**Ki save** DC 16

## Features

1st level: **Unarmored Defense, Martial Arts**

2nd level: **Ki** (you start knowing three such features: Flurry of Blows, Patient Defense, Step of the Wind), **Unarmored Movement**

3rd level: Monastic Tradition: **Way of the Four Elements** (2 Monastic Tradition Features: **Elemental Attunement & Water Whip**), **Deflect Missiles**

4th level: Ability Score Improvement: **Dexterity +2, Slow Fall**

5th level: **Extra Attack, Stunning Strike**

6th level: **Ki-Empowered Strikes**, Monastic Tradition feature: **Clench of the North Wind**

7th level: **Evasion, Stillness of Mind**

8th level: Ability Score Improvement: **Wisdom+2**

9th level: **Unarmored Movement Improvement** (move along vertical surfaces and across liquids on

your turn without falling during the move)

10th level: **Purity of Body** (immune to poison and disease)

11th level: Monastic Tradition Feature: **Ride the Wind**

---

**Armor** none

**Weapons** shortsword, ten darts

**Tool** lute

**Equipment** an explorer's pack



# The Tunnel Below

by Scott “wilyhobbit” Frey

**Setting:** In and under Redgorge, a town near the Free City of Cauldron, between the Hellfurnaces and the Hadarni Range.

## Characters:

**Me:** Lone traveler, story collector, in my early 50s dressed in road clothes, a dagger on my belt. My walking stick, backpack, and cloak are in my room.

**Orthran Stonebreaker:** 45 y.o. male dwarf lvl 1 fighter, stableman Red Rock Tavern. 4’2” 165 lbs, lean for a Dwarf, brown curly hair and thick brown beard, sparkling green eyes, and a crooked smile. He’s wearing a woolen grey/white long hooded tunic over leather breeches.

**Larissa Phalen:** 26 y.o. female human, barmaid at The Dark Moon Tavern and Inn

**Father:** Ethan Phalen: works for the Constabulary in Redgorge

**Mother:** Alaina Phalen: also a servant at The Dark Moon Tavern and Inn

**Kairee:** 98 y.o female half-elf lvl 10 bard, owner of Red Rock Tavern

I wandered into the Red Rock Inn and Tavern, a plain timber and masonry two-story building, looking for a clean room and cold ale on a warm, humid summer evening. I’d just arrived in Redgorge from up Sasserine way. There was only one room left. I paid straight away, thinking happy thoughts of a soak in a warm tub and a night lying on a mattress instead of the cold earth. I stowed my gear in my room and returned to the noisy taproom where I made the acquaintance of an anxious, young dwarf. He introduced himself as Orthran, the Red Rock’s stableman. We had to share a table since the taproom was bustling with locals and travelers alike. I decided this young chap might provide an entertaining tale, so I asked what was on his mind. He obliged, much to my surprise, given the gruffness some dwarves display.

“It was the typical night at the Red Rock. Miss Larissa had been visitin’ her horse in the stables and she stopped in for a drink. A bunch of knuckleheaded rowdy locals started givin’ her a hard time, talkin’ about how she’d never been outta Redgorge in her life. Them boys think they are something since a few of ‘em have been here and there across the valley and even up into the Hellfurnaces, so they say. I dun believe much of what they say on account of Miss Kairee knowing so much and just laughing at them and settin’ ‘em straight when they get down into the keg and out with their tall tales. Now Miss Kairee, she’s seen a thing or two in her time.”

Orthran ran his hand slowly along the scabbarded short sword, which lay across his lap, almost as if touching the weapon helped him keep his story straight.

“So these boys poked and picked at Miss Larissa so bad the other night that she got it in her mind to have a look down in them tunnels they found beneath the Red Rock. Ms. Kairee shooed them on to other topics and arguments. But when Miss Larissa was ready to take her pony out around closing time, she was fuming, thinking how them boys had hollered at her and carried on like they did.”

“I felt bad. I always kinda liked Miss Larissa. She had always been nice to me on account o’ me taking such good care of Wildflower, her nice little pony. I always give her a good brushing and a few apples when Miss Larissa brings her to town. See, she lives in a small place in the woods nor’east of Redgorge there with her mom Alaina and her dad, Ethan. He’s with the constables. And her mom, she serves over at the Dark Moon with Larissa.” The young dwarf paused his speech to take a long draw from his tankard. Foam coated his upper lip, dribbling into his thick, brown beard. He let out a loud, nasty-smelling belch and continued his tale.

“I decided... man, Miss Kairee is gonna skin me for this and probably turn me loose. But I decided since I knowed where the gate key and the door keys are for them tunnels, that I would show Larissa what was down there, hoping maybe she would get a little spooked and decide to let it go.”

“Well, I’m wishing I hadn’t-a-dun that on account o’ her beggin’ me to let her go on past that locked door and have a look-see back in there. Supposedly there is some tunnel or something that heads off kinda westerly, in the direction of the Demonskar. That’s what they say. I think them tunnels go all over under Redgorge, going all the way back up to Cauldron, from when that Spellmason feller used to run things around here. Thank the gods them days are behind us.” Orthran looked up, not realizing he was still holding his now-empty tankard. He set it on the table with a hollow clanking noise and waved his other hand to get the attention of Kel, the young halfling working this end of the taproom.

“So I told her we’d maybe go down just a small ways into the tunnel so she could tell them, boys, she has been somewhere they ain’t and seen some things they ain’t seen afore. There was no way I was letting her go down there all by herself. Not cuz she’s a girl, mind you. She’s tough enough and can handle herself. I just don’t know what’s down there and why the doors are locked. I even told her we’d make up some kinda tale when we came back upstairs.”



“Now, she insisted we light a torch and go as far as we could on account of her not bein’ skeered of nuthin. That’s what she said. Well, who’s this dwarf to say no to a pretty girl who’s askin’ real nice.” At this, the young dwarf’s face flushed, recalling the sweet visage of the kind female. “I went and fetched a fresh torch and oiled it up good so we’d have a good hour or more to look around down there. And I decided to go ahead and grab my sword, just in case we run into something that gave us trouble. I even took a pouch and a small sack cuz what if we found something shiny and nice down there? Although I figured we’d like to find nothing but dust, stink, maybe a bone or two, and some rats.”

“Whatever we found, or what found us, was more than rats...” The dwarf ran his calloused hand over his thick

beard and thought for a moment, clearing his mind. “I can say that much, although I can’t say for certain what we got into down there...”

“So we went through the gate. I closed it in case Ms. Kairee came a-lookin’ for us. I didn’t want her knowin’ what we was about. Pretty damn dumb of me, now that I think about this. Real dumb.” A pained expression crossed his face. He glared at Kel when the hobniz returned with an over-full tankard, foam rolling down the side. “I closed the door after we went through, making sure I could open it again from the inside, of course. I could tell that the tunnel was dug by dwarves.”

“Best I could tell, we were heading pretty quickly west. That’s why I say this tunnel maybe goes to the Demonskar. One thing I noticed straight away that I thought was kinda

erie is that the torch flame was bein' pulled in the direction we was walkin'. Like there was some kinda draught of fresh air. It ain't uncommon for fine dwarven tunnel works, but that means there was an open end somewheres else. Like, these here tunnels ain't abandoned but are just closed off under the Red Rock. But the fact that there was some fresh air down there means the ventilation was working and that someone was keeping things up."

Orthran leaned over, pulling his short sword from across his lap and laid it against the wall, stood up, grabbed his tankard, and took a long draught. Looking around the taproom, he arched his back, groaned a bit, then sat again. "Ah, my danged back... if I sit too long. Here's where things get sorta weird. Have you ever heard that sound like when you drop a chain onto the stone floor, that heavy clank? Well, we kept a-hearin' that on down the tunnel. I never expected we'd come across anyone or anything down there. Yet here was this odd chain clanking, metal-on-stone sound. We never did get closer to it, but it was there, sure as the beard on my face," said the young stableman, stroking his beard for effect. "Larissa even asked if I knew what that might be, one of the only times she said much while we were down there. I told her it was probably just a hangin' chain used for mining gear. I didn't want to alarm her."

"After probably about 10 or 15 minutes walking along the tunnel down there, we came to where another tunnel crossed the one we was in, going North and South if my reckoning was spot on, which it usually is," surmised the dwarf. "I spent some time in the mines up a ways Northeast o' here, so I know the ways through tunnels like most of my kin do. It's sad, them hill dwarves turning all soft and farming and the like. They couldn't track their way down them tunnels like I could. No sir. Oh, and we were sloping downhill some, all the way we were walking along. As we were moving, she kept right by my side, like I told her to, carrying her walking stick and all, which was cute and sweet, but I think we know that wouldn't have been much good if we'd a run into anything of any ferocity."

"And well, it wasn't any good, that's what I'm sayin'. The further we went down that tunnel, the cooler it got, and the more I could feel the air moving down to the west. A mighty nice little cross breeze was a' blowin' through that cross tunnel. And, oh- I just remember this just now," he tugged at a simple gold band on a finely woven gold chain about his thick hirsute neck. "Some weird smells was coming from down the Southern passageway... something like smoke, but there weren't no smoke. Maybe like something where wood got burnt, or weird leaves or such. Anyway, I thought that was odd, to say the least."

"She wasn't much for talkin' as we went down this tunnel. I dunno if she was drunked up or shy or what. Normally, she would be all chatty and sweet with me, like when she brung old Wildflower in for me to stable her. For a time there, I thought maybe even Miss Larissa might be taking a fancy to me, but no, she took up with this boy from out past her folks' place in the woods. Nice enough feller, but that did sort of leave me kinda sad now that I

think back. I think she wasn't talking much cuz she was thinking maybe old Orthran was leading her on some kinda weird adventure, maybe planning to trick her into something or whatever. But I ain't that kinda dwarf. She's pretty and that, but I would never lay a hand on no one without asking first." He shook his head slowly from side to side, locking eyes with me.

"So there we went down past that crossover tunnel with the funky wood burning earthy smell, and all at once, my durned torch blew out. That's enough to make a dwarf right embarrassed about his underground skills. I had the good sense to bring along my flint and tinder, but here's where this gets weird. It got dark down there, and I mean dark as it gets! I ain't never seen darkness like this. Normally I see okay once my eyes adjust to darkness like what's in the mines, but this time, it wasn't happening. It was black like that ink in a well I spilt on the desk. But never mind that." Orthran took another long pull from his tankard, spilling the dark, foamy porter down his beard.

"Larissa didn't make a sound or nothin' when that torch went out. Or if she did, I didn't hear her on account of me cursing about letting my durned torch go out. I prolly ain't done that in over ten years of mining, but here it happened on this occasion. What's weird is the tunnel cooled way down and felt damp all at once. I don't rightly know when exactly it went from dry to damp, but sure enough, it durn well did."

"Well, I told her to keep calm, and Orthran would have the fire up in no time, on account that I know them humans can't see in the dark like us dwarves. Honestly, I can't imagine going through life with all the frailty and dumbness of a human. She may be nice and all, but she's no match for a fine dwarven maiden now," chuckled the young dwarf, his eyes looking upward, recalling a former lover perhaps.

"So... here I'm a' kneeling, the torch is on the floor of the tunnel, and I'm trying by the Gods to get a spark to take and get this torch goin', and I'll be durned if it ain't happening. Now, you need to understand some things here. I'm good with animals, with stone and metal, and I'm damn good at makin' fire and makin' it quick. Something was messin' with my fire makin' or whatever. I don't know if it was the damp, the dark, or if some magicks was going on or what, but I could not get this durned torch going."

"I sat a minute in that awful dark thinking to myself 'cause that's what helps me figure stuff the best, is thinking. Then I felt a coldness close beside me, and I heard nothing from the girl. I reached out with my arm to where I knew she'd be to my right, and there was nothing but the coldest damp I ever felt in a mining tunnel short of being underwater." The young dwarf leaned in close, lowering his voice. "Well, that was enough for me, I hopped to my feet, drew my blade, and moved the way she should be, and damned if I didn't hit the wall. I was facing the side of the tunnel when I thought I was facing back up the tunnel from where we came. I never been turnt 'round in a tunnel before."

"Somethin' here was not right. I righted myself, swallowed my pride, thankful that no one could see what

was happenin' with me runnin' into the wall. As I headed quickly back up the tunnel to find the girl, something cold and sharp grabbed... something was actually in there with us, or someone. But it grabbed me hard and fast, like this," Orthran pinched his collarbone and neck. "And poked into me right here," pointing to the base of his neck. "And I get this icy cold burn thing going down through my collar bone and into my shoulder and arm," he let his head droop, closing his eyes, re-enacting the scene for me.

"Next thing I know, three Redgorge Deputy Constables and Ms. Kairee are standing over me, mad as hell, worried sick about where Larissa had gone. My sword was under me. They said nothing was missing but her..." The dwarf paused and swallowed hard as tears welled up in his eyes. "Well, I never felt so bad in all my years, and if I could take back that decision to let that sweet girl talk me into taking her down there just to show up those boys, well, I'd take that decision back in a second. Ms. Kairee hasn't told me yet what she's gonna do to me for what I dun, but I did tell them constables that I'm good with a blade and willing to go back down in there and get the girl back. Ms. Kairee so far said there will be none of that, that the tunnels are no place for a dwarf boy like me. Can you believe she called me a dwarf boy? I practically run them stables single-handedly, and she's a callin' me a boy." At this, the dwarf's face reddened with anger and embarrassment as he leaned in to finish his tale.

