

THE WORLD OF FARLAND

WAR OF IMMORTALS

Campaign Setting



Before the Lords of Sin, before the rise of human civilization, elves and dwarves fought for their lives in the War of Immortals....



Erelom Mts.

Ruin of Liferock

Ardaranel

Ruin of Gaorg

Roth L.

Old Rothnog

Calador

Sarumv

Loraglin

Hinterlands

Hathiand

Balathil Mts.

R. Lonael

Taur

Deep

Marsh L.

Agh

Thartaur

L. Sarnegar

Uglod

Baku

Stor-gris

Sarnatol I.

R. Hitharil

Dianiand

O. Andunemen

SIRIAND

"Great Land"

(c. 9770 E.R., Stor-gris Era)

Eratol I.

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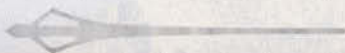
Could almost be the black Dragon Bardanax, second ruler of Stor-gris, couldn't it? Who's Bardanax? Read on!

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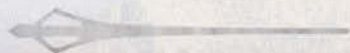
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INTRODUCTION

THE STOR-GRIS ERA

It is the distant past of the World of Farland, before the Lords of Sin and the Dark Conquest. A different conflict consumes the land, a war fought by elves and dwarves against the fell and evil Dark Folk kingdom of Stor-gris. This dread kingdom is a land of orcs, goblins, and their kin; it is a slave-holding realm, full of monsters and terror.

The Races of the Light face an uphill battle: the dominion of Stor-gris is massive and heavily populated by the quick-breeding Dark Folk races, and worse, it is headed by strategic and ruthless leaders, and none moreso than the orc-demon Karoxfang, the founder of the kingdom, whose very name causes the bravest among the elves and dwarves to quail in fear.

If this isn't enough, the realm of Stor-gris is supported and advised by the Wintervale, the land of perpetual ice and snow that lies across the gulf to the east. This bleak place is ruled by the White Lady, a mysterious entity of great and terrible power. The elves and dwarves are menaced from two sides.

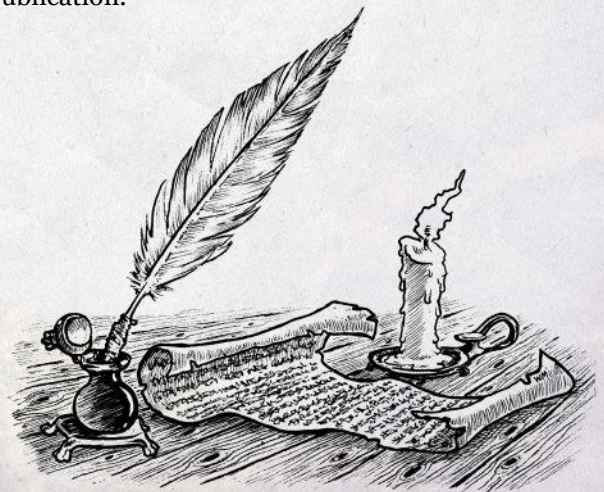
They have some allies. The gnomes have provided support, both militarily and otherwise, in the war against evil, but they generally take an isolationist policy. The halflings and humans too do what they can to support the good races, but their societies are primitive and undeveloped. In fact, many humans live in caves and huts, and while they understand the threat posed by Stor-gris, there is little they can do against such powerful and developed foes. Thus, the elves and the dwarves must bear the brunt of the conflict with Stor-gris.

They are aware of this fact, and they fully understand the magnitude of their peril. Sometimes the elves and dwarves have faced the armies of Stor-gris in open combat, but the seemingly endless

hordes of orcs and goblins always makes this a dangerous proposition. There are simply too many goblin-folk. Nevertheless, they have one hope: their intellect. The elves and dwarves have been planning a scheme to assassinate the dreadful Karoxfang and hopefully throw the wicked kingdom into disarray and perhaps civil war. The plan is tenuous, however, and its outcome lies in the balance....

This, then, is the backdrop of the *World of Farland: War of Immortals* Campaign Setting. Players in this setting face a centuries-old conflict between non-human races, a game of chess played for the highest of stakes—the freedom of the Races of the Light, or their ultimate destruction. The grand civilizations of the elves and dwarves hang by a thread... will they survive?

This campaign setting offers the opportunity to play in the World of Farland, but in a time in its history when great non-human civilizations vied for control of the continent, fielding massive armies and engaging in epic battles that would later become the stuff of myths and legends. At this point in its history, humans have not yet assumed the prominent position they will later occupy. The Stor-gris era is the time of the ascendancy of orcs, dwarves, and immortal elves. Campaigns set in this era begin in the year 9770 Elven Reckoning, approximately 10,700 years before the Lords of Sin and the Dark Conquest as told in the *World of Farland Campaign Setting* publication.



HISTORY

Around 7000 years before the date in which War of Immortals campaigns take place, the first great elf houses were founded, and with them, the flowering of elven civilization began. At that time, orcs and most other monsters did not yet exist, and the elves lived in a virtual paradise, free from biological aging, most diseases, and the majority of perils save that caused by accidents. But such a utopian way of life could not last. Not long after, from the greatest and most noble elf house, *Al-Dustriel* (“Lovers of Honor and Glory”) came a peerless and lovely elven maiden, Talkana, called *Silumiel* (“Beloved One as Beautiful as the Moon”). Not only was Talkana Moondaughter, as she came to be called, the comeliest elf who had yet lived, she also proved to be gifted in many other ways: she was supremely intelligent, skilled in crafts, and adept in the fledging discipline of magic. She traveled the land, teaching and improving all with whom she came into contact. Dwarves were newly created at this point and just attempting to found their own civilization, and Talkana did much to guide and instruct them. She traveled to their home of Liferock to tutor them in elven ways.

But her curiosity and ambition was as great as her beauty and skill. Talkana ever sought to expand her knowledge until she contacted... something or someone she should never have sought. Without warning, some 6500 years before the present date, she disappeared. The elves sought her in the wilderness, but returned unsuccessful; they deeply mourned her loss. However, something soon distracted them: the appearance of foul, stunted, evil creatures in the wilds—orcs. Soon after the orcs appeared, similar but distinct creatures followed—goblins and other Dark Folk. These beasts attacked the elves in their forest, and the elves found themselves fighting for their very existence. Though individually these creatures were no match for an elf, they still represented a real threat due to their high birth rate.

The elves called this early strife the Battle of the

Sarum. Yet this conflict provided the elves with the impetus to study magic in earnest, and their new discoveries turned the tide of the battle. The Dark Folk were on the verge of defeat and ultimate extermination—when inexplicably, House Al-Dustriel turned on their kin and caused civil discord in the Sarumvest and its capital of Alustel. For the first time, elf shed the blood of elf. This civil strife came to be called the Kin Slayer Wars. House Al-Dustriel, with its allied houses, left the Sarumvest and founded the city of Talas in the wastelands to the east. And worse, the rebel elves aligned themselves with the orcs and goblinoids. The war dragged on, with the final result in doubt, for the rebels and Dark Folk were led by a powerful and enigmatic being that called itself the White Lady. Eventually, with great loss, the forces of House Al-Dustriel were defeated. The orcs were scattered and the White Lady fled; this occurred some 3400 years ago. The elves set about to hunt down any orc stragglers. For hundreds of years, the elves knew peace.