"So, here I sit talkin' to you, no idea what's happened to my friend Miss Larissa, feeling worse than a dull blade whacked agin' a slab of granite a hundred or so times. I dunno what they're gonna do to me. Them constables was acting like I had some kinda bad idea taking that girl down there. The worst part is Ms. Kairee said I'm gonna have to sit with Larissa folks and explain my tale to them." The dwarf looked grimly around the taproom as if he expected her parents to enter.

"One thing I did hear them talking about in the tunnel as I was waking up that got me thinkin' was they said something about the Underdark. Now, I ain't never been there, hope never to go there, and I hope whatever happened, Larissa dun end up there somehow. I just dun understand why she would just leave me. I was tryin' to get that durned torch going. If she'd been a little more patient and I coulda got this torch lit, we would both be back home, safe, and none of this would be happenin'."

At this, Orthran looked about the taproom as if expecting to see his missing friend. He turned back to face me, a look of sad resignation upon his grizzled face. "So, strange as all this is, that's what I know. By my beard, somethin' come up and snatched her or spirited her away and left me for dead or whatever, and now we got a real mystery to figure out right here in Redgorge. An oddest of all about this whole deal, I'm right up in the middle of this. I normally keep it pretty simple with my stable work and a little forgin' things here and there for Ms. EllieBleu over at the Twisted Pine Branch Outfitters. But here I am, telling a stranger this story, hopin' we can help find Miss Larissa. I just hope

nothin' bad's befell her." With that, Orthran grew quiet, sipping from his tankard, looking at me as if expecting me to have something to say to all this that might help ease his burden.

All I could do at that moment was smile and nod at Orthran and stammer out a weak offer of assistance if needed. I quickly wondered to myself why I did that and how quickly I could reach my friends. You see, I simply cannot resist a good mystery.

## Dark Mines, Dark Hearts

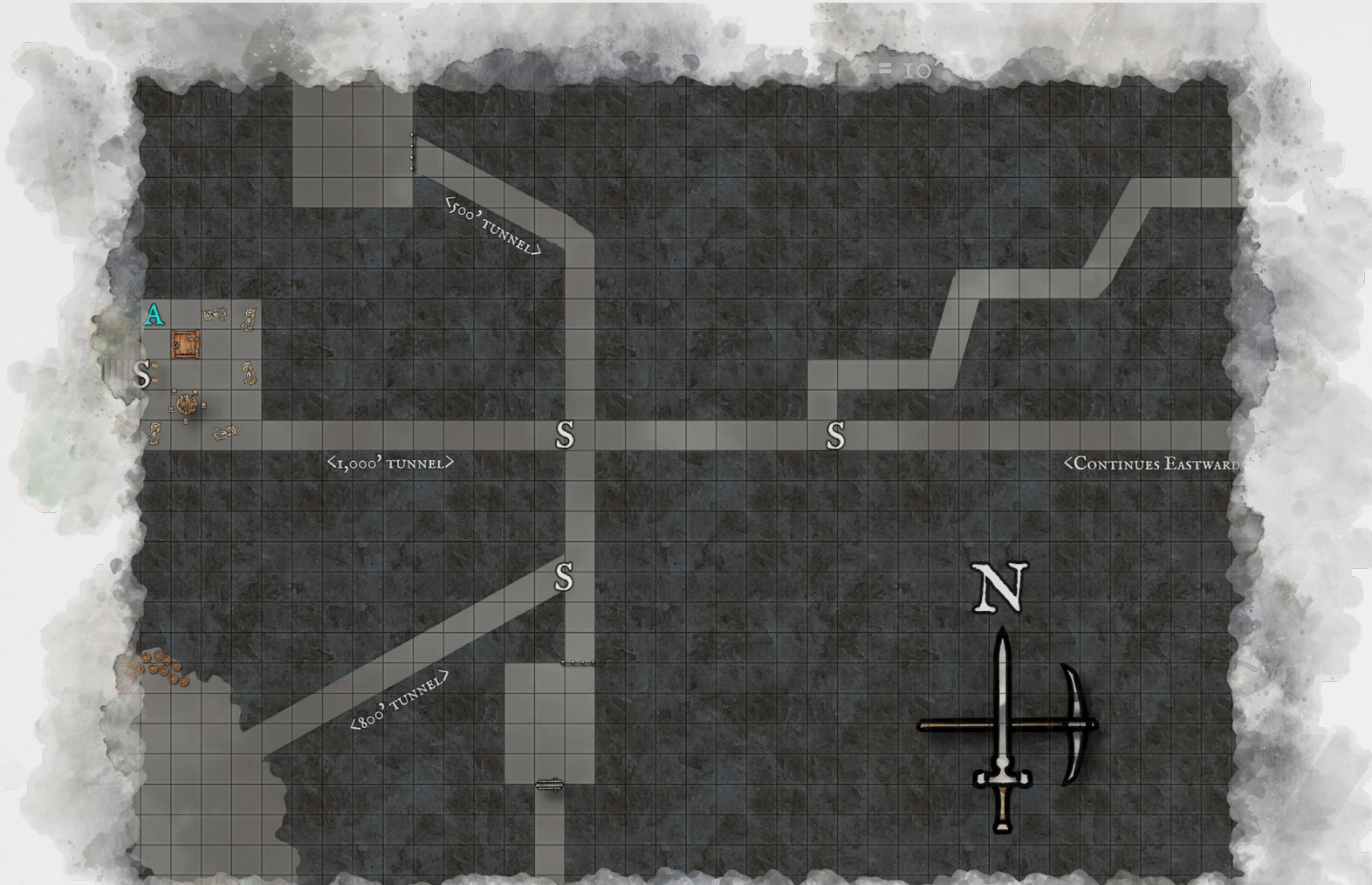
a short scenario for a party of low-level adventurers

The recent discovery of a tunnel beneath the Red Rock Inn and Tavern has spurred local interest in the abandoned old underground passageways beneath the village of Redgorge. Keira, who owns the Red Rock, forbade anybody to enter the cellar room with the door to the tunnel—an order that Larissa Phalen and Orthran the Dwarf defied to their peril. Constable Everton Dunhill and Mayor Sindra Redstone are familiar with an incomplete, decades-old report from a party that explored the passages and found several secret doors. The explorers went through one such doorway and vanished, never to return. After that, the Constable's predecessor told everyone the tunnels were unsafe. Wild rumors circulated for a time, but interest gradually faded, and most people wrote the tunnels off as dangerous to enter but not a threat to the village.

The Quarrymaster of the Redstone Quarry is a member of the Thieves Guild in Cauldron. Feldon Dunhill (Human male dual-classed Fighter2 / Thief 3, NE) has an agreement with a group of DuerGAR engaged in mining an underground deposit of fine-grade rock salt far to the west of Redgorge. The DuerGARs' slaves mine the salt and pack it into barrels (in a system of caverns and tunnels beyond the map provided) and then store it in Area B. A chosen few among Feldon's teamsters enter this area to take the barrels of salt and leave behind crates of food and alchemical weapons in a blind exchange—they have not seen the DuerGAR face to face. Occasionally, Feldon's minions leave captives in the pit, unfortunate souls kidnapped off the streets of Cauldron by the Quarrymaster's comrades in the Thieves Guild. The men use the eastward tunnel to travel to a point nearer to Cauldron. A side passage slopes upward and northward to an area beneath the Miners Guild at the Redstone Quarry (off the map provided). The rank-and-file miners are unaware of this trafficking and trade arrangement. Dunhill is enjoying a very nice profit from selling the rare salt in far-off cities, a seemingly innocent business venture.

Area A houses a small band of DuerGAR (5) who patrol and guard the tunnels under Redgorge, keeping any nosy locals away from the action underground.

A Drow Priestess of Lolth leads this operation. She periodically ventures into the tunnels to inspect them and to see that the DuerGAR are maintaining scheduled patrols and avoiding drawing the attention of the humans above. It was she who poisoned Orthran and captured Larissa.



Larissa languishes in a 20X20X20 cubic pit in Area A. A trap door on the floor opens onto the pit. The Gray Dwarves and their Dark Elf boss have kept Larissa alive with scraps of food and water while they decide what to do with her.

### The Tunnel Below- Optional Adventure Hooks

1. A wicked cult meets in the tunnels below town. They've grabbed Larissa. Goodness only knows what they plan to do with her.
2. A mad dwarf prospector ventured down there and disappeared. Maybe it was he making that chain-clanking noise.
3. The ghosts of dead miners haunt the tunnels under Redgorge, so the town fathers barred the tunnels and chambers. Mining has disturbed their spirits.
4. Larissa used Orthran to get her down into the tunnels so she could meet up with her lover and run away to be together. Larissa's father, a Deputy Constable, disapproves of her beau.
5. Fiends and their allies from the Demonskar, far to the West, have followed caverns and tunnels that eventually connect to the tunnels beneath Redgorge. They are planning to attack the village.
6. People have been vanishing. No one suspects the terrible truth:
7. A colony of Illithids from an Underoerth colony beneath the Hellfurnaces has discovered the tunnels beneath Redgorge. The brain-eaters are using the tunnels to come to the surface to skulk about.
8. Recently, tremors have been shaking the village. A sinkhole opens in the village, and Umber Hulks burst from the ground. The monsters have burrowed from beneath the Hellfurnaces into the tunnels beneath Redgorge.

### Village of Redgorge

- 579 Humans
- 36 Mountain Dwarves
- 18 Hobniz
- 4 Half-Elves
- Mayor- Human Female: Sindra Redstone, 46 y.o., CG
- Constable- Human Male: Everton Dunhill, 51 y.o., LN
- Red Rock Inn Proprietor- Half-Elven Female: Kairee Greenbough, 98 y.o., lvl 10 bard, N
- Quarrymaster, Redstone Quarry- Human Male: Feldon Dunhill, 32 y.o, dual-classed Fighter 2 & Thief 3 NE (cousin of the Constable)
- Exported goods: basalt and obsidian from the quarry, foodstuffs, barrels (an excellent cooper lives in town), and the small river-dwelling baitfish called Redgorge darters

# Beyond the Flanaess: Maritime Development On Oerth

*By Richard DiIorio*

The development of ships and ports, naval warfare, and sea-borne commerce on Oerth have deviated from the pattern of Earth's history. Factors affecting such things on Oerth include magic, fantasy deities, aquatic races, and sea monsters. Most explosives do not work on Oerth, which rules out the use of ship-mounted cannons.

## Sea Monster Hunting Grounds

---

Many dangerous predators swim beneath the surfaces of Oerth oceans and seas and some of the large lakes. Wandering sea serpents and other monsters pose an unpredictable threat to sailors in the Flanaess, and so there is always someone on watch – even when the ship is sailing in well-patrolled waters. There is no such thing as a safe passage in the seas and oceans of the Flanaess. Some creatures, such as the inhabitants of sahuagin cities or Xohusur, the terrible Dragon Turtle of the Drawmij, maintain permanent lairs and hunt within a radius of those places.

## Hunting Territories

---

Great white sharks can travel up to 3000 km while hunting.

Huge-sized creatures typically claim a territory roughly the size of a hex on the Darlene map (approx. 2000 km<sup>2</sup>).

Sahuagin villages with 50 warriors claim areas the size of single hexagons on the Darlene map (approx. 2000 km<sup>2</sup>).

Some clever predators may trail boats, waiting for smaller animals attracted to the noise to swim near and then pouncing on the distracted prey.

## Water and Sound

---

Sound travels four times faster.

Sound travels 1000 times as far.

Concussive blasts reach twenty times further.

The water's surface reflects sound. Noises from above are

seldom audible below, and vice versa. In shallow waters, sound reflected between the surface and the bottom creates an echo chamber effect.

Aquatic races have been using the last effect to their advantage for centuries. When the elder kraken, Vaalastroth, self-proclaimed ruler of the Azure Sea, bellows commands from his lair, his voice travels to every corner of the Azure Sea within an hour.

Sailors understand how sound travels underwater. Aquatic creatures hear surface vessels long before they see them, thus allowing them to coordinate assaults. Bulkier ships employing oars generate more resounding turbulence within the deep than smaller ships slowly careening over the waves. Loud banging sounds, like carpenters hammering on ships' hulls, cause smaller aquatic creatures to flee from these cacophonous tones and may warn predators in the area of the mariners' location.

Sailors know aquatic monsters usually rely more on sound than sight to hunt. Loud ships passing through their realms would annoy sea elves. A sahuagin tribe will only spot a ship's shadow when it reaches within 60 meters during daylight but can hear the ship's noise reverberate up to several kilometers away.

To circumvent this, shipwrights and sea captains have learned much about sound and concussive force underwater from friendly aquatic elves. A craft designed to minimize sound reverberating underwater increases the chances of a non-hostile encounter with aquatic beings. Aside from conventional means like a reinforced hull, the most coveted magical modifications reduce the noise generated from below the surface. Silence spells provide the most effective way to travel undetected by aquatic races.

As excess sound can result in higher encounter chances with predatory beasts, this effect works well for a horror scenario in which even the slightest sound draws the attention of dangerous aquatic creatures.