But the White Lady returned centuries later, around 1700 years before the present date, and founded the Dark Folk realm she called Rothnog, setting herself up as its queen. Having learned from her defeat at the fall of Talas, she fortified her kingdom and built it slowly, treating and parlaying with the elves and dwarves until her military might was in place. Then she struck. Rothnog attacked and waged terrible war against the elves and dwarves. Some dwarves recognized the threat to their ancestral home Liferock and took themselves off to found the fortress of Wawmar. The White Lady was indeed successful in destroying Liferock, and she even threatened the bounds of the Sarumvest itself. Much of the reason for her success was her dreadful general Karoxfang, the spawn of an orc and a demon. Yet always evil turns on itself, and the kingdom of Rothnog was split by its own civil war. Powerful orcish warlords rebelled against the White Lady, and war raged within the kingdom until the might of Rothnog was broken, though the White Lady emerged triumphant from the civil strife.



The elves and the dwarves saw their chance and attacked the weakened kingdom, defeating it utterly. The Lady and her vassal Karoxfang, around 450 years ago, attempted to flee east with their defeated army, but they were trapped and overwhelmed at Thunder Pass as they tried to cross the Grand Peaks. But the leaders of Rothnog would not be eliminated so easily. Karoxfang and his picked warriors fought their way out of the trap and escaped in the only direction open to them—to the south. The White Lady used her powerful magic to escape as well and took herself into the city of Gorgwath which she had prepared in the east. The elves at this point founded the Satellite Cities of Emerain and Palahan in the eastern plains of Aeltal to protect against attacks from Gorgwath. And again, the elves and the dwarves knew peace—but alas, it was all too fleeting.

Dispossessed orcs, goblins, and other Dark Folk from all over the Hinterlands flocked to Karoxfang. Having had the luck to take prisoner a famous dwarven architect and engineer, the vile general used the dwarf's knowledge to build for himself in the south a nearly unassailable fortress city he called *Stor-gris*, or "New Start" in the uncouth tongue of orcs. Slowly and quietly he reestablished contact with the White Lady in Gorgwath and began anew the work of Rothnog. He claimed the wide lands surrounding *Stor-gris* and founded Dark Folk cities and castles there. Gradually, he increased his domain and strengthened his armies, this time brooking no disobedience, for he would not have *Stor-gris* repeat the mistakes of Rothnog. So skillfully did Karoxfang enact his plans that by the time the elves and dwarves perceived their peril and began to marshal their armies, it was too late. A deadly plague blew out of the east, and it killed disease-resistant elves and dwarves alike. Their armies decimated, there was little they could do as the forces of *Stor-gris* openly revealed themselves and laid claim to the Hinterlands, declaring that Karoxfang was the rightful king of all Siriand. About 70 years ago, *Stor-gris* gave them an ultimatum: submit to the rule of the orc-demon general... or die.

THE WAR OF IMMORTALS

This ultimatum began the War of Immortals, so called because the immortal elves had to face down the might of *Stor-gris*, though their numbers were lacking. The dwarves fought on the side of the elves, though they trusted to the impregnability of their fortress of Wawmar as often as they fielded armies. Both the forest of the elves and the volcano of the dwarves provided an initial advantage, but it wasn't enough to win a war, especially not one against such vicious opponents.

The War has run hot and cold for seven decades. The elves and dwarves have never faced with their full armies the full force of the dark kingdom, for they are heavily outnumbered. They have fought many skirmishes and engaged in much guerrilla action, but ever the armies of *Stor-gris* have pushed north, driving the elves from the Hinterlands and forcing them to withdraw closer and closer to their woodland kingdom of the Sarumvest.

In addition, Gorgwath has begun menacing the elves of Aeltal, and Dark Folk from the east have encroached on the Kingdom of Wawmar. It is becoming obvious that *Stor-gris* and Gorgwath are preparing for a massive assault—and indeed elven spies have reported a huge army gathering in *Stor-gris*. According to the spies, such a massive army has never yet been seen in the Siriand.

Things are not looking good for the races of the light. In fact, not since the first appearance of the Dark Folk have the good races been in such peril.

In desperation, the elves and dwarves have devised a plan. They will attempt to lure Karoxfang out of the Dark Folk kingdom and try to assassinate him. But the ambush at Thunder Pass failed to kill the terrible orc-demon, so many elves despair that such a ploy could succeed now. Plus, many dangerous missions must be accomplished before the plan can be enacted. The elves and dwarves are seeking brave and skilled operatives to assist them in their plan. Who will help them? The fate of their civilizations is at stake.

USING THIS BOOK

This book is a resource for Game Masters and players alike as they run and play in campaigns set during the Stor-gris era and the War of Immortals. For players, it contains new PC race options, new rules, altered spell lists, and information on the civilizations of the period. The depth of information in this text will allow players to create PCs that seem grounded in their actual civilizations and will give them the information that they need to immerse themselves in their roleplaying.

For Game Masters, it contains new magic items, details about the civilizations, important NPCs and locations, various factions, and a developed campaign outline that will guide players from low levels to high levels as they leave their mark on the War of Immortals epoch.

This is a self-contained book which, in concert with the core books that allow you to play the 5th edition of the world's most popular roleplaying game, is all you need to create an epic campaign your

players will never forget. This book also comes with two adventures that will help PCs learn more about the history of the mysterious White Lady. If you want to discover what becomes of the White Lady, check out *The World of Farland Campaign Setting*, the center piece of the trilogy of World of Farland game books, which also includes *The World of Farland Game Masters Handbook* and *The World of Farland Players Guide*. But you don't need these three books to run a game set in the time of the War of Immortals; you only need the text you're currently reading!

This book is made up primarily of exclusive content that has never appeared on the World of Farland website, but we encourage you to visit us there at www.farlandworld.com. You will find a great deal of information for your 5e game, including player and GM options and more free adventures. Furthermore, you can follow the World of Farland on twitter: [@Farland_World](https://twitter.com/Farland_World). Welcome to the community, and we wish you many happy hours of gaming in Farland!





CHAPTER 1: ELVEN CIVILIZATION

ELVEN SOCIETY

Elves rule the large forest-kingdom of the Sarumvest in the North and the land of Aeltal in the East. They call themselves *elhil* (singular *elhan*). Elves look generally like humans, but they are taller, fairer of face, and have beautiful speaking and singing voices. They are known for their leaf-shaped ears and their lush, silky hair, which is usually dark, although many have red, black, or blond hair, with some rare individuals displaying naturally silver hair. Baldness is unknown among elves. They are also resistant to many diseases that affect the other races. The individual elf is usually slimmer than most humans and is not given towards the same type of raw strength often found among men. This is not to say that elves can't be strong, but their race doesn't display the heavily muscled builds that sometimes appear among men, dwarves, and orcs.