## River And Lake Travel

---

The rivers and lakes of Oerth are too narrow or shallow to permit giant aquatic monsters or large underwater cities, but there are still many more large predators than on Earth. And, as on Earth in past centuries, river pirates haunt the waterways of the Flanaess. A ship rarely remains on a river overnight and will dock or anchor at an established safe location or along the shore. As such, rivers regularly used for trade have established way-points with docks set up within a few hours' distance of one other. River captains anticipating being on the water overnight will equip their ships with defensive features outlined later in this article. Assuming they travel by daylight, daily river travel is approximately 100 km. Despite these dangers, river travel has the benefit that barges and ships can carry substantially more cargo than a horse.

In the absence of hostile inhabitants, lakes become desirable locations for villages, with small fishing boats plying the water and with little need for defensive structures facing the water. As any experienced adventurer would know, lakes found in populated areas with no settlements on their banks often contain dangerous inhabitants. Those that support hostile predators and have no settlements on their shores or the inhabitants would know any dangerous creatures in the lake and take precautions to ensure safety.

Sages classify the Nyr Dyv, Lake Whyestil, and Lake Quag as 'monstrous lakes.' Unlike smaller lakes, these lakes have numerous races co-existing with the dangerous aquatic creatures swimming their depths. Hostile sentient aquatic races perform guerrilla raids on shoreline population centers. These raiders retreat to their submarine lairs afterward or if they encounter heavy resistance. In addition, water-dwelling predators seldom swim near shore, preferring well-traveled lanes for their hunting grounds.

Settlements form along the coasts of these monstrous lakes due to their strategic location, ease of travel, being ideal for trade, and the availability of fish. These well-defended shoreline cities and large towns construct high walls to deter amphibious assaults from aquatic invaders. These walls separate the harbor from the homes. Few live on the docks outside the walls unless in a fortified manor house. Some cities' walls run along the quays. Others feature barracks on the waterfront so sailors can remain nearby to defend their ships.

Battlements equipped with siege engines face the water, supplied with ammunition designed to discourage sea monsters and groups of aquatic raiders rather than hostile ships. Harbor entrances feature heavy gates, spiked drag chains, or other means to impede aquatic beasts from entry. Still others host fortified camps on the dock with living quarters, inns, and regular amenities for sailors and visitors who want to remain near their ships.

Fishers and crabbers pool their resources to procure large boats that they work together. Fishermen ply their trade in well-defended packs, with fishing boats near each other for support in case of surprise raids. Larger nations and cities procure military vessels to accompany fishing boats and defend them while they work. Sailors know not

to toss anything overboard, particularly not food, lest it attract sea monsters.

Merchant ships follow the coastlines in cases where they must cut across a monstrous lake. These ships seek out enclosed harbors overnight when raids occur most frequently. Merchant ships must wait for the fishing boats to deploy before leaving port. As the fishing vessels ply their trade, they grant the merchant vessels the benefit of masking their sounds for several kilometers.

The Rhennee barges act as homes and fishing vessels. The size of the Rhennee clan barges, anywhere from 15 to 30 meters long and half as wide, deters the monsters of the Nyr Dyv.

## Travel On Oceans And Seas

---

Naval ports and travel on Oerth deviate wildly from Earth's. Perils on the open seas dwarf those of monstrous lakes. Most naval merchant guilds employ maps that mark the territory of sea monsters. Vessels avoid these areas, if necessary, taking longer, slower courses to their destinations. Unless upon an exploratory vessel, sailors seldom venture out to the deeper part of the ocean. These ships double the watch, secure cargo, and employ any means necessary to ensure their safety. As a result, mercantile ships seldom stray far from coastal ports when traveling on hostile seas as the threat of monstrous aquatic beasts decreases closer to shore.

These behemoths avoid the shallows due to a lack of food and adequate space to maneuver (a sea serpent needs a lot of room to change velocity, leaving it vulnerable to attack). Most sea monsters seek only to protect their territorial hunting grounds. Sea monsters do not view large ships as a food source as there is easier prey available that provides more sustenance. These beasts see ships as competition. Sea monsters seek out and obliterate any competition in their territories. Ships that disturb a sea monster's territory with excessive noise find their ships shattered in pieces or capsized. Due to the immense power of sea monsters, vessels entering into direct combat find themselves in dire straits. Creatures such as sea serpents, dragon turtles, and krakens can rapidly inflict substantial structural damage to a ship. Sailors on the Nyr Dyv speak of having their 10-meter-long merchant ships crushed into driftwood by lake serpents in minutes. Seamen in the fleet of the Sea Barons hold that an adult dragon turtle can capsize any vessel the size of a sloop (15 meters long) or smaller with a single surfacing. These behemoths can capsize caravel-sized ships by repeatedly ramming them from below.

Aggressive aquatic races like the sahuagin will readily attack and pillage vessels and settlements. As they have an easier time killing the defenders and plundering the ship underwater, aquatic races prefer to sink a ship first. But aquatic races have difficulty scuttling a vessel, as they seldom employ fire to burn a ship to the waterline and lack the strength to shatter or to make sizable holes in the ship's hull. Due to these shortcomings, they more frequently board a ship, kill all aboard, and then leave it derelict on the water. Coordinated raiders employ nets and grappling hooks.

Corsairs raid coastal towns and merchant ships for loot and captives. Defending an embattled ship against a boarding attack is much like resisting a castle siege with the attackers attempting to scale the ship's walls. Pirates seldom scuttle a vessel they intend to plunder because capturing a ship, her cargo, and her crew intact adds to their fleet. Ships' crews often seek to disable rather than destroy an enemy craft, hoping for prize money.

Avaricious captains offer passage along dangerous routes for exorbitant fees to cover their risks. Even these unscrupulous captains fear attracting sea monsters and other hostile aquatic races. Rival merchant captains and pirates avoid naval battles deep in the ocean, as the sound of combat may attract unwanted attention. Even victors of such a battle risk destruction by what the noise attracts. Strangely enough, this has given rise to a civilized veneer to piracy on Oerth. Both pirate and merchant vessel captains know a battle on the sea could ensure mutual destruction. When merchant vessel captains cannot defeat pirates, they attempt to parlay. When all else fails, merchant vessel captains employ a dead man's switch that activates a thundering horn. This horn generates such discord that most sea monsters seek it out to destroy it.

Keoland and other major sea-faring countries deploy warships to patrol vital routes.

Over time, the aquatic inhabitants of heavily trafficked waters have migrated to new homes or adapted to avoid human contact. The result was the creation of secure shipping routes for trade. Such passages include the Gradsul to Gryrax and the Irongate to Scant shipping routes.

## Ship Design

---

Ships of Oerth tend to be smaller than their equivalents on Earth because of the historical tensions between countries, the additional dangers of travel on seas and oceans with very hostile marine life, and the types of goods transported by water.

The main benefit of large cargo ships is financial; a larger craft has a lower build cost and a lower running cost (fewer crew members) per ton of carrying capacity. This benefit only applies if the vessel is full of valuable cargo. Unfortunately, on Oerth, countries rarely have the available labor or desire to grow extra food or extract more raw materials from their lands than they need at a local level. Even if a country grows extra food, there is rarely a market for exporting bulk goods as client nations don't wish to depend on other nations for raw materials or food. In addition, bulk trading is only feasible when the trade routes are relatively secure – which in the dangerous oceans and seas of Oerth is rarely the case. Most items traded across oceans and seas are luxuries, manufactured goods, and local specialties. One exception to this is the Scarlet Brotherhood, which raids the southern continent for raw materials not available in the Tilvanot Peninsula.

## Ship Classification

---

Although ships on Oerth use the same terminology as those on Earth, the design of the vessels is different due to several

factors, most notably the lack of gunpowder technology for ships of the Renaissance era – a Galleon-sized ship on Oerth will not have portholes for cannons. The commonality of naming convention is for the dimensions, the number of decks, and the number of masts (i.e., a sloop is roughly 15 meters long, with a full deck, a half-deck, and a single mast). All other factors can vary based on the nation that built the ship, the use of the craft, and the material at hand.

With no cannons, large ships need only carry troops and equipment across the oceans to invade foreign lands. A bulky military ship thus becomes a very tempting target for enemy spellcasters to target. Mitigating this risk is usually more expensive than building a larger navy with smaller vessels. With



that caveat in place, most countries have a large flagship; this is more a sign of prestige than a cost-effective way of engaging in combat. Most navies on Oerth consist of sloop- and caravel-sized ships with rare galleon-sized flagships.

Although magic is used in rare circumstances to enhance vessels, ship designers developed mundane means for mass production. The following is a sample of these changes that occur across all ship types going into dangerous areas (monstrous lakes, seas, and oceans).

**Holy Dedication:** Shipwrights honor Procan, Xerbo, Osprem, and other such sea gods by painting or carving on ships the holy symbols and images of these powers. Owners avoid giving vessels presumptuous names like Unsinkable to avoid tempting or offending the deities of the ocean, particularly Procan.

**High Side Walls:** A common defensive trait most ships share is high sidewalls. These walls span the distance between the water's surface and the top of the hull when at maximum cargo capacity. The walls slow anyone attempting to scale the ship's hull. Ships going into dangerous territory have a minimum sidewall of 3 meters. Achieving a higher sidewall either means lighter cargo for the same hull design or a hull design with high-ceilinged decks. Military vessels use higher ceilings for each level, which makes water travel more comfortable for the marines and sailors on-board. Merchant's vessels cheat by installing a high wooden curtain wall around the ship (above the main deck) to create an artificially increased sidewall. The sidewall has a drawbridge for when the ship docks to assist in unloading cargo. The traditional "U-shaped" cargo ship does not exist on Oerth, as it would be too easy for aquatic creatures to board.

**Quiet Hull:** Smooth-sided hulls reduce cavitation sound while creating a uniform wake (less noisy than multiple wakes) to reduce the vessel's presence. A vibration-dampening material coats the interior of the hull. The material typically consists of cork to avoid transmission of vibrations from inside of the ship to the surrounding water.

## Magic

Magic can defeat the best measures of shipbuilders, but magical resources remain expensive. Most shipbuilding practices ignore magic in their plans. Accomplished shipwrights design around the most relevant magical attacks.

**Aerial Bombardment:** An aerial assailant must use multiple missiles of substantial mass to be effective. Magic items that permit the attacker to carry more equipment into battle (e.g., a bag of holding) are invaluable. Other magical enhancements include increasing the strength of flying beasts (e.g., griffons) that carry the aerial combatant into battle so the beast can have large saddlebags filled with missiles. Magical defenses against these attacks include spells to eliminate the attacker or deflect incoming missile attacks.

## The Physics Of Projectiles

Early cannonballs on Earth traveled at roughly 200 m/s, so to achieve a similar effect, a stone or lead weight dropped from a height must achieve that speed when it hits the deck. This attack would require roughly a 20-second drop from 2 km! An object dropped from 200 meters would reach 55 m/s (or 200 km/hour) within 6 seconds – still fast enough to inflict damage but not enough to pass through several decks and the hull.

Any projectile attack from the surface either skips off the water surface or loses so much momentum going underwater that it does minimal damage to the hull once it connects.

**Fire:** Immolation of the hull or sails immobilizes or destroys ships.

Defensive measures include sails made from fire-resistant material and spells to conjure water or sand for extinguishing blazes. Attackers burn enemy watercraft with incendiary magic, flaming pitch arrows, and alchemist's fire launched from light catapults or sprayed by siphons.

**Hull Breaches:** A hull breach can capsize a ship as water floods the hold and lower decks. Breaking through a hull by conventional means is difficult above water and



neatly impossible from below. Magic can do the trick, as with a disintegrate spell of warp wood spell. Magic can also quickly repair a breach.

## New Ship Types

The following is a sample of new naval vessels that could be used thanks to the prevalence of magic and fantastic creatures on Oerth.

**Decoy:** A buoy acts as a crewless vessel designed to make underwater noise like a passing ship. Although typically deployed as a bobbing buoy, some ingenious designers have made them mobile by adding sails to add to the confusion. The vessel is lowered into the water and, in the case of the floating decoy, set in a random direction away from the main craft. After a given time, the noisemaker activates and begins thumping the hull. The noises mask those made from the ship and attract any hostile aquatic creatures to the decoy instead of the main vessel.

**Floating Aeries Vessels:** Some wealthy realms of the Oerth have developed Floating Aeries Vessels (or Aeries). These ships act much like contemporary Earth's aircraft carriers, except instead of holding airplanes, they have stables with trained flying creatures such as pegasus, griffons, and hippogriffs. Most 'aeries' carry giant eagles, which can feed themselves when out to sea by fishing for their food on long voyages.

## Defensive Measures

**Boom Bell:** The inner workings of this one-meter diameter bronze sphere contain many springs and hammers. Ten seconds after activation, a cascading series of sonic blasts erupts. On the surface, the sound is louder than that of church bells. Activated underwater, it may damage all creatures within 30 meters. The ship takes no damage from the blast. This weapon is quite effective against gigantic sea monsters and groups of aquatic beings.

**Bronzewood Upper Deck:** The superior hardness of bronzewood makes it ideal for the upper deck and portions of the hull above water, protecting the ship from aerial bombardment and harpoon attacks, but a vessel made of bronzewood would be prohibitively expensive.

**Clangers:** This system of cords, bells, plates, and other noise-making devices spread along the sides and railing of a vessel gives sailors a warning if a creature is attempting to climb aboard their ship during the night.

**Fire Sails:** Almost all military vessels on Oerth have fire sails. Gnomes weave these sails from 'salamander cloth' from a white fibrous mineral using secret techniques. Salamander cloth resists fire, lightning, and acids. Sails made of this cloth weigh half as much as regular sails (for the same strength), do not break down due to salt water, and rarely need replacement. Fire sails cost five times as much as ordinary sails.

**Gong:** This brass gong is built into the hull so that sound made by something striking on the gong plate reverberates underwater. When hostile sea creatures attack, a sailor takes a large hammer and beats on the gong repeatedly to

create a cacophony of underwater noise – the effect on any aquatic monsters within 100 meters of the ship is akin to being stuck in a church bell tower when the bells ring. This deafening boom is extremely painful and will force most aquatic creatures to flee. Those who do not retreat will take damage from the noise and be disoriented until they can get their heads above water. The sound may attract further unwanted attention.

**Redoubt:** A redoubt is a location within a ship with reinforced walls and doors where the hard-pressed defenders can fall back and from which they can carry on the fight. Fighting vessels are typically built with redoubts, such as forecastles and aftcastles with lockable doors.

**Repelling Hooks:** These 60 cm long polished iron hooks are installed around a ship's deck about 25 cm apart and extend outwards at a downward angle with curving beaks pointed towards the water. When not in use, they can rotate till they lie flat against the hull. Smooth-skinned aquatic humanoids have trouble grasping the hooks' polished iron surfaces and risk impaling themselves on the hook points in a rapid climb from the water.

## Searching the Skies for Spelljammer Fan Content

Check Out

## Wildspace Magazine

[www.thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php](http://www.thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php)



# The Hamlet of Willow Wood Brook

by Patrick "Ancient Gamer"

**Elder:** Durdin Duur, Priest of Saint Cuthbert (human male, cleric 8th level, LG)

**Current Population:** 48

Governed by the City of Dyvers as of 576 CY

Willow Wood Brook lies roughly 100 miles west of Dyvers, nestled between the Att River and the Gnarley Forest on the Gnarlwood Road. Locals call the ancient earthen highway the Old Road or the Western Treadway. The hamlet offers peddlers, freighters, soldiers, and other travelers a friendly place to stop and rest.

Between 486 CY and 490 CY, Billets of Saint Cuthbert established a chapel and hostelry along the Old Road to serve travelers moving between Dyvers and Verbobonc. Though most hostel guests were devotees of Saint Cuthbert, the clerics welcomed all honest folk; one pilgrim raised a small shrine to Pelor in the flower garden behind the chapel.

Over the years, settlers arrived from the lands of Dyvers and Furyondy, attracted by the relatively safe conditions of the area, trade along the patrolled roadway, and the abundance of willow trees and freshwater. Men planted their steadings close to fresh water, and the hamlet that grew up became known as Willow Wood Brook. The settlement has grown and shrunk over the years. Today, it includes the Church-Hostel of Saint Cuthbert, a blacksmith, a bowyer-fletcher, a general store, a tavern, and stables.

## The Blacksmith

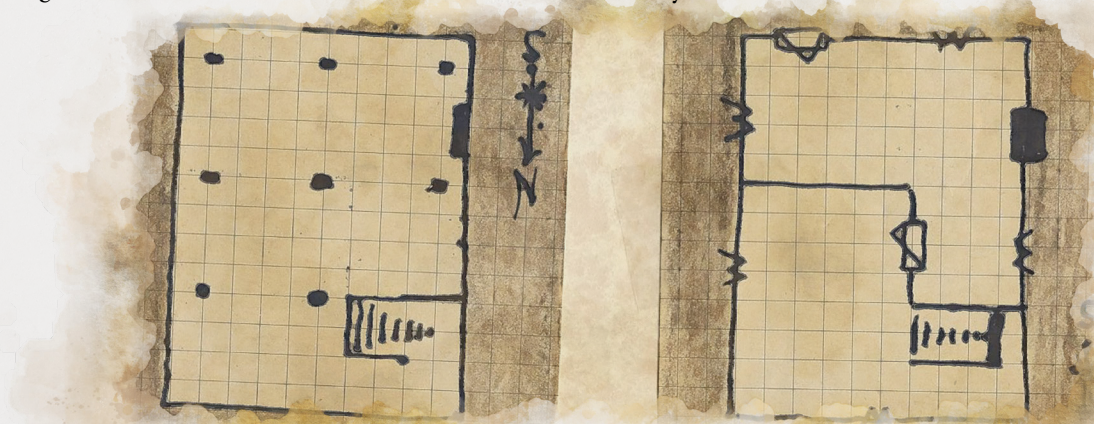
(Map building #1), The smithy is owned and operated by Tyler Hansen (39). Tyler has three sons (18, 17, & 15) and, with his wife Heather (38), runs the smithy and a relatively modest farm of potatoes, carrots, turnips, gourds, pumpkins, and corn. Like most of their neighbors, the Hansens' are of Oerdian ancestry.

The Hansens have two loyal hounds named Jent and Sweet. A skilled blacksmith, Tyler can repair most common farming tools and craft simple jewelry (Cuthberran holy symbols from iron to silver, good craftsmanship), small hunting knives, fishing hooks, utensils, nails, etc., as well as arrowheads, axe heads, and spear points.

The Hansens worship Saint Cuthbert but are not zealous followers. Tyler and his two eldest sons are part of the hamlet's militia. Tyler's sister, Tina, is married to Marius Vicker, the owner and operator of the Grey Griffin Pub.

## The Hansen Home

The ground floor is stone, while the upper floor is timber. Stout doors and well-made wooden shutters help to keep out black bears and other animals that sometimes break into homes looking for meals. A small stone furnace for smithy work stands within the covered front porch. Inside



# WILLOW WOOD BROOK



the front porch is a small room for entertaining and as a layover for customers and travelers.

The back half of the building is the family's living area. A big iron brazier sits on the flagstones, which the Hansens use for cooking and heat. Stone stairs lead to the cellar, where foodstuffs, firewood, rainwater barrels, and materials for smith work are stored. The upper half is a loft area split in two, with the parents sleeping on one side and the boys on the other.

Barrels for catching rainwater stand near the rear of the house. Further back, a flat stone as wide as a wagon lies between the building and an old willow. The rock top bears the names of the dead buried beside it: Tyler's grandparents, parents, and elder brother.

**Map Building #2, Bowyer-Fletcher.** Another family of Oeridian ancestry, the Evans, makes quality bows, arrows, and small leather products. The Evans also tend a small herd of sheep. They are the second oldest established family in Willow Wood Brook, after the Malgraths.

**Map Building #3, Church-Hostel of St Cuthbert.** The current Patriarch, Father Duur, and six other priests of St

Cuthbert live, preach, enlighten, and educate not only the inhabitants of Willow Wood Brook but also care for travelers along the Old Road.

**Map Building #4, General Store.** A halfling, Pynn Hardfoot, and his family run this well-stocked store.

**Map Building #5, Willow Inn & Tavern, and the Grey Griffin Pub.** Marcus Vicker owns the Inn & Tavern and co-owns, with his twin brother Marius Vicker, the Grey Griffin Pub. Most staff in both places belong to the brothers' large family. The Vickers clan was among the founders of the hamlet. The Willow Inn & Tavern is one of the best waystations between Dyvers and Verbobonc, and local legend claims it once hosted a prince.

**Map Building #6, The Willow Wood Stables.** A large family of Oeridian-Suel ancestry, the Magrath family has been raising, selling, and stabling horses in the area since before the Cuthberrans built the chapel.

**Map Area #7, the ruins of a Brew Master's home and shop** destroyed some 90 years ago.

*More material on Willow Wood Brook will appear in the coming issues of The Grey Grimoire.*

# Across the Banner Hills

by Samuel "Samwise" Weiss



Even today, after the Ketites have toiled and bled to make a highway across part of it, the Bramblewood's maze of briars and yarpick, infested with giant insects and other monsters, presents an obstacle to travel between the East and West.

In the era of the Great Migrations, the forest was even bigger and more dangerous. Its tangled growth choked the passage from the west into the Fals Gap. Few Oeridians dared the Bramblewood's lethal and shifting trails before the Twin Cataclysms, but as the Baklunish-Suloise Wars raced toward their devastating conclusion, Oeridian leaders dispatched riders into the woodland to look for safe paths into the unknown east. After the first scouts to survive the Bramblewood's perils returned to report the forest was impassable, the Oerids turned their attention to the rugged hills between the vast forest and the looming Barrier Peaks.

Peaceful contact with the Dwur of the Barrier peaks revealed to the migrating Oerids tales of fertile lands beyond

the mountains but also brought reports that the Banner Hills were no safer than the deadly eaves of the Bramblewood. Eiger swarmed the hills, and the Dwur were not inclined to challenge the giant-kin for the region's scanty ore deposits. However, the wandering Oeridians were determined to reach the rich fields of the eastern lands no matter the cost and looked for trails through the wild hill country.

The first small tribe to attempt a crossing quickly discovered the rugged hills were littered with thickets of long-thorned yarpick, making slow going for horsemen. Worse, they encountered the Eiger that stalked the hills with thorn-spiked clubs. The men who followed the vanguard quickly adapted to fighting on foot, tipping their light lances with yarpick thorns. By hard fighting, the tribesmen broke through to the Fals Gap. But there they were ambushed and overrun by the savage Flan servants of Vecna, only a few straggling back west to bring word of the disaster.

The Aerdi tribe of Oerids mastered fighting with long spears of their design in new tactical formations before they launched their invasion of the Banner Hills. Combined with the early forms of the famous battle magic the Aerdi would later perfect on their trek across the Flanaess, the arrayed spearmen presented a dire threat even to gangs of giant-kin. The Aerdi slaughtered the Eiger of the Banner Hills and then pushed down the Fals River to the Volverdyva River. Vecna's attention was elsewhere, and no Flan ambushers waited for the victors. The Nehri, following close behind the Aerdi, broke the Eiger in the Banner Hills, and by the time the Keogh began their passage, there were few Eiger left to menace the Oerids now streaming through.

The Eigers' defeat opened a path but did not make the crossing the hills easy. The Oeridian tribes lost many wagons with women, children, elders, and vital supplies. Further, during the long years when the Thundering Horde controlled the Volverdyva and stopped migrations, the Eiger slowly returned to the hills, and by the time the last of the Oerids made the passage during the first century, before the crowning of the first Aerdy Overking, the hills were almost too dangerous for such a trip. By the time of the Paynim Incursion and the Brazen Horde, the Banner Hills were once again effectively impassable, which is why the Relentless Horde chose to go north to Tusmit and Ekbir, and then across the Yecha Hills, from whence they burst upon the northern prairies.

# Wise Woman

by Paul "Artharn the Cleric" Judersczka

## Wise Woman

Human, neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 12 (3d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

**Saving Throws** INT +3, WIS +4

**Skills** Insight +6, Medicine +6, Nature +6

**Damage Resistances** none

**Senses** Passive Perception 14

**Languages** Common, Flan

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Spellcasting.** The wise woman has abilities equivalent to a 2nd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). A wise woman does not learn or use spells in the usual way, and her abilities operate as set out below.

A wise woman relies on herbal ingredients and communing with the spirits. All her abilities require verbal, somatic, and material components. If she does not have the herbs and other materials needed for her magic, she must spend several minutes gathering plants and other natural supplies. Such foraging in a territory very different from the wise woman's home region will take longer or might even fail.

The wise woman has innate abilities which amount to being able to cast the following spells at will:

Cantrips: *druid craft*, *spare the dying*

1st level: *speak with animals*

**Special abilities:** Four times a day, a wise woman may use any of the following special abilities, used like a ritual, taking a minute to cast:

- *Diagnose malady:* A wise woman can determine whether a person suffers from disease, poisoning, or a curse.
- *Augury:* The wise woman conducts a ceremony that works like the *augury* spell. She might cast bones or

sticks, gaze into a crystal ball, enter a spirit-trance, read the entrails of a rabbit, etc. But while *augury* answers a question concerning a possible choice in the next thirty minutes, the wise woman's divination ceremony can answer queries about some course of action and its consequences as much as a week in the future.

- *Healing:* This takes 5 minutes to prepare. The wise woman brews a broth or mixes a salve with the effects of a *goodberry* spell. Drinking the potion takes one round for each hit point restored.

*Heal malady:* Once per day, the wise woman can perform one of the following as an hour-long ritual.

- Remove curse
- Lesser restoration

With the ritual's end, the subject falls under a *geas*, bound to work some task for the wise woman.

## ACTIONS

**Staff. Melee Weapon Attack:** +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage if wielded with two hands.

Many communities in backward rural districts and semi-civilized regions of the Flanaess lack a local priest, mage, or shaman. Instead, they rely on the help of a local wise woman, or her less common male counterpart, the cunning man. This person may live in the village, or apart as a hermit. Such an elder has the benefit of generations of learning about remedies and cures, weather, and crops. She communes with nature spirits, ancestors, and the elemental forces to foresee future events. The wise woman's magical powers are limited but powerful. Typically, she commands respect within the community and will assist her neighbors for little or no payment or in return for their ongoing support. When dealing with adventurers, a wise woman nearly always demands that these outsiders perform some quest or make payment in another fashion. Many adventures have begun with a party setting out to fulfil its obligation to a wise woman who healed or assisted the party's members. Some wise women and cunning men are pragmatic and self-interested, others kind and helpful, and a handful are nearly as greedy and wicked. Most are human or hobniz.