The eyes of the *elhil* are exceedingly sharp, allowing them to see very well in shadow and even full darkness. They are also adroit at spotting things normally not noticed by other races, such as secret doors, creatures at a distance, and signs of approaching danger. Their ears are sharp as well, allowing them to notice sounds that other would not hear.

Elves do not sleep, as do other races. In place of a nightly rest, for half the night, they enter something that they call "The Reverie" or "The Trance." This is a type of waking hallucination during which they largely remain aware of their surroundings but in which they "walk in the halls of memory," reliving the many years of their nearly endless lives, thus keeping their memories sharp. *Elhil* are not completely insensate during the Reverie, but are less likely to notice danger. They rest for the remaining four hours of the night, but remain fully awake and alert. During

In the War of Immortals, the elven race is a major protagonist. If you want to play a character who comes from a long lineage of important folk, who has a connection with nature, or who has an innate nobility, consider an elf.

this rest time, they may stand guard or study spells or something similar but may undertake no strenuous activity. Their lack of a biological need to sleep, coupled with their innate magical nature, makes them resistant to soporific magical effects. Similarly, their innate magical nature and strong wills make them resistant to spells that would charm other races.

All elves speak *Altarian*, or "High Speech." In the continent of *Siriand*, *Altarian* is the common or trade tongue, known and used among all races save the Dark Folk, who may know it but refuse to use it as a rule.

ELVEN HISTORY AND PEOPLES

All *elhil* descend from the same race, the *Tinnurim*, or "those who love the Twilight." Legend has it that *Tal-Allustiel*, forsaking the creation of a Lesser God, instead created the race of elves as a helpmeet for him in the Ontological War that would be fought over *Núrion*, the planet upon which the continent of *Siriand* lies. A great host of elves he

made on the plane of Efferenus in his domain of Faerie, a realm of ancient, well-wrought stone halls and wood bowers, enclosed in a seemingly endless forest set on the edge of a twilight sea. From there, Tal-Allustiel commanded the first elves to journey to Siriand and taught them to build swan-ships, which they used to embark upon the Twilight Sea. They sailed for many months, before they reached the shores of the plane of Tanis, the Feywild, and sailed down the Great Fairy River. Like the Twilight Sea, Tanis too is a plane filled with soft, never-ending sunset, the lovely, golden light of sultry dusk. The elven host spent so long on this Twilight Voyage that they came to feel most at home in the gloaming and ever after held it to be a sacred time. Thus their name.

So long and arduous was this voyage that several times parts of the elven host grew weary, and loving Tanis, turned aside to dwell there. The elves who forsook the command of Tal-Allustiel and stayed in Tanis came to be called by their sundered kin the *Talundorim*, the “Dusk-Doomed” or the “Unfaithful,” and they were forgotten by the histories. Yet legend has it that these elves still dwell there.

The *Tinnurim* remained faithful and continued their voyage until they emerged out of the Twilight into a place in western Siriand. They continued their journey, seeking a place to dwell, and wandered for years. Finally, they discovered a large, beautiful lake in northern Siriand. The lake was located in the midst of a vast and lovely wood. The *Tinnurim* took the wood for their own to dwell in and built on its shores a great city, the first city ever constructed on Núrion, and they called it Alustel, the City of the God, for they dedicated it to their lord Tal-Allustiel.

The elves who chose to dwell in the great city called themselves the *Altarim*, the “High Folk.” The *Altarim* of the great city on the lake, the captains and officers of the ships of the Twilight Voyage, as well as their descendants, were creatures born of magic and



instilled with it during that voyage. They began to perfect their “art,” learning for the first time incantations, though at first they were not able to cast much more than the simplest of spells.

Most of the sailors and passengers on the Twilight Voyage, and their descendants, chose to dwell free beneath the dappled shadows cast by the leaves of the lindens and beaches of the great forest. They called themselves the *Aranarim*, the “Folk of the Wood.” They were not truly a separate people from the *Altarim*; rather, they were only different in the way they lived and that to which they gave their love, for they cared little for learning, crafting, and work. Rather, their hearts dwelt on song and nature, and the only magic they possessed was that which was naturally inside them.

Then the disaster occurred. Talkana Moondaughter, beloved paragon of the elves, disappeared into the wild. Not long after, the first orcs were sighted, and on the heels of orcs came other Dark Folk—kobolds, goblins, and hobgoblins. They were a plague, and while individually, they could not match an elf, especially not an elf who had

made the Twilight Journey (though few of those were left, for many had wearied of the bright sun and the ravages of time on Núríon and had sailed again into the Beyond in their Swan Boats), the numbers of the Dark Folk seemed limitless. Slowly they wore away the defenses of the beleaguered elves of the Great Wood, which they had come to call in their ever-changing language the Sarumvest.

But Tal-Allustiel had not forsaken his people, his helpmeets. He sent for them the Star-Fallen-to-Earth, the Holy Swan Alfain, to dwell on the lake by the City of the God. With the Swan came the true might of elven magic, for with its arrival the *Altarim* discovered that they could form their incantations into words of real power, spells that could summon great creative and destructive force. And then, with their art perfected, they beat back the dark hordes from the borders of their forests. But never again would the elves of Siriand know peace from the goblin-folk that ever came howling out of the fell East.

Those of the *Altarim* who dwelt closest to the Swan Alfain and tended it soon found that they absorbed some of its power. They came to shine with their own internal light, much as the holy bird itself did. They called themselves the *Galan*, the “Glimmer Folk,” and they discovered that within them abided a small part of the power of the Swan. They would become lords of the *Altarim* and of all elves.

Eventually, the disordered hordes of Dark Folk developed something of a culture. In due course, as if directed by some dark power, they skirted far to the south the elven forests and came to found their own kingdom, which they called Rothnog in their own foul tongue. Great was the evil caused by the folk of this dark land. Indeed, they destroyed the dwarven homeland and first dwarf city of Liferock. But eventually the Rothnogians fell to their own internal squabbling and feuding, and a civil war broke out. The Dark Folk spent their strength fighting each other, and the elves and their allies of necessity the dwarves capitalized on their weakness and destroyed Rothnog utterly. But it was not the end. The

The Sarumvest: "Beautiful Wood," in Elven, this vast forest is the ancestral home of the elves and the seat of their power. It contains their capital of Alustel as well as the majority of the elven population.

remnants of the Rothnogians, led by the orc-demon Karoxfang the Vile, escaped from the trap at the Battle of Thunder Pass and fled south to found the terrible Kingdom of *Stor-gris*, “New Start” in the Dark Speech of the goblin-folk. Karoxfang’s liege, the mysterious White Lady, also escaped Rothnog’s destruction and fled back into the east, into her terrible city of Gorgwath.

So now instead of one foe, the elves found themselves with two enemies they had to face on two fronts. They sent bands of elves into Aeltal, the fertile lands west of the Gaeramir, the Jeweled Gulf. There these elves founded the two Satellite Cities, Emerain and Palahan, and their purpose was to keep watch on the evil forces of the White Lady in her dreadful city of Gorgwath. These elves came to call themselves the *Telarim*, the “People of the Cities.”

ELF TRAITS

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 2.

Age. As an elf, once you reach physical maturity, which you achieve at about the same age as humans, you cease to age, making you effectively immortal. The burdens and cares of the world, however, gather on your shoulders until you eventually find it unbearable and seek to set sail and return to Faerie, the mystical land of Elvenhome that is said to lie

across the Seas. The elves call this phase in their life the Time of Weariness, when they grow tired of their countless years. They can resist this urge for some time, depending on their personal will power, but eventually it grows too burdensome. More about this later.

Alignment. Elves are almost always good, although they favor chaotic good and neutral good alignments in equal amounts. However, neutral and chaotic neutral elves are not unknown. You can choose whatever alignment you wish.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. Accustomed to twilight forests and the night sky, you have superior vision in dark and dim conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 feet as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Keen Senses. You have proficiency in the Perception skill.

Fey Ancestry. You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put you to sleep.

Trance. As an elf, you don't need to sleep. Instead, you meditate deeply, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. (The common word for such meditation is "trance.") While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that have become reflexive through years of practice. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

Size. Male elves stand between 5'8" and 6'3" (with some taller) and tend to weigh between 140 and 190 pounds. Female elves stand between 5'6" and 6'1" and weigh between 100 and 150 pounds. Your size is medium.

Names. Common elven names are detailed on the World of Farland website (www.farlandworld.com).

Languages. Elven, and one other language.

Subrace. Four varieties of elf exist: *Altarim*, *Galan*, *Aranarim*, and *Telarim*. Choose one.

ALTARIM

The *Altarim*, descendants of the captains and officers of the Twilight Voyage, are the High Elves of the city of Alustel. Magic is second-nature to these elhil, and almost all know several simple spells and incantations; many can wield magic that is far more powerful. The *Altarim* are a noble and cultured people who love poetry and artistry. Unlike their woodland brethren, the *Altarim* love working with metal and stone, crafting beautiful and mighty dwellings and possessions for themselves and to trade with other races. *Altarim* naming conventions involve appending the elf's house to the end of the name. For example, an elf may be called Olanis of House Solbar. The *Altarim* are equivalent to High Elves from the 5e SRD.

GALAN (GLIMMER ELVES)

On the shores of Lake Aelnin, the home of Alfain, dwells a subpopulation of the *Altarim* called the *Galan* or "Glimmer Elves," the ruling segment of all elven society. As tenders of the Holy Swan, other elves recognize them as rightful lords of the elhil. Living so close to the Swan of the elves, the *Galan* have basked in its magical energies for centuries, and it has changed them. They have grown more high-minded and proud than the typical elhil, and their bodies are suffused with a small bit of the magical energies of the holy bird. When they let this power shine forth, lesser creatures can't help but be awed. This holy energy also guides their decisions. Like the *Altarim*, *Galan* append their house to their name. Some of the most famous *Galan* houses are Aradune, Glorale, Haran, Mithaleil, Tifwing, and Valleron.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom or Charisma score increases by 1 (your choice).

Elf Weapon Training. You have proficiency with the longsword, shortsword, shortbow, and longbow.

Touched by the Swan. You have advantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws.

Let the Power Shine Forth. You can muster the light of the Holy Swan that shines within you to

help you influence others or to show you the path. If you chose to increase your Wisdom, you can gain advantage on a single Wisdom check of your choice; if you chose to increase your Charisma, you can gain advantage on a single Charisma check of your choice. You cannot Let the Power Shine Forth again until you have finished a short or long rest.

ARANARIM

The *Aranarim* are the elves who live free in loose communities in the Sarumvest. They tend to be considered “rural” by their *Altarim* cousins, but this is not necessarily a fair critique—they just have different concerns and a different way of life. They give their care to song and peace and growing things, spending their countless years walking beneath the shading trees of the Great Wood, hunting and gardening and reveling in nature. The wood elves, however, do recognize the authority of the *Galan* and *Altarim* in Alustel, and while they might sometimes be reluctant to do so, they obey the commands and summons of their lords when they must go to war. Indeed, they are fierce in defense of their homeland, and their sharp eyes and expert archery make it perilous indeed for any enemy to enter the eves of their woodlands. Unlike the *Altarim* and *Galan*, the *Aranarim* don't identify with or organize themselves into houses. When identifying themselves, they append a nickname, usually something they are fond of (for example, Mablung Redleaf), or a place of origin (for example, Beleg of Carvenrill). *Altarim* are equivalent to Wood Elves from the 5e SRD.



TELARIM (ELVES OF THE CITIES, OR FRONTIER ELVES)

After the fall of Rothnog, two bands of bold elves—soldiers, woodsmen and their families—agreed at the behest of the Elvenking to remove to the east and found two communities to keep a watch on the White Lady and her city of Gorgwath. These rough-and-tumble elves founded the settlements of Emerain and Palahan, which came to be called the Satellite Cities. Over the centuries, these communities flourished and became prosperous. The elves of Emerain became known for their horses and horsemanship, while the elves of Palahan grew famous as mariners. But ever the *Telarim* face threats from land and sea, and dwelling on the frontier, their lives are focused on security and war as opposed to art and culture. In terms of naming conventions, *Telarim* identify themselves by their sire or their city (for example, Duor son of Huor or Valandas of Palahan).

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by 1.

Frontier Elf Weapon Training. You have proficiency with the longsword, shortsword,



shortbow, and longbow. If you are from Emerain, you are also proficient with the lance. If you are from Palahan, you are also proficient with the net and trident.

Tough. You ignore the first level of exhaustion that you gain in any 24-hour period.

Talent of the City. If you are from Emerain, you are good with horses. You start with a riding horse and you have advantage on Wisdom (Handle Animal) checks that relate to handling horses. If you are from Palahan, you have an affinity with the sea. You are proficient with Navigator's Tools and water vehicles, you can swim, and you have advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks that relate to swimming.

CULTURE

If elven society is not entirely in its heyday (as it later would be after the eventual fall of Stor-gris, still a thousand years in the future), it is nonetheless in a golden age. It would not be entirely wrong to call elven society the most important and advanced culture on the planet. Elves were responsible for bringing knowledge of magic and how to shape it into the world, they first used language, they first built cities and works of art... and for better or worse, the elves know how important their culture is. While elven society is, as a whole, benevolent and wise, it is thus tinged with pride, even hubris. Elven history has been marred several times by rifts—the earliest split that between the elves who were unwilling to fulfill the command of Tal-Allustiel and the faithful elves who continued on to Núríon. One of the worst schisms in elven antiquity took place when the greatest elf house Al-Dustriel, star of the elves, left Alustel and inexplicably joined forces with the din-hordes of orcs, the new scourge on Siriand. The Kin Slayer Wars triggered by this rift lasted a century. Even now, political strife in Alustel, largely instigated by the proud and stiff-necked Lord Cirock of House Aradune, causes turmoil in the society of the Sarumvest.