# The White Rose of the Suel Imperium

by Les “Oblivion Seeker” Reno

*For Jay “Lord Gosumba” Scott, who asked for it.*

Sometimes called the Imperial Rose, the White Rose of the Suel Imperium lingers in the architecture and fashion of the Flanaess. Wherever descendants of the Great Houses and Mages of Power settled, their influence inspired dressmakers to embellish simple bodices with applique blooms of satin or velvet. Artisans working in steel and precious metals engraved the Rose’s pattern into weapons and household wares. Skilled hands wove the design into tapestries and carpets adorning wealthy manors in Keoland. In Safeton and Hardby, the Founding Families ordered their architects to incorporate the Rose into columns and friezes. Even the Sea Princes value chalices etched with depictions of the Rose held between pairs of sea lions, the waves of Jeklea Bay reaching for the flower’s sepals.

While familiar to many as a design element, the Imperial Rose’s significance remains forgotten by most living souls. Many take its white bloom and thin red lips at the tips of petals as purely decorative, a matter of cultural and regional aesthetics. Individuals well-versed in Suel history recognize an actual flower whose beauty and medicinal properties led to it becoming a symbol of the Imperium, but only a few scholars and traditionalists recall a legend about the Rose once passed from generation to generation. Linia Halstreth, the Lady Sage of Safeton, recorded a version of the story in her invaluable *Notes and Marginalia on the Former Imperium*:

*“In the long years before the Imperium shared our people’s light with the world, a young man from a good family fell in love with a girl. He had spent much of his time studying arcane magic under his father and other mentors; in his limited time, he had mastered energies and elements and conditioned his mind to a state of clarity and focus far beyond his contemporaries.*

*“Eager to introduce the boy to adult society, his father brought him to a winter ball thrown by a powerful spellcaster, a man with a cunning smile and eyes that twinkled like stars in the desert night. Rumors claimed the man had spent years traveling to distant lands, even visiting other worlds and times.*

*“The host remained absent during most of the celebration, leaving nobles to their conversations and dancing. He materialized at the top of the stairs only when the guests began commenting on his failure to appear among them. Smiling, the sorcerer offered an ambiguous apology. He introduced his daughter to the assembled crowd.*

*“The girl’s beauty seared the boy’s thoughts, inflaming passions he had considered under his control.*

*“The man announced that his daughter would soon be of marriageable age. Upon his wife’s departure from this life, he had taken the child with him on his journeys, and she had demonstrated her ability to judge circumstances and character from a young age. The time drew near for her to start her own family. Eligible men could offer gifts in courtship, but she would choose her mate. She would announce her decision at another gathering in a year, the suitors making their offerings when winter turned to spring. Until then, her potential husbands were not to speak to her. Her heart was a mystery to which each must bring his answer. The boy’s flesh flushed, his heart racing at the stranger’s words and lurching to a sudden halt when the man added that her husband would gain access to the family’s magical secrets.*

*“So the prize was two-fold, a bride and unsurpassed arcane knowledge.*

*“Sleep abandoned the young man, replaced by alternating tides of imagined possibilities and frustrated yearning. He sat at the desk by his window, his moist eyes catching the moons’ light as their shapes changed from night to night. Being a Suel of noble birth, he would not cry, even in frustration. As time passed, his eyes dried and reddened. The lunar reflections dulled. During the days, he roamed the halls and gardens of his father’s house like a spirit condemned to endless wandering.*

*“His father’s frequent encouragement gnawed at his mind like insects picking at rotten wood. He must prove himself worthy to his beloved, but his talent was a mere fragment of her family’s Art. Older men, his father, his former mentors all spoke of great deeds of magic or demonstrations of wealth. The young man knew she would refuse such gifts with a pitying but firm smile. To win the lady, he must discover her desire. He must solve the mystery of her personality.*

*“The boy found his sister in the estate’s garden. She would be of marriageable age herself in three years. She could provide insight into his beloved and some advice about charming and delighting a noble young lady. His sister listened to him and smiled. She told him of a creature she had seen in the Great Market, a dancing monkey with white fur and a red velvet cap. [Here, Linia notes that some versions of the tale substitute a talking white bird with a red crest for the monkey.]*

*“The youth followed his sister’s directions and found the merchant, who asked for an exorbitant price for the animal. With his father’s blessing, the boy spent part of his future inheritance to purchase the creature. But upon the beast’s arrival at the family manor, it bit and tore at the servants. It hissed and squatted and raised its tail, befouling the floor. When finally cornered, the little monster cackled malevolently and rushed its would-be captors, who gasped and screamed, jumping out of its way. It hopped through a window into the branches of a cherry tree and disappeared.*

*“Seeking restitution, the young man returned with his father to the market, but the merchant had left for parts unknown.*

*“Disappointed and exhausted, the boy spent more and more time in the garden. He would fall asleep while sitting on a bench near the blooming flowers, products of skilled horticulture and family magic. Their perfume did nothing to ease his troubled dreams. One day, his mother approached him. Seeing his mood, she spoke of various matters, eventually recollecting his father’s attempts to win her hand. She told him of his father’s lovely voice and talent with the harp-lute, and the young man laughed, trying to picture his father strumming leather strings and tapping the soundboard with long fingers. Something about the image caught his imagination. After pressing his mother for details of the courtship, he arrived at a plan.*

*“The boy hired a tutor and purchased a harp-lute. His instructor praised his vocal efforts, encouraging the young spellcaster to reach for higher and higher notes. The servants left food and drink for the boy, who spent hours working with his teacher and on his own. He practiced at the instrument till the strings tore his fingertips, bright red on pale skin. He ignored the pain and let the wounds scab over.*

*“When he thought he had achieved the basics of musical mastery, he called for his family, but they didn’t reply. He summoned the servants, but they didn’t respond to verbal commands or the ringing bell. Leaving his room for the first time in three months, he walked the long halls. As he approached an intersecting corridor, a servant passed. The boy called out, but the man didn’t respond. He followed the servant and found his family seated at dinner. They made no move as he entered the dining hall. He quickly discovered that kin and servants had filled their ears with wax to keep the terrible noise of his efforts from disrupting household routine. The young man’s musical attempts had produced only a painful dissonance, but those closest to him thought it would be cruel to deprive him of hope.*

*“Shocked and hurt, the young man soon sought his tutor, but a kitchen maid charmed by the scoundrel’s flirtations had immediately warned him of the boy’s discovery, and the pair had fled to the hinterlands.*



*“The defeated youth lost his appetite. A great pain settled in his breast, spreading like poison through his body, sharpening his senses while his mind remained detached from his surroundings. He thought only of the girl. Everything else was a distraction, an illusion. Exhausted, he fell into a long, deep sleep.*

*“The girl stood before him, smiling, her arms outstretched. He knew he dreamed. He knew this dreamworld differed from waking life, but he also felt its truth. He ran to the girl, embracing her, and as he held her close, he felt her form shatter and fall away.*

*“Opening his eyes, he discovered the remains of a marble statue scattered in pieces at his feet, its dust clinging to his arms and chest. The statue’s face stared sightlessly at him. The features were those of his beloved. He began to cry out when a soft but imperious voice silenced him.*

*“Even at a distance, the young man could make out the woman’s pale face and red lips. A ruby skull hung from her neck. She was more beautiful than the girl he loved, but he felt no desire, no temptation—only awe. The woman raised her left hand, and the boy fell to his knees, lowering his gaze. ‘You would have a gift worthy of this girl and all she possesses?’*

*“Yes,’ the boy said, staring at his beloved’s dust.*

*“And what would you give for such knowledge?’ ‘I’d give my soul.’ The woman’s delighted laughter startled him. ‘All souls of your kind come to me at the end,’ she said. ‘But each has other obligations after that meeting. Let us say instead you shall honor me through devotion to your beloved and to the generations your pairing brings forth. Let us say you serve me through your Art and through strict observance of my Laws. Do you know who I am?’ ‘Yes. You are the Ruby Goddess.’ ‘Then raise your eyes and look upon me.’*

*“A white rose emerged from the stony ground where Wee Jas had stood. ‘Approach your gift,’ a voice commanded. Drawing near the young mage noted the thin red lips along the edges of the petals. ‘Receive the gift, boy.’ He grasped the rose by its stem. The thorns ripped his skin, but he felt no pain. Instead, the cuts infused his body and soul with confidence and vigor. He pulled at the rose, tearing it from its source, and glistening red fluid burst from the petals, spilling over the edges, staining the pale flower and moistening his hands till they became slick with blood.*

*“You know what you must do,’ the goddess said.*

*“The young man awoke in daylight to find red stains on his sheets. His hands showed wounds from dozens of thorns, but he felt refreshed, focused, and sure of purpose. He quickly penned a letter to his family, explaining he would be gone until the night of courtship, and he disappeared from his father’s estate.*

*“Seasons changed. The appointed date arrived. Suitors brought the girl trinkets, treasures, and tales. They offered arcane wonders, demonstrations of strength, and promises of a glorious future. One by one, the maiden rejected them with a pitying smile. Finally, her father said, ‘Is no one worthy of my daughter’s hand and heart?’*

*“There is one,’ a voice declared, and a space to the father’s right came alive with magical energy, a glowing circle*

*opening from some distant place and shooting sparks from its spinning edges like struck flint.*

*“Dressed in stylish but understated finery, the boy emerged from the opening and approached the mage’s daughter. He got down on his knees, just as he had for the Ruby Goddess, and he presented her with a white rose, the tips of its petals traced red. The girl smiled, not with pity, but with joy. She raised the flower to her face and inhaled deeply, and her cheeks brightened as if touched with rouge.*

*“The young mage had won his love, and with her, her father’s secrets.”*

While most scholars view the legend as a poetic invention, Linia Halstreth suggests in her *Notes* that the young arcanist and his family may represent actual or composite figures from pre-Imperial history. According to Halstreth, the senior mage and his daughter signify an otherworldly power and something in its possession for which the ancient Suel bargained, with the White Rose—a flower of remarkable beauty—standing for whatever price was required to gain that resource. The girl’s status as a symbolic rather than living figure accounts for her father letting her choose a husband, as arranged marriages were standard among the Suel. In the Lady Sage’s words: “The girl functions more as object than personality, and the tale explicitly links winning her hand with gaining access to her ‘father’s’ power. Our hero pines for his beloved, but his heart thrills at the prospect of learning her family’s secrets. The storyteller associates successful wooing of the young lady’s ‘person’ not only with finding the flower that pleases her, but also with knowledge, mastery, and the need to prove oneself worthy of the otherwise unattainable. Consider the story as a parable or allegory for the earliest days of the Suel people, and we begin to understand the extent to which our ancestors saw Law, Magic, and Death—a boundary between worlds—as intertwined; we comprehend the degree to which they already recognized the possibilities of Imperial hierarchy.” However, an earlier historian with a flare for the scandalous, Uhas of Neheli, goes further, insinuating that the girl’s strange depiction and the boy’s ultimate triumph hint at unholy pacts and perhaps at an inhuman taint to the old noble bloodlines.

Halstreth’s commentary explores the Rose’s symbolic connection with the Suel Imperium’s aspirations and traditional values. The boy, presumably an ancestor of one of the noble houses or a stand-in for all of them, desires something. He abides by the limits set by the older mage. The Ruby Goddess reveals the means of acquiring the object of the boy’s desire. In exchange for her knowledge and assistance, the young mage submits himself and his descendants to the Goddess’s Law; the agreement involves no negotiation. Acquisition of the means is associated with blood, and the young man must travel to a distant place and do what he must to procure the item and bring it back to his homeland. “As needs and desires grow, the Imperium extends its reach and exerts its will. Nothing of value can exist outside its laws, which reflect the Laws underlying all lasting things,” Lady Halstreth remarks. “There is an element of destiny at work, but at the same time, higher

levels of arcane achievement require the Goddess's blessing. Wee Jas provides her most promising children with magical gifts, but she expects their families to use their talents within limits and according to her teachings.

"It is not enough to rule; one must govern with understanding. Pursuit of ever greater power without her approval brings isolation and destruction. The reach should not exceed the grasp, and the grasp extends without catastrophe only through study of the Magical Art and submission to Cosmic Law. Otherwise, those of rare power run the risk of brushing against equal or greater forces without benefit of the Dark-Eyed Lady's counsel. They risk being tripped up by their own desires. And because of their power and position, they put their people in danger."

While the Lady Sage's critics praise her commentary on the Rose for its erudition, they assert that the personality she describes is her own, not that of the Imperial Suel. They claim Linia's perspicacity fails her in her final work, which reflects more on her struggles and late-life regrets than on any truth about her ancestors.

Over the centuries, descendants of the Suel nobility stopped telling the Rose's story, perhaps in an attempt to forget or evade the past, including whatever arrangement or exchange allowed the Imperium to rise and flourish and the decisions that resulted in its doom. However, the symbol was too deeply ingrained in their collective imagination to disappear from their culture.