Still, most elves strive to do and be good. The *Galan* of Alustel have spread throughout the Great Wood and rule the major elven cities of Calador, Loraglin, and Lannael. They direct their people in a fashion that is generally wise and far-sighted, and though their primary concern is the good of elves, they do care about the other free peoples of Siriand—dwarves and gnomes initially, but recently they have also started to view humans and halflings as



something other than animals, and thus they have begun to care about their fate as well.

In terms of economics, the wood elves of the Sarumvest hunt, gather, and farm, providing food in the form of venison, pork, fowl, fruit, and grain to the elven nation as a whole. The elves, having had endless years to learn agriculture and animal husbandry, produce more food than they need, and therefore they trade much of their food to the dwarf Kingdom of Wawmar in exchange for mithril and crafts, usually metal works.

Elven society is organized in a very loosely hierarchical fashion. In the Sarumvest, wood elves group themselves into bands called *jún*, each ruled by a *Lhanar*, a “Wise Person,” a patriarch or matriarch who has been selected as a leader by the band based on wisdom, craft skill, or natural charisma. Most wood elf bands owe their allegiance to a noble elven house based in Alustel or one of the other cities of the Sarumvest. The bands support the house of their liege lord by sending a tithe of food from each harvest as well as by providing warriors when called upon to do so. The wood elves believe that they owe the noble elf houses their fealty because legend has it that those houses were founded by the elves who captained the Swan Boats during the Twilight Voyage, seeing the elven race through immense danger to the safety of Siriand. That debt is one they take seriously. They also gain political representation through the noble houses in the capital of Alustel.

The noble houses of the elves each provide a lord or lady as a representative to the Meet-of-Elhil, the holy conclave of elves by which the Elvenking is elected, just as the Grand Admiral was elected by the ship captains during the Twilight Voyage. The noble houses see this democratically elected monarch as a representative of their god, and they obey his or her commands as best they can, although they are not hesitant to offer advice and even to voice opposition when they feel the circumstance demands. The noble houses do not machinate politically against their king, although they aren’t above vying with each other.

The Satellite Cities are called such because they are a satellite state to the larger nation of the Sarumvest, to which they owe their allegiance. The commands of the Elvenking are theoretically law in the Satellite Cities. In actuality, the two settlements manage nearly all of their own affairs. Each city is ruled by an *Altarim* lord who distinguished himself during the battles against Rothnog, specifically the Battle of Thunder Pass. For example, Palahan is ruled by Lord Singul of House Rolomin, who lost his arm from the elbow down at Thunder Pass, but fought bravely.

The elves of the Cities are quintessential frontier folk, living in almost complete self-sufficiency, producing most of their own crafts and goods. They look down a bit—unfairly—on the society of the Sarumvest, which they see as soft, but they nonetheless thirst for news, culture, and art from the Woodland Kingdom. The elves of the Satellite Cities have far more contact with humans than do the folk of the Sarumvest; in fact, two centuries ago, they left an indelible impact on human culture when they invited the leaders of the primitive human tribes to the north to visit their communities. Two of the four human tribes of Aelfar have sworn allegiance to the elves of the Satellite Cities, and in return for crafted goods, they provide crops and soldiers in time of need.

The Satellite Cities: The two cities of Emerain and Palahan, founded in the lightly wooded area called Aeltal as a guard and bulwark against the Wintervale. The cities are a satellite holding of the Sarumvest, hence their name.

CRAFTS

Since the construction of the mighty Swan Ships of the Twilight Voyage, the elves have been master craftsmen of tangible goods, as well as art and poems. Having naturally lovely, melodic voices and an innate sense for music, they are renowned singers and musicians. The other free races have been known to stand motionless for hours listening to elves singing in the distance. In terms of musical instruments, they prefer harps, flutes, and lyres, although they are proficient with most instruments. They do not, however, favor percussive instruments.

As much as they are known for music, they are also renowned for poetry and art. With their limitless patience and artistic sense, their poetry seems nearly magical, with their most skilled bards being able to literally conjure images in the mind's eye that are as striking as actual reality. Their greatest artists produce sculptures and paintings that bring to tears those who behold them. Their unlimited lifespan colors everything they do, and elven craftsmen are perfectionists. They will work for years and decades on a single line of poetry or an individual stroke of a painting. Unlike the dwarves, however, they don't work for its own sake or view work as an end in itself; rather, they work in order to ease their long years and fill their surroundings with beautiful things, for above other things, elves appreciate beauty, be it the natural beauty of a tree or a star, or the beauty of things they have produced with their own hands.

Finally, the elhil are famed craftsmen of physical objects, rivaling the best artisans of the dwarves in all but stonework. The *Altarim* especially are known for their skill with crafts. They produce clothing, tools, instruments, and other goods, and because their own lives are so long, they take care to make their goods durable and lasting; objects made by elves wear out at a rate that is slower than objects made by other races. Elven crafts can be distinguished from those of other races by their delicate appearance but intrinsic flexibility, durability, and toughness. Elves often imbue the most special of their creations with magic,

and thus they are known for their cloaks that hide the wearer, their boots that mask footfalls, and their shining lamps that kindle at sundown and extinguish at sunrise.

The *Altarim*, and to a lesser extent the *Telarim*, are expert smiths, producing swords, other weapons, and armors that are sought after by all races. The dwarves, however, have recently invented plate mail, and the elves cannot yet make such heavy and thick armor very well; nor do they desire to do so, relying instead on speed and agility in combat.

The *Aranarim* do not commonly work in stone or metal, but they are masters of woodcraft, creating fletches and bowers to dwell in, as well as portable objects made of carven wood, such as chairs, tables, utensils, and objects of art. As bowyers, they are unsurpassed. The bows and arrows of the *Aranarim* are treasured by elves and humans alike. The *Aranarim* also craft lovely poetry and song which, if not as subtle as that of the *Altarim*, rivals it in its pure, primordial magnificence.

The *Altarim* of Alustel and the *Telarim* of Palahan are master shipwrights, producing long-prowed vessels that skim the waves as if flying over them. Often, they shape these boats into the form of swans, although none of the craftsmen among the elhil is



able to produce ships as good as those that made the Twilight Voyage, for that level of skill was lost when the first elves on Núrión died or sailed back into the Twilight. No other people in Siriand possess the knowledge to construct seaworthy ships, although the fell Dark Folk of Gorgwath have captured shipwrights from Palahan and forced them to produce unlovely, dark vessels designed to ferry orcs across the Jeweled Gulf.

ELVEN LIFE

Elves do not grow weak or die of old age. They can be slain by violence and rarely by sickness, and they can waste away from despair, but they do not otherwise perish. Their limitless lifespan makes elven society far different from the culture of any other

race on Siriand. To put it simply, elves plan for the future. They know that work in which they invest today will pay off in the far future, and as such, much of what an elf does on a day-to-day basis seems pointless to those of shorter lifespans. But actually, the elf is simply planting the seeds of some distant harvest.

The gestation period of an elf is one year. Elven children are much like human children, albeit less rambunctious, and they grow at the same rate. Once they reach their full biological growth, they cease to age, although in the oldest elves the cares of the world can generally be read in the set of their visage and the look in their eyes.

Elves aren't considered full adults until they reach the age of 75 or thereabouts. At that point, their fate has become clear, and they usually pursue it actively, taking up a craft or seeking to start a family. Many but not all elves marry, though they reproduce rarely in relation to their lifespan. Most elven couples only have two to three children, although some rare few have more. Elves have the urge to reproduce in the first two centuries of their existence, and after that they give themselves to other pursuits, although infrequently an elf might marry and reproduce in the third or even fourth century of life. Elves almost always prefer other elves as partners, although humans are similar enough in appearance that elves might fall in love with and reproduce with a human. This has happened only a few times in recorded history, primarily because humans for most of their history have been uncivilized tribal brutes living in caves. Many elves are entirely asexual.

Elven women are equal to elven men, and though most choose a domestic life, no elf finds it unusual for a woman to enter the crafts, the church, politics, or even the military. Indeed, the Meet-of-Elhil has twice elected a woman queen of all elves, and the famous elven queen Celewen was responsible for defeating the rebellious House Al-Dustriel and ending the Kin Slayer Wars.

The daily life of an elf depends upon what folk he belongs to. The *Galan* usually spend their days in



thought and contemplation, or politics. The *Altarim* often spend their days in craft, poetry, or song. The time of the *Aranarim* is spent tending their crops or gardens, hunting and gathering, singing, or walking in their beloved woodlands, reveling in nature. The *Telarim* while away their hours producing the necessities of their lives, guarding the frontier, or following the love of their hearts—riding horses or sailing the waves.

Sometime around their fifth century, elves begin to grow tired of the ceaseless years in Núríon. This is known as the *Numasal*, the “Time of Weariness.” The more strife, violence, and destruction the elf has seen, the sooner the Time of Weariness arrives. The Wars with Rothnog made it such that many elves experienced the *Numasal* during their third century. However, elves of exceptional willpower can put off the *Numasal* until their tenth century or later, and *Galan* and *Altarim* tend to have their *Numasal* later than *Aranarim* and *Telarim*. When the weariness grows too great, elves seek to flee Núríon. Usually this takes the form of setting sail on a Swan Boat; they call this final journey the *Merrutenn*. Elves of the Sarumvest sail down the River Aelalrath, which flows from the Aelnin lake, while the *Telarim* depart from Palahan and head south in the Gaeramir Gulf. Oddly, no elven ship on this final journey ever seems to enter the Ocean Andunemen; if the vessels don’t come to grief, then one evening in the gloaming the elhil on the ship find themselves on a strange twilight river. Some of those elves out of fright or faintness of heart at this point disembark and join the *Talundorim* in the Feywild of Tanis, but those who are courageous can continue the journey eventually to reunite with their lord Tal-Allustiel—or so the legends say.

Elves who are not able to take the *Merrutenn* disappear into the wild and are not seen again. They either die bodily or fade away, or else find some other way to Tanis, where they then at least have the possibility of continuing their journey.

Those elves who are slain in battle, die from an accident, or those rare few who die from a disease are

generally buried. They are interred with simple, light clothing and a winding cloth only; no coffin is used. In place of a grave stone, elves plant a tree, a garden, or a patch of flowers. Some elves believe in reincarnation, but it is an open theological question.

RELIGION

Elves worship Tal-Allustiel, the “Beloved God of Twilight,” their lord and creator. Indeed, the elhil have a special relationship with their god, for the very first elves beheld his face, and every elf has at least the theoretical possibility of meeting him again while still alive. Elven priests are called *Aluar*, “People of the God,” and elven druids are termed *Lirevest*, “Hearts of the Forest.” Elven druids are nearly indistinguishable from elven priests and clerics. All elves revere nature. Elven priests work to preserve the forests and nature but are more focused on ministering to the elven peoples and elven culture. They encourage art, facilitate worship, and serve as healers, among other things. Elven priests preside over weddings, burials, and other special events in an elf’s life, and elven priests are often consulted for general advice. Elven priests tend to dress the same as other elves and are usually only recognizable by their holy symbol of Tal-Allustiel, which they display proudly; they may wear the symbol as an amulet or paint it on a shield or other accoutrement.

Elven druids are simply elven priests who have taken more literally the command of Tal-Allustiel to tend to the forest. They revere nature and aid it, seeing it as holy to Tal-Allustiel. They often maintain sacred groves, called *Hathratuar*; these groves are used by clerics of Tal-Allustiel to hold services, with the blessing of the *Lirevest*. In 9770 E.R., the unofficial High Priest of Tal-Allustiel is the Lady Rilia of House Glorale, sister to the Elvenking. The unofficial High *Lirevest* is Tharien of House Haran. They share the great holy glade *Gonuial* in Alustel; Tharien tends the glade year-round while Rilia tends to the king and the residents of the city.

Greater God	Elven Name
Heshtail the Merciful	Hidriliel, "Lesser God of Light"
Bestra, Lady of Goodness	Bralatariel, "Lady of Gardens"
Kantor the Crusader	Raralt, "Strong War God"
Neltak, Lord of Law	Holterran, "Lord of Law"
Dekk, Lord of Balance	Herralhan, "Lord of Knowledge"
Bel, Lord Thief	Gandammar, "Tricky Traveler"
Vornoth, the Dark Walker	Vornoth is the elven name

Lesser God	Elven Name
Reeanan the Bright	Braladriel, "Lady of Light"
Calbran, Lord of Luck	Herranilheer, "Lord of Luck"
Thranton, Lord of Lightning	Lirarathar, "Elf of Storms"
Aknor the True	Balherran, "Lord of Skill"
Janora, Goddess of Fate	Taladwen, "Lady of Doom (Fate)"
Flamgart, Fire God	Narlherran, "Lord of Fire"
Grlarshh, Death God	Maustar, "Personage of Death"







40 meters



ALUSTEL

THE CITY OF ALUSTEL

POINTS OF INTEREST (CIRCA 9770 E.R., STOR-GRIS ERA)