As for the actual Rose, specimens survive in the western reaches of the Sea of Dust and among the bone-littered spaces between stone pillars in the Drachengrabs' Twisted Forest. Explorers can take flowers and cuttings from a bush, but the plant refuses to grow outside these environments. Following implications in earlier work by Uhas and others, Linia argues certain Suel families corrupted the power represented by the Rose, or they indulged in behaviors resulting in that power's "rejection" of the Suel people. Whatever the case, the corresponding flower now thrives only at places of disaster for the Imperium and its survivors.

For all its associations with the rise and fall of the Suel Imperium and the evils of latter times, the actual Rose retains its curious essence. During the height of Badwall's honey trade, beekeepers hired adventurers to procure buds from the Twisted Forest. Expeditions carefully transported the developing flowers to the town, placing them in baskets enchanted to preserve freshness. Upon delivery, the town's women delicately peeled back the sepals, squeezing the white petals until their "blood" or essence spilled from the red tips. The honey-makers then infused their product with the liquid. According to local accounts, a single drop could alter an entire batch, granting honey and honey mead properties like the most potent healing potions. A taste of this honey also functioned as a powerful stimulant. "White Bud Honey" had a high cost due to the Rose's rarity, even before the humanoid invasion of the Pomarj halted its production.

Cultists in distant lands value the White Roses found in the western Sea of Dust for a rust-colored mold that

grows on the bush's leaves and seems to drain its sap. Scraping the mold smears the plant and fingers with a dark, wet substance, as if someone had pricked or sliced a digit, then wiped it on the leaf. Believers allegedly smoke a resin or powder derived from this mold. A small dose induces the experience of dying, leading some to reconsider their lives and the time they have left but causing others to pursue ever-increasing risks as they attempt to recreate the moments before annihilation.

## Notes and Suggestions for DMs


I'd like to again thank Jay "Lord Gosumba" Scott for inspiring this article. Jay asked me if I knew of any lore about the Suel flowers from the description of the Twisted Forest in 1988's *Greyhawk Adventures*. I didn't, but I was happy to create something for him to use in his games. In constructing a legend and its interpretations for the Rose, I was inspired by such works as S. Theresa Dietz's *The Complete Language of Flowers and Folklore and Symbolism of Flowers, Plants, and Trees* by the Lehnrs.

The passage about the Twisted Forest in *Greyhawk Adventures* contains the first reference to Uhas of Neheli, an infamous Suel historian (p. 96). Later authors, especially David Cook (in *Vecna Lives!*) and Gary Holian (in his *Living Greyhawk Journal* articles on Keoland and its Silent Ones), elaborated on the nature of Uhas's research.

Linia Halstreth, the Lady Sage of Safeton, made her first and only print appearance in Robert S. Mullin's "Arcane Lore: Greyhawk Grimoires II" (*Dragon* #241). The Halstreth family and Safeton's Sages' Guild are institutions of importance in my campaign.

Readers can learn more about Wee Jas from Len Lakofka's "Gods of the Suel Pantheon" installment in *Dragon* #88. Sean Reynolds elaborates on her cult in "Core Beliefs: Wee Jas" in *Dragon* #350. From Reynolds, I took the idea of Wee Jas as a love goddess and as a deity whose domains of Law and Magic are intrinsically linked (p. 22); I took additional inspiration from his connecting Suel funerary customs with Law and hierarchy (p. 23). I read Reynolds as suggesting that the faithful Jasidan sees duty as extending across generations and believes in formal continuity between past, present, and future. Reynolds is also the source for the reference to Imperial marriage practices.

The Tale of the White Rose is a product of culture and history, and the Imperium was a place of high magic, but the story is not a religious allegory. Those *karuth* (priests of the Stern Lady) who know the tale regard it as an entertaining trifle, perhaps a warning to spellcasters seeking to expand their powers beyond established boundaries without first gaining the Goddess's blessing. (See "Core Beliefs," pp. 24-25, for a discussion of magic and its limits, stated and implied, according to Jasidan theology.) This possible moral marks the limit of their interest in the legend. The *karuth* deal in Law and its application, not dreams and make-believe.



Dungeon Masters might consult another Sean Reynolds work, *The Scarlet Brotherhood*, and consider alternative interpretations of the story. Suel refugees carried samples of the Rose as far east as the Drachensgrab Hills. In the final hours before the Rain of Colorless Fire, Kevelli Mauk and his Scarlet Brotherhood followers would have attempted to salvage the flower for themselves. Even if they'd succeeded in gathering cuttings before the fatal conflagration, he and his students would have discovered the Rose could not survive matter transportation via Lendor's Matrix. Whether this had to do with Kevelli's bloodline, his ideology, or some quirk of Rose or artifact would be a matter of debate for the Brotherhood.

For the Brotherhood's leadership, the Rose represents a purity of culture and purpose lost by the old Imperium, something the organization seeks to restore. In other words, they see their inability to bring the actual Rose to their lands as *not their fault*. The Brotherhood's teachings are clear. The Suel must cleanse and perfect themselves according to Kevelli's design. They must be worthy of their heritage, including the Rose and what it represents, and they must reclaim it.

To maintain their front as simple farmers and monastics, the Brotherhood transformed the Imperial Rose's symbol into another floral sign, the White Lotus. A small and secretive group within the Office of Obedience, the Children of the Pale Petals, answers directly to the Father of Obedience. Its members study a text called *The Strong and Lovely Petals*, allegedly authored by Kevelli, which explains the Rose's story as an allegory of Suel superiority. The Children are responsible for training and indoctrinating candidates for Father, chief steward, and stewards of the Offices of Faith, Purity, and Sorcery.

Gary Gygax mentioned Badwall's honey in *Artifact of Evil*. I elaborated on the town's beekeeping tradition in *Oerth Journal #36*.

DMs can—and should—take whatever they want from this article and its inspirations and use the material to suit their campaign and players.

# Whispers of the Great Serpent: The Hidden Empire of the Serpent-Men

by Matthew “Matteus” Fenn with Samuel “Samwise” Weiss and  
Les “Oblivion Seeker” Reno

*Authors’ note:* The Serpent-Men of Robert E. Howard’s “The Shadow Kingdom” and the worship of Set in his Hyborian Age stories inspired the Serpent-Men described in this article. These reptilian horrors may replace the Yuan-Ti of published Greyhawk materials.

The Serpent-Men, once rulers of an ancient realm, now weave their deceptions in the shadows, aiming to regain their lost dominion over humanity. Their history and nature are enigmatic and deeply intertwined with Oerth’s ancient history. In their proper form, Serpent-Men eerily resemble humans, though with snake-like heads and thick tails. Their vibrant scales shimmer, and they move in a silent slither when not walking upright. Possessing vast intellect, they converse in a mysterious hissing language and cannot speak in human tongues without mechanical or magical aids. As sages, magi, and venom experts, their primary deity remains Set, known to them as “The Great Serpent.” Deception, among other arts, is the Serpent-Men’s chief weapon. They emerge from their jungle hideouts and, using magic, replace human leaders. Their primary aim is to enslave humanity and convert them to the worship of the Cult of Set.

## History

*“For in the whispers of the night,  
Set’s children dream of forgotten might.  
Their legend a shadow, a myth, a lore,  
Those who hiss in shadows plot evermore.”*  
- Fragment of Set’s Midnight Requiem

The Snake-Men believe that a malign entity of the Outer Dark created them many long ages ago before humans appeared on Oerth. This entity is known as the Great Serpent, the Father of Serpents, or most commonly, Set. This ancient serpent god, Set, is lord of arcane magic, master of deception and death, ruler of the sunken cities and the black gulfs between the stars. The symbol of Set is a scaled serpent, coiled, holding its tail in its mouth.

The Serpent-Men’s devotion to Set has persisted since time immemorial, revering him in their grand temples. Their ancient empire, centered in Hepmonaland, was a civilization grounded in sorcery, alchemy, and the worship of Set, extending across the shallow primordial seas to the Tilvanot Peninsula and into the Amedio Jungle. The Serpent-Men’s world was one where dinosaurs roamed, ancient demons lurked, and magic surpassed human comprehension. They used a race of lizard men, ancestors of the modern troglodytes, as servants. Later, they enslaved apemen, the ancestors of dakon, banderlogs, and tasloi, using them to raise magnificent cities built of gleaming crystal and stone spread throughout southeastern Oerik, sacrificing them on blood-soaked altars and feasting on them. The screams of victims devoured alive added to the savor of the feast for the cold-hearted Serpent-Men. Even before humanity emerged and grew, the Serpent-Men’s empire waned, compelling them to retreat into the dense jungles, leaving their troglodytes servants to reign in their stead before they fell before an uprising of the dakon, now advanced to the point they could overthrow the masters that fed on them. The rise of the Touv in Hepmonaland further hastened

their decline. Yet, even as their existence faded into myths, their ambition remained undiminished.

Following the Twin Cataclysms and as a result of the Great Migrations, many Suel communities sought refuge from their crumbling Imperium, traveling extensively across the Flanaess. Some eventually settled in the Tilvanot Peninsula. In -415 CY, the first Suel settlers came to Hepmonaland. Sensing an opportunity, the Serpent-Men covertly began assimilating into Suel society, using their ability to assume the forms of their consumed victims. Their influence grew, especially within the ranks of the Scarlet Brotherhood. The Scarlet Brotherhood may have started as a noble assembly seeking the preservation of Suel culture, but the Serpent-Men have corrupted it into a force seeking humanity's subjugation. Back in the Amedio, lingering groups of Serpent-Men infiltrated the Suel there, corrupting them until they descended into cannibalistic savagery and worse. Disturbing investigations from the expedition of Matreyus suggest the insane humanoids known as gibberlings are the final devolution of inbreeding and cannibalism among the Amedi Suel.

## The Cult of the Great Serpent

The name Ranet once burned brightly among the Suel empire. As the Goddess of Fire, she was worshiped and

revered, her flames representing both creation and destruction. Yet, Pyremius, driven by his insidious ambitions as the demigod of poison and murder, sought to ascend further. His malevolence bore fruit when he poisoned Ranet and assumed her portfolio.

Yet, as the centuries passed, whispers persisted of the existence of a mysterious "Suloise snake goddess." Some believed it to be the remnants of Ranet's legacy, while others saw the shadow of Beltar or even speculated on a lesser-known facet of Wee Jas. The Snake-Men, always the manipulators, saw an opportunity in this mythos. As they wove their webs of deceit among the Suel settlers in Hepmonaland and the Tilvanot Peninsula, they breathed new life into the legend of Ranet. Her worship made a strong resurgence. Yet, beneath this facade lay a sinister plot, for the Snake-Men were not true worshipers of Ranet. Instead, the image of the Suel Snake Goddess is a smokescreen for their true allegiance: Set, the Father of Serpents.

To the untrained eye, it appeared as though Ranet's essence had returned, but those who look deeper might see the scaled and deceitful tendrils of Set's influence. That is why uttering the name "Set" is taboo and often met with severe consequences. Those who have dared to voice it may soon afterward turn up dead. Likewise, even alluding to the existence of "talking snake-men" draws the ire of the serpent cult.



The majority of humanity dismisses the Serpent-Men as mere legends. This cultivated aura of myth has made their existence one of the best-kept secrets in the Flanaess. Individuals who've dared to challenge or expose these secrets have met with chilling fates: some vanish without a trace, others suffer gruesome deaths, while the most cursed slowly decay into haunting ophidian visages.

While the Suel gods hold significance among the human populace, the Serpent-Men have artfully woven a narrative, suggesting the Suel deities are but servants of the Serpent Queen. In the chambers of the grandest Tilvanot temples, one can see the deceit in painting: a magnificent fresco displaying the ascendancy of the Great Serpent deity. At its center, Ranet, the Suel Snake goddess, is majestically enthroned as queen. Her eyes are the mesmerizing, vertical slits of a serpent's gaze. Regal robes hang on her lithe form, her serpentine headdress a cascade of intertwined golden snakes. A thick tail protrudes from under her robes.

Surrounding Ranet, the Suel deities are artfully depicted in postures of submission. Bralm and Llerg kneel in humble deference. Pyremius cowers before her. Syrul, her extended forked tongue a testament to her connection with the Great Serpent, bows her head in acknowledgment of Ranet's supreme reign. Snakes emerge from the crimson skull of Wee Jas as she curtsies to the monarch of snakes. An artist may even dare to depict Lendor, the god of time, placed beneath the Serpent, indicating that even time itself is subservient to the will of the Great Serpent. This image is not merely an ornate piece of religious art but a powerful narrative of the spiritual hierarchy within the Cult. In villages and cities, festivals and rituals that once celebrated individual Suel deities now include praises and references to the Serpent Queen's dominion.

The Cult's priests, primarily from the Scarlet Brotherhood, are clean-shaven and bald, bearing a mark of exalted status. So revered are they that even a touch by a commoner would mean death. However, these are priests in name only since the real Ranet has faded and lost her power to bestow spells. The situation is similar for clerics of the Suel pantheon. The Suel pantheon denies priestly spells to those Tilvanot clerics who have distorted their worship. However, in a masterful ruse, those who appear under the guise of "clerics" are wizards who deceptively weave arcane spells, exploiting the cult's legacy and image for their agendas. For some, that agenda is only a selfish grasping for power and position. Others seek to enslave humanity and hasten Set's arrival upon Oerth.

The Cult of the Great Serpent believes serpents are divine manifestations. Killing a serpent is considered blasphemy. Cultists regard any harm their reptilian masters inflict upon others as a holy sacrifice to Set. Festivals feature the sacrifice of unsuspecting innocents whose blood fuels fervent rituals and arcane rites dedicated to pleasing and empowering the Great Serpent.