- 1 The *Hatarlorn*, “North Garden”
- 2 The *Alarnarl*, “Glorious Citadel,” hold of the Elvenking. South is the Pool of Alfain
- 3 *Olt Branu*, “Strong bridge,” guarded approach to the *Ladhelorn*, the “North District”
- 4 The *Traeralann*, “Halls of Art,” hold of the gathering of artists
- 5 The *Gonuial*, “Stone Trees,” temple of the high priest and site of the Meet-of-Elhil
- 6 Ruin of House Al-Dustriel
- 7 *Rann Bralu*, “Street of Noble Ladies,” where dwell the *Galan*
- 8 The *Hatarul*, “Garden Hill”
- 9 The *Artarul*, “Flowered Hills”
- 10 *Rann Herran*, “Street of Noble Lords,” where dwell the *Galan*
- 11 The *Lannolt*, “Halls of Strength,” where are quartered the Elvenking’s military forces
- 12 The *Teroth*, “Watch Towers,” that guard the approach to Holy Alfain
- 13 The *Andhrim*, “Pool of Stars”
- 14 The *Balroth*, “Tower of Craft,” hold of the gathering of mages
- 15 The *Alutanhath*, Temple to the “Lesser Elven Gods”
- 16 *Branu Allun*, “West Bridge,” south of which is the *Ladhallun*, “West District”
- 17 The *Alluhatar*, “West Garden,” wherein is the famous Statue of Queen Celewen
- 18 *Lannevail*, “Hall of Song,” amphitheater
- 19 The *Finroth*, the six red towers of the *Altarim*, where are the counsel of the High Elves, who send recommendations to the Elvenking
- 20 The *Lannegon*, “Halls of Stone,” the hold of the gathering of sculptors and stone masons
- 21 The *Traerwen*, “School of Painters,” hold of the gathering of artists
- 22 The *Ithiloth*, “Tower of Memory,” hold of the

gathering of historians

- 23 The *Ard Arned*, The Great Library, near the *Alrunin*, “East Lake,” in the *Ladhalrun*, “East District”
- 24 The *Rann Balar*, Street of Craftsfolk, adjacent to the Great Market
- 25 South Docks, near the *Thronwen*, “Fish School,” hold of the gathering of fishermen

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CITY

Who Rules: Elvenking Dalos of House Glorale, king of the Sarumvest and the Satellite Cities.

Other Power Centers: High Priestess Lady Rilia of House Glorale, sister to the King; Lord Cirock of House Aradune, lord of the most politically powerful elven house; Selthala Theladwen, high mage of the Tower of Craft; The gathering of craft-folk, guild of craftsmen; Galdin Palantar, head of the gathering of artists, painters, and singers; The Counsel of the *Altarim*, who represent the interests of the *Altarim* to the Elvenking.

Population: About 12,000 elves and a few half-elves.

Major Products: Alustel’s main export is culture: songs, poems, art, religious pronouncements, statuary, and trends. It also exports knowledge-related products: spells, magical discoveries, and books. Its physical products are paltry in comparison, although it does export fish, sculptures, and metal goods. In this regard, it imports far more than it exports.

Armed Forces: The Elvenking’s guard, headed by Lord Harlin of House Meliane, consists of 50 elite elven warriors and 2 griffon riders. Overgeneral Dalanuil of House Aradune, who oversees the war in the Hinterlands, keeps 25 armed warriors at the *Teroth*, while Lord Yeltinir of House Haran, high captain responsible for defense of the Sarumvest,

bivouacs about 25 troops at the *Branu Allun* and 25 troops at the *Olt Branu*. In times of trouble, around 1500 elves, veterans of the skirmishes against Rothnog and Stor-gris, would willingly take up arms.

The City: The fabled Alustel (“City of the God”) is nestled deep in the vast Sarumvest, the woodland kingdom of the elves, and serves as its capital. The city is surrounded by the *Rhanleg*, a masterfully crafted wall of thorns that blends into the forest and that does nothing to break up the beauty of the landscape. Wood elves dwell in their tree top fletches for miles around the city but are not truly considered residents of Alustel, as they live outside the *Rhanleg* and thus the city boundaries. The city itself is built at the northern edge of the great Lake Aelnin, and the elves of Alustel make heavy use of beautifully crafted boats to connect the two sides of the city split by the lake. Alustel holds many gardens and glades of surpassing beauty.

The houses of Alustel are a mix of bowers (homes crafted patiently from trees, made by skillfully planting and tending them as they grow until they interlace overhead to form a watertight ceiling), fletches (homes built in trees), and stone halls. For its beauty, the stonework of Alustel surpasses all masonry save that of Wawmar itself. The elves prefer to build and work in a hard white stone found in the Erethel Mountains to the East. They carve this white rock into graceful and sweeping shapes, making their buildings, though made of stone, appear light, airy, and open. The streets are crafted from a gold-tinted stone mined from the Erelom Mountains to the west. Those streets are lined with beeches, elms, and linden trees, carefully tended so that they grow tall and strong. From the boughs of these trees hang gold and silver lamps that magically enkindle at the fall of twilight, the most beloved time of the elves.

East of the city are lovely but rugged hills, covered by beautiful wildflowers in the summer and providing a glorious perch from which to survey Alustel. Looking out over the city from these hills, several landmarks would become apparent: the

Eastern District, at the foot of the flowered hills, is dominated by another, smaller, hill. Atop this hill sits the *Alutanhath*, an open-air temple with a mirror-like marble floor and shining white pillars, one for each “lesser elven god.” In the middle of Lake Aelnin are three islands. Nearest to the eastern side is the island of the *Ithiloth*, a blue stone tower that houses the historians of the elves and their great libraries.

Immediately across from that spire is the island-hold called *Traerwen*, the compound where the artists revered among the elves meet. The third island, at the northernmost end of the lake, holds the great tower of the mages, the *Balroth*, with its metallic roof and intricate, rune-covered walls. The West District is dominated by the *Finroth*, the six red, star-shaped towers of the High Elves, the *Altarim* of the city. A five-member council represents their interests; each elected council member is housed in one of the outer towers, and all the members meet in the middle tower, the *Toroth*, to hear grievances or concerns to take to the Elvenking.

The North District is marked by three hills. Atop the first hill is the *Andhrim*, the beloved pool of the elves in which shine the constellations of the sky whether one looks into it in night or day. The second hill is the sacred temple of the elves, with the *Gonuial* at its crown, a circle of wonderfully crafted stone trees surrounding a slab of rock carved with the mark of the great elven god Tal-Allustiel. The third hill holds the mighty *Alarnarl*, the fortress of the Elvenking, a stronghold of glorious, dark stone with three white towers extending from its sides and reaching toward the sky.

The *Alarnarl* guards the holiest of the holies, the Pool of Alfain, the Sacred Swan of the Elves and what they believe is the source of their magic. Looking upon the white Swan is like looking at a star fallen to earth, for as it glides in its sacred pool it shines with a radiance that is dazzling. This powerful glimmer extends for a great distance and affects those who dwell nearest to the Swan. The nobles of Alustel, whose homes front the pool of Alfain, became

changed over the passing of centuries until the other elves of the city took to calling them the *Galan*, those who gleam with the light of the Swan.

Many beautiful songs, powerful heroes, lovely maidens, and breathtaking art came from Alustel, and even dwarves and gnomes, folk who will never see the city, speak of its beauty and importance. As the intellectual center of the known world, the knowledge, art, and culture of the City of the God influences all of the cultures of the great continent.

FACTIONS IN THE SARUMVEST

The Interventionists: This faction is headed by Lord Curuval of House Tifwing; Galdin Palantar of House Mithaleil, a noble of Alustel and perhaps the most famous elven bard; and Lord Yeltinir of House Haran, high captain responsible for defense of the Sarumvest itself. They argue that when it comes to the war with Stor-gris, the elves need to ally with the dwarves and gnomes. They maintain that the best course of action is to work together with the other races to go on the attack, take the field against the

forces of Stor-gris, and eliminate the threat before the dark army becomes entrenched and unbeatable.