The Scarlet Brotherhood seeks to revive forgotten snake cults across Flanaess. The worship of Mok'slyk, the Flan snake deity and arcane mentor of Vecna, is the most

prominent among these ancient, obscure sects. The resurgence of snake worship under Set's influence has spread into many regions. Most people mistrust or even hate these cults. The Snake-Men work by subtle means to amass power, hiding until the day all humanity will submit to the Father of Serpents' indomitable will.

## Swords & Wizardry & OSR Compatible

---

### Snake-Man

---

**Hit Dice:** 2+2

**Armor Class:** 6[13]

**Attacks:** Bite (1d4) or weapon (1d8).

**Saving Throw:** 16

**Morale:** 9

**Special:** Consume likeness, charm gaze, summon serpents, darkvision (60ft), venomous (save or suffer 1d6 hp damage, paralysis in 1d4 rounds for 2d6 turns).

**Move:** 20

**Alignment:** Chaos

**Number Encountered:** 1

**% in Lair:** 2d12

**Challenge Level/XP:** 7/600

**Snake-Man: HD** 2+2; **AC** 6[13]; **Atk** bite (1d4), weapon (1d8); **Move** 20 (slither 40); **Save** 16; **Morale** 9; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 7/600; **Special:** Consume likeness (requires consuming a human victim over 1d4 days, then polymorph self as the victim at will, the shadow is unchanged, gain victim's memories), charm gaze (as charm person, -2 saving throw), summon serpents; darkvision (60ft), venomous (save or additional 1d6 damage, paralysis in 1d4 rounds for 2d6 turns).

## Tales of the Valiant & 5E Compatible

---

### Snake-Man

---

*Medium Humanoid*

---

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 33

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (-1)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

---

**Saving Throws** INT +3, WIS +4

**Skills** Stealth +6

**Damage Resistances** none

**Senses** passive Perception 12, darkvision 60 ft

**Condition Immunities** frightened, paralyzed, poisoned





**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic  
**Challenge** 3

---

**Consume Likeness (True Form Only).** Over 1d4 days, the snake-man can consume a human victim. Once this process is complete, the snake-man gains not only the Change Shape ability to transform into the likeness of the consumed individual but also accesses all of the victim's memories up to the point of their death.

**Magic Resistance.** The snake-man has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

## Actions

---

**Bite (True Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit* 6 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 6 (1d6) poison damage on a failed save and becoming paralyzed for 2d6 rounds, or take half as much poison damage without paralysis on a successful one.

**Summon Serpents (True Form Only, 1/Day).** The snake-man can magically summon 1d4+1 poisonous snakes. The summoned creatures appear in unoccupied spaces the snake-man can see within 60 feet of it. The summoned creatures are friendly to the snake-man and act on its turn. They follow the snake-man's commands and fight until they drop to 0 hit points or the snake-man dismisses them as a bonus action.

**Charm (True Form Only).** The snake-man targets one humanoid it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the snake-man, the target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or be charmed by the snake-man. The charmed target regards the

snake-man as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. The effect lasts 24 hours or until the snake-man is destroyed, or is on a different plane of existence than the target, or takes a bonus action to end the effect. If the target's saving throw is successful or the charm effect ends, the target is immune to the snake-man's Charm for the next 24 hours. The snake-man can have only one target charmed at a time. If it charms another, the effect on the previous target ends.

**Short-Sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

## Bonus Actions

---

**Change Shape.** The snake-man can magically transform into a human (using its Consume Likeness trait) or back into its true form. Items the snake-man wears or carries transform with it. If knocked unconscious or slain in human guise, the monster reverts to its natural form. In man-shape, the snake-man retains its HP, HD, ability to speak, proficiencies, INT, WIS, and CHA scores, as well as this bonus action. Its statistics and capabilities are otherwise replaced by those of the new form, except for any class features or legendary actions of that form.

# Detect Life: The Ingundi

by Nijineko Prismaticpsion

*Hiking on a woodland road in the Grand Duchy of Geoff on a summer evening, one hand resting on the pommel of the broadsword at your hip, you see a lady sitting by the side of the trail ahead. You walk up to speak with her. The golden-haired beauty looks up, her eyes bright in the green shadows. You sit. The woman leans on your shoulder as you tell her of your adventures. In a little while, when you stand to resume your journey, she rises to join you. A short way down the trail, you hear running water. Investigating the sound's source, you discover a stream rippling through a glade screened by ferns and trees, the perfect place for a twilight tryst. You grin. She smiles back. You hang your sword on a hornwood limb and spread your cloak on the grass for a blanket. She draws near and whispers how much she wants you—for dinner!*

The Ingundi presented here is a psionic version of the monster, whose statistics appear in the hardback *Greyhawk Adventures* pages 28-29 and *MC5 - Monstrous Compendium - Greyhawk Adventures Appendix*.

Ingundi make for a potentially dangerous encounter at low levels (1-3) and a less challenging encounter at lower mid-levels (4-6). At higher party levels, an Ingundi would feel too threatened by the PCs and thus flee but could target significant NPCs instead. For a horror-oriented scenario, the Ingundi could lure PC or NPC children or even replace them.

## Appearance

Resembling a common lizardman (sages speculate about a possible relationship to the psionic Quanak), an Ingundi walks on two legs but must lean forward with its tail extended for balance when it runs. An Ingundi juvenile stands about 2' tall and will grow to 5' or 6' as an adult. The scales are yellowish-white to light yellow on the underside, shifting to mottled or striped shades of green on the back. Long, sharp teeth fill the wide jaws. Slim arms end in clawed hands well-fitted for grasping prey and tearing flesh but ill-suited for dexterous usage. Big pupils dilate to great size in dim conditions, making the yellow eyes appear nearly black.

## Habitat

The typical Ingundi dwells in a forested region (unconfirmed reports indicate Ingundi in the Hornwood and Felreev Forest). It will often nest in hollow logs and burrows at the roots of large trees; it can contort its flexible form to fit into narrow spaces. Its greenish, variegated coloration provides camouflage in sunny meadows and dark thickets.

It lurks near game trails and well-traveled paths, letting its prey come to it.

## Society & Culture

Ingundi communicate using telepathic images and a few mental words for hunting prospects, prey, and threats. They cannot speak aloud but may cry out in pain. They start life as abandoned eggs. Possessed of instincts and inherited memories, Ingundi can hunt minutes after hatching. Ingundi are solitary, avoiding each other except during winter mating season. The Ingundi courting process is entirely mental. The mating pair will meet only after a psychic courtship and then copulate repeatedly. The partners' solitary instincts soon drive them apart.

Racial memories combined with telepathy allow Ingundi to communicate with each other from birth. However, Ingundi flee from any attempts at psionic communication by non-Ingundi. Attempts to listen in on an Ingundi have yielded nothing but a brief psychic 'squeal' that feels confusing and even painful for non-Ingundi. Some psionists believe the Ingundi use a racial code that transmits at high-speed sensory impressions and psychic imprints.

These reclusive reptiles seem content with their lifestyle and show no desire to develop beyond it, shunning tools and clothing. They sometimes take the forms of juvenile giant iguanas and hitch rides on adult giant iguanas, with which they seem to communicate by telepathy.

## Predation

An Ingundi is a solitary, nocturnal hunter. While hidden, it probes the target's mind to learn its desires. The Ingundi reshapes its body into a form meant to entice the victim sexually. Depending on the creature the Ingundi is stalking, the Ingundi may take on the shape of a doe in heat or a wanton wench. The Ingundi beguiles its selected meal to accompany it to some secluded place, attacks by ambush, and then kills and devours it. The Ingundi's snake-like jaw can dislocate, letting the monster gulp huge gobbets of flesh and swallow small animals whole. A juvenile preys on woodland beasts, but an adult will catch and eat humanoids.

When threatened or in danger, an Ingundi uses its telepathic insight and shape-changing abilities to take on a repulsive and undesirable form, such as a pox-ridden beggar or a giant skunk. It might also lure prey by taking on the semblance of a lost or wounded young animal or child.

An Ingundi snatches thoughts from its victim's mind and mentally projects expected responses. To others, the Ingundi's prey will seem to be engaged in a strange, one-sided,

intense conversation. Should its charms and wiles fail, or its target threatens it, the Ingundi will flee.

## Psionics

	Powers	Skills/Proficiencies	Notes
0e	<p><b>Basic:</b> Animal Telepathy, ESP,</p> <p><b>Advanced:</b> Shape Alteration, Telepathic Projection</p>	<p><b>Modes:</b> mind blank</p> <p><b>Psionic strength</b> = 126.</p>	<p>Ingundi can use Animal Telepathy on humanoids and other Ingundi.</p> <p>The Ingundi version of Telepathic Projection can only charm and requires touch. Adults may appear as humanoids or animals with Shape Alteration, while juveniles may only take on animal semblance.</p>
1e	<p><b>Minor:</b> Animal Telepathy, ESP,</p> <p><b>Major:</b> Shape Alteration, Telepathic Projection</p>	<p><b>Modes:</b> mind blank</p> <p><b>Psionic strength</b> = 126.</p>	(identical to 0e notes)
2e	<p><b>Devotion (telepathy):</b> Attraction, Aversion, Probe, Send Thoughts</p> <p><b>Science (psychometabolism):</b> Metamorphosis</p>	<p><b>Proficiencies:</b> Contact, Detect Psionics</p> <p><b>Modes:</b> mind blank</p> <p><b>Psionic strength points</b> = 52 (assuming 3HD, add or remove 13 psp per HD altered. Considered as having an 18 WIS for purposes of psionics.)</p>	<p>Metamorphosis is limited to animals (and humanoids when adults).</p> <p>Probe is limited to discovering targets of desire only (halved cost in psp, +2 chance of success)</p> <p>Ingundi suffer no penalties to power scores when contacting animals or humans in line of sight as a racial ability.</p>
3e	<p><b>Powers:</b> Aversion, Psionic Charm, Mindlink, Mind Probe, Psionic Alter Self, Psionic Speak with Animals</p>	<p>All powers are at will (Su) psionic abilities. Manifest Level is equal to HD+2.</p>	<p>Mindlink is the augmented unwilling version. Mind Probe is limited to discovering targets of desire only (reduced cost).</p>

### Ingundi tactics, use of powers:

**Charm prey:** Telepathic Projection, Attraction, Psionic Charm

**Disgust hunters:** Telepathic Projection, Aversion

**Lure prey with appearance:** Shape Alteration, Metamorphosis, Psionic Alter Self

**Lure prey with communication:** Animal Telepathy, Send Thoughts, Mindlink (humanoids), Psionic Speak with Animals

**Discover prey's target of desire:** ESP, Probe, Mind Probe



# Oath of the Scourge of the Seas

By Troy Alleman



Feared by honest sailors and pirates alike, the dark paladins who swear the Oath of the Scourge of the Seas serve Panzuriel, the Demon Kraken. Wherever they sail, these villains spread chaos, betrayal, and death.

## Tenets of the Scourge of the Seas

**Ocean's Wrath:** Fight like the storm that wrecks ships and drowns men by the score.

**Deception's Tide:** Trick and ambush your prey like the 'sneaker waves' that drag fools to their deaths.

**Herald of the Abyss:** Claim souls for the murky depths and expand the dominion of your dark patron.

**Unyielding Cruelty:** Show no more mercy to those who fall before you than a squid shows its prey as it crushes and eats it alive.

### *Oath Spells*

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Armor of Agathys, Silent Image
- 5<sup>th</sup> – Mirror Image, Pass Without a Trace
- 9<sup>th</sup> – Tidal Wave, Gaseous Form
- 13<sup>th</sup> – Black Tentacles, Greater Invisibility
- 17<sup>th</sup> – Destructive Wave, Mislead

### *Channel Divinity*

When you take this oath at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options:

**Panzuriel's Deception:** As an action, you can become invisible through the end of your next turn or until you attack, deal damage, or cast a spell.

**Dread Wave:** As an action, you can unleash a black wave of fear. Each creature of your choice within a 30-foot cone must make a Wisdom saving throw against your paladin spell save DC. On a failed save, targeted beings become frightened for 1 minute. They can repeat the saving throw at the ends of their respective turns, ending the effect on a success.

### *Mantle of the Deep*

Starting at 7<sup>th</sup> level, you gain darkvision with a range of 120 feet. If you already have darkvision, its range increases by 60 feet. Additionally, you gain a swim speed equal to your walking speed and can breathe underwater.

### *Sinister Omen*

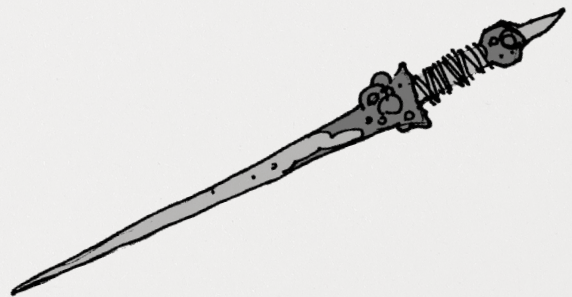
At 15<sup>th</sup> level, as a bonus action, you can emit an aura that unnerves your foes. For 1 minute, whenever an enemy creature starts its turn within 10 feet of you, it takes psychic damage equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1).

### *Scourge Ascendant*

At 20<sup>th</sup> level, as an action, you can embody the dread essence of Panzuriel. For 1 minute, you gain the following benefits:

- Shadowy tendrils sprout from your back, granting you a flying speed of 60 feet.
- Attacks made against you have disadvantage.
- When you hit a creature with a melee weapon attack, the target must make a Wisdom saving throw against your paladin spell save DC. On a failed save, the creature suffers paralysis until the end of its next turn.

Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you complete a long rest.



# Yhad, The Sea-Beast Hunter of Scant

By Jarl Thor

**Human male**  
**9th level Ranger**  
**Lawful Good**

**STR** 17

**INT** 12

**WIS** 15

**DEX** 11

**CON** 16

**CHR** 16

**Armor Class** 5 (studded leather overcoat and ring of protection +2)

**Hit Points** 72

**THACO** 12

## Melee

---

**Handaxe:** +3 hit 1d6+3 damage

**Trident:** +3 to hit 1d12+3 damage

## Ranged

---

**Handaxe:** +2 to hit 1d6+2 damage

**Trident** +2 to hit 1d12+2 damage

**Special Attacks:** gain surprise on a throw of 1-3 out of 6, +9 damage when striking giant-class enemies (including koalinth, scrag, and merrow, three monster kinds he has clashed with often), may conduct *shocking grasp* (see below) through his magic trident

**Special Defenses:** surprised only on a throw of 1 in 6.

Spells: 1 1st-level druid spell and 1 1st-level magic-user spell per day.

**Spellbook:** *affect normal fires, read magic, shocking grasp, Tenser's floating disk*

Secondary Skill: Sailor/Navigator

## Equipment:

---

aquatic trident\*, ring of protection +2, boots of levitation, potion of water breathing, potion of cure serious wounds

small boot knife, flint, and steel in a watertight pocket box, broad leather belt & oilskin belt pouches

\*Underwater, Yhad's trident grants him free action and acts as a magical weapon against monsters invulnerable to ordinary weapons. Within 100 yards of any large body of water, Yhad can hurl the trident like a javelin.

Based in the port of Scant, Yhad has captained the cog Centaur and hunted sea monsters with the help of his devoted crew for twenty years. Two pale, puckered rings on his brow contrast his deep-tanned Oeridian complexion. Yhad is tall and built like an oaken barrel, with a powerful grip that can rip a sheet of heavy canvas like a linen tablecloth. As a youth, he lost his family and nearly his life to the Great White Aboleth. He recalls his mother screaming as white tentacles rose, writhing, from black water. He remembers prying the fishing spear from his dead father's hands. He felt the shaft shiver and splinter as he thrust it at the pale bulk rolling over the deck, as a sharp and slimy touch burned his forehead. Priests of Osprem found him washed ashore, alone. They healed what they could. His scars sometimes itch with the monster's lingering venom. A few years ago, the seafaring ranger almost lost his crew during a reckless chase after his nemesis. He has since learned to temper his zeal with wisdom. Having lost friends and family to the Great White Aboleth and other sea beasts, Yhad's crew will follow him loyally, even to their deaths. He won't ask them to die for an impulsive decision or personal grudge. Whatever they purchase with their lives must be worth the price. Yhad keeps the Centaur well-supplied; one of his monster-hunting expeditions can last three months. He knows the Sea of Gearnat well and can advise anyone preparing to fight against the sea monsters that inhabit its depths.

*Gregory W. Dewtiler's article, More Magic for Beginners, Dragon # 149, describes aquatic weapons.*

# The Earldom of Chull

By Eric Bailey

**Ruler:** Lord Augustus Weston, Earl of Chull

**Capital:** Chull (pop: 7000)

**Population:** 21,000

**Demi-humans:** 3,800

**Humanoids:** Unknown

**Alignments:** Lawful Good, Lawful Neutral, (Chaotic Good)

**Languages:** Common, Old Oeridian, Halfling, Dwarven, Elven

**Religion:** Zilchus, Oeridian Agricultural Gods, Nature Gods; Halfling, Dwarf, and Elf Pantheons.

## Geography

The city of Chull stands at the northern edge of the South Province, a few miles from the Thelwood, built around a large inlet of Relmor Bay. The city's nearest neighbor is Benkend or, depending on whom you ask, Anitol Salay by land and the port of Prymp by sea.

## Government

Four noble houses alternate possession of the office of the Earl of Chull. Lord Augustus of House Weston rules now. His peers, Lord Bradley of House Rothmere, Lady Genevieve of House Moonrich, and Lord Edward of House Hunting, sit on the Earl's Council, along with representatives of the Church of Zilchus and the city guilds. The Earl's authority extends more than a day's journey (about thirty miles) beyond the city walls.

Chull pays homage to the Herzog of the South, delivering scutage (direct cash payment) and not soldiers. Chelcor suspects the Earl of sympathy towards the Iron League. Rumors that the Herzog would quarter orc mercenaries in Chull provoked panic and rioting among the citizenry two years ago.

## Military

General Annalee Bimariss, a Grey elf of the Rieuwood, leads the land forces of Chull. Annalee is loyal to House Rothmere. Each of the four houses contributes a company of knights and fighting-men to Chull's small army. Commons citizens with the means to furnish their own arms serve in the militia.

Admiral Cedric Erwood, brother of Lady Genevieve of House Moonrich, commands the Earl's fleet. He has won several sea battles with privateers sponsored by Chull's detested rival, Prymp.

## Economy

Blessed with bountiful fishing in Relmor Bay and fertile fields, Chull feeds itself and exports corn, barley, and barrels of salted fish. Convicts work the blistering salt-pans east of the city walls alongside free laborers paid monthly in pecks of salt. The city's lumberyard (supplied by logging camps in Thelwood) produces staves for Chull's coopers, planks for the boatwrights, and wagon loads of lumber for export to nearby towns.

## Rumors

Woodsmen laboring in the fringe of Thelwood have begun vanishing from their camps. Reports of giant lizards - some that go about on two legs - stalking Thelwood, and rumors of twilight gatherings of dark humanoid figures in the treeline, have reached the city of Chull. The lumberyard owners appeal to adventurers for help.

A sinister new snake cult has the Guild of Gong Farmers afraid to clean out and repair the city sewers, after workers disrupted a gathering of robed and serpent-masked men in the drains. The cultists conjured swarms of vipers and constrictors to attack the workers. Waste and rubbish pile up in the middens and drains while guild members refuse to work. The City Guard will reward adventurers who investigate and stop the strange goings-on below the streets before the city of Chull becomes an overflowing dungheap.



# Gods of the Baklunish

*By Rob Conley*

## Istus

---

The Baklunish customarily greet both disaster and good fortune with the simple saying: "It is the will of Istus." Istus is the weaver of fates that no man can escape. Among the Baklunish, such fatalism often inspires what an Easterner might deem reckless behavior.

The cult of Istus rose to preeminence among the survivors of the Invoked Devastation. The goddess's deterministic ethos appealed to people uncertain of the future, trying to rebuild their homes in a land still suffering the magical aftereffects of the destruction called down by the Suloise Mages of Power.

Few Baklunish make public offerings to Istus or call for her aid. What good would it do them? Istus knows their fates. Many Baklunish view Istus as a cruel and uncaring goddess. While this attitude may seem impious, anyone born into Baklunish culture is always concerned with his fate and will work to ensure his fortune.

Though wise men say what the Lady of Our Fates has woven cannot be unraveled, one of the other effects of Istus's influence on Baklunish society is the flourishing of scholarly arts. The scholars who study the ways of magic are in great demand by those who desire to change or evade what fate has set before them.

Istus accepts any into her service, and many women join to improve their station in the customarily male-dominated societies of the Baklunish peoples.

Eight in ten of the clerics of Istus are women. Men fear Istus for her power over their fates and follow the dictates of her clergy, obeying the priestesses as same as the priests.

## Zuoken

---

Though Istus is dominant, she is not the only power worshiped in Baklunish society. Others arose as men sought to regain control over their fates. Zuoken is a demi-power who preaches that if one controls his body and mind with absolute discipline, then one will have control over one's destiny.

The Followers of the Way— as the devotees of Zuoken are known— appeared about 200 years ago. Their methods and techniques led to the development of unarmed martial arts. The Followers established monasteries to study the martial arts and control the mind and body.

Alongside the physical discipline of martial arts, many of the Followers of the Way develop their mental discipline to the point that they can affect the world and others with the power of their mind alone. Many come to study the esoteric science of psionics.

## Xan Ye

---

Xan Yae is a minor power that arose as Istus gained prominence. The followers of Xan Yae believe that destiny binds all mankind and that the only way to deal with fate is to laugh at it and take as much of life as a man or woman may. Xan Yae is the patron of thieves throughout Baklunish Society. Followers of Xan Ye tend to be adventurers and rogues.

## Geshtai

---

Geshtai is the only power among the original Baklunish gods to survive the rise of Istus. Geshtai was one of the myriad powers worshiped before the Invoked Devastation. These powers were associated with places and elemental forces. Geshtai is the patron of Lakes, Rivers, and Wells, and her clerics protect oasis wells, local lakes, and rivers from those who wish to despoil or pollute them. Geshtai survives because much of the southern Baklunish lands are in areas where there is very little water. Geshtai's church has a network of protective bases around the oases and other water sources vital to that area. Baklunish caravan masters and the Paynim nomads always give thanks to Geshtai when they travel.

## The Tiger and Wolf Nomads

---

Among the Tiger and Wolf Nomads, vestiges of the old religion of the Baklunish survive. The tribes take the ancient gods for guardian spirits and totems but have not retained the organized priesthoods and scholarly traditions that flourish among the settled Baklunish. During their people's migration, the shamans of the Wolf Nomads offered hecatombs of cattle to the genius of the wolves of the steppe lands and northern evergreen forests to protect their people on the trek and in their new homes. The shamans of Tiger Nomads performed a similar sacrifice directed to the spirit of the tigers and offered human and humanoid captives as well as kine. Both nomad nations hold summer games to celebrate the spirits, with wrestling matches, singing, gambling, and races. The attendees drink many skins of koumiss. The annual festivals end with ritual hunts to 'feed' the tribal patron spirits. Travelers visiting the nomad territories in high summer should take warning that the Tiger Nomads chase not only beasts but also men in these bloody rides.

Name	Portfolio	Align	Sex
Istus	Fate, Destiny	N	F
Zuoken	Physical and Mental Mastery	N	M
Xan Yae	Twilight, Shadows, and Stealth	N	F
Geshtai	Lakes, Rivers, and Wells	N	F





# Rogues Gallery: Arrilon

By Curtis Cable



## Arrilon Shadowwood

Human male  
6th level Ranger  
Chaotic Good

**STR** 14

**INT** 13

**WIS** 15

**DEX** 18

**CON** 16

**CHR** 10

**AC:** 2 (+2 Leather Armor of Blending + Dex bonus)

**Hit Points** 42

**THACO** 15

### Melee

+2 Shortsword: +2 hit 1d6+2 damage S,M/1d8+2 damage L

+2 Dagger: +2 to hit 1d4+2 damage S,M/1d3+2 damage L

### Ranged

Short Bow; 1d6/1d6, +3 to hit (Dex bonus)

Range 5/10/15

**Equipment:** +2 leather armor of blending, +2 short sword, +2 dagger

**Special Attacks:** gain surprise on a throw of 1-3 out of 6, +6 damage when striking giant-class enemies (including orcs), fight with paired magic sword and dagger at no penalty

**Special Defenses:** surprised only on a throw of 1 in 6.

**Secondary Skill:** Forester

**Equipment:** Standard adventuring gear, quiver of 15 arrows, waterskin, ball of beeswax, carving knife, pouch of seasoning herbs, scroll case with hand-drawn map of the southern Dim Forest trails

The ranger Arrilon Shadowwood spends much of his time scouting and investigating activity on the road between Hochoch and Orlane along the southern edge of the Dim Forest, tracking the movements of humanoids in and out of the forest to support the local lords and villages in the area. Born to a half-elf father and human mother, Arrilon has a hint of elven features, with brown hair and green eyes. Arrilon is lithe and quick, and with his magical short sword and dagger, he often employs both weapons for two-handed fighting. Alan Clayborn, the retired ranger residing in Orlane, trained him in his early years. Arrilon continues to seek news and counsel from Alan regarding people and events in the area. (See N1, Against the Cult of the Reptile God)

Arrilon fled his village as a boy with his family when orc invaders overran the settlement. He often makes gifts to temples that provide for those affected by humanoid attacks, especially children. Arrilon sometimes carves wooden animal totems as gifts for children he meets, using an ornate carving knife, an heirloom saved when he fled from his childhood home. Although he spends much of his time patrolling this territory, Arrilon will join a mission outside of this region to pursue a threat to unprotected towns and the populace. He seldom speaks of matters beyond the business at hand, offering little about himself even to close colleagues. He continues to seek contact with the Sylvan elf population in areas of the Dim Forest west of the Javan River. Despite his quiet and intense nature, Arrilon privately longs for more knowledge of his family history and connection to his elven lineage.

# THE GREY GRIMOIRE

The Grey Grimoire is the flagship publication of the Grey Guildhall community. Dedicated to all things Greyhawk the magazine contains a trove of new content for Greyhawk.