The Isolationists: The isolationist faction is mainly headed by Lord Cirock of House Aradune, a stiff-necked, powerful, and amoral noble, cousin to Elvenking Dalos of House Glorale. Lord Cirock is politically perhaps the single most powerful noble in Alustel, besides the Elvenking himself. Lord Cirock's main ally is also a powerful one: Overgeneral Dalanuil of House Aradune, who oversees the war in the Hinterlands. They want to fortify the Sarumvest and leave the dwarves and gnomes to their fate. Part of their motivation for this stance is strategic: they believe that the elven forest, guarded by its skilled defenders, is essentially unbreachable, and that an enemy would have to pay a cost it would deem too high to invade the elven lands. But an even larger part is racist: they simply feel that elves are superior to other races and that any drop of elven blood spilled in defense of another race is an unacceptable loss. The interventionist faction recognizes this motivation and views it as ignoble. Thus the flames of their rivalry are fanned further.



CHAPTER 2: DWARVEN CIVILIZATION

DWARVEN SOCIETY

Dwarves are shorter than humans, averaging about 4 ½ feet tall, but they are every bit as strong. They can endure much hardship, work for hours without tiring, march long miles heavily laden, and fight unwaveringly. They also naturally resist poisons and toxins. Dwarves call themselves *khazak*; elves call them *nowgol*. At this stage in their history, only one dwarven kingdom exists: Wawmar in the Northeast. The kingdom consists of the fortress of Wawmar itself plus three large towns and multiple small villages. Culturally, dwarves divide themselves into two groups: Kibil-Gunders, dwarves who dwell in the fortress of Wawmar, and Shieldfolk, dwarves who dwell in the towns and communities and “shield” the fortress from attack.

DWARF TRAITS

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by 2.

Age. As a dwarf, you mature slightly later than humans and are considered young until you are 50. You live about 350 years.

Alignment. Most dwarves are lawful, and they tend toward good as well, although neutral and rarely even evil dwarves have been reported. You can choose whatever alignment you wish.

Size. A Kibil-Gunder is typically around 4’6” to 4’10” tall and weighs around 150 to 170 pounds. A Shieldfolk typically stand 4 to 4’6” tall and weigh about 150 to 160 pounds. Females are essentially the same height as the males, although they tend to weigh slightly less. Your size is medium.

In the War of Immortals, the dwarven race is the second major protagonist. If you want to play a character who fights hard, works hard, or has a strong sense of fidelity to his home and culture, consider playing a dwarf.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 25 feet. Your speed is not reduced by wearing heavy armor.

Darkvision. Accustomed to life underground, you have superior vision in dark and dim conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can’t discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Dwarven Resilience. You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage.

Dwarven Combat Training. You have proficiency with the battleaxe, handaxe, light hammer, and warhammer.

Tool Proficiency. You gain proficiency with the artisan’s tools of your choice: smith’s tools, brewer’s supplies, or mason’s tools.

Names. Common dwarven names are detailed on the World of Farland website (www.farlandworld.com).

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Common (Altarian) and Dwarven.

Subrace. There are two main dwarf subraces: Kibil-Gunders and Shield Folk. Choose one.



KIBIL-GUNDERS

Wawmar is the name the elves call the dwarven fortress; the dwarves themselves call it Kibul-Gund, and dwarves who were born in the fortress call themselves Kibul-Gunders or simply Gunders. Having grown up close to an active volcano, they tend to be resistant to heat. They are slightly taller and slimmer than dwarves not born in Wawmar, but they are quite strong. Their hair shades are white, silver, brown, or red. Rarely, it is even blond. They have light skin. They treasure their lush beards and tend to braid or plait them in intricate ways. Female Gunders aren't often able to grow beards, and usually have hairless faces.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 1.

Dwarven Armor Training. You have proficiency with light and medium armor.

Stonecunning. Whenever you make an Intelligence (History) check related to the origin of stonework, you are considered proficient in the History skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

Heat Resistance. You have advantage on saving throws made against any source that would deal you fire damage, and you have advantage on Constitution checks that deal with natural heat.

SHIELDFOLK

Dwelling in the towns and communities outside of Wawmar, these dwarves are used to a rugged, hilly environment. They are also accustomed to vigilance and have developed keen senses, deep intuition, and remarkable resilience. Their hair is generally black, gray, or brown. Often they are bald, although their beards remain lush throughout their life. They tend to leave their beards unbraided. Shieldfolk women also often have slight beards. Shieldfolk skin is tan, ruddy, or swarthy.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Dwarven Toughness. Your hit point maximum increases by 1, and it increases by 1 every time you gain a level.

Perceptive and Intuitive. You are proficient with either the Insight skill or the Perception skill (your choice).

WAWMAR

Kibil-Gund, or Wawmar as it is generally known, is the greatest legendary Dwarfhold. It is known for its perfectly carved tunnels, its magnificent halls, its soaring archways, and its grand vistas. Built in an extinct volcano, Wawmar is both a mighty fortress and a wonder of engineering and architecture. Constructed at the behest of King Mar I and designed by the famous dwarven architect Agralin, Wawmar stood for untold millennia as the center of all things dwarven, especially their economy. Although it was originally built near the elven capital city of Alustel, the precious metals of the mountain and the fine craftsmanship of the dwarves who lived therein insured that Wawmar would long remain a hub of trade.

The fortress city also became the center of dwarven culture after the fall of the first dwarfhold Liferock. As such, every dwarven trend in thought originated here and spread to all the other dwarf cities later to be founded on the continent. Wawmar was home to one of the few dwarf philosophers, the sapient Nulin, who originated the idea that the love of work is the differentiating characteristic between the humanoid and bestial races. Advances in dwarven technology invariably began at Wawmar. The famous steam-powered implements of the dwarves were also invented in the volcano city. Legend even mentions strange steam-forged automatons created in Wawmar that the dwarves used as soldiers in ancient wars; if this is true, these creations seem to be lost to the mists of time.

Wawmar was chosen for its eminent defensibility, and as Stor-gris menaces from the south and the Wintervale encroaches from the east, the fortress has thus far stood strong and weathered every attack thrown against it. The dwarves of Wawmar are ever safe behind her great walls, yet they are able to sally forth and attack their enemies almost at will—or they have been so far, but a mighty threat is growing in the south.

Wawmar also refers to a kingdom, which consists of three major towns and multiple villages in the region around the fortress. The kingdom is very industrious, and each town produces valuable resources and commodities. The dwarves who live outside the Volcano-fortress call themselves Shieldfolk, seeing their role as warning and defending the heart of dwarvendom; they take pride in this role.

HISTORY

Wawmar's history is nearly synonymous with the history of the World of Farland. Only the elves have a longer continuous history. The dwarves reckon time differently than the other races, recording it since the foundation of their first hold Liferock, but for ease of use, the dates here will be given in the common Elven Reckoning.

Wawmar, or Kibil-Gund, was founded in the year 8305 E.R., after King Mar I, in consultation with Agralin the great engineer, determined the necessity for a defensible fortress. The war with Rothnog was raging, and it was becoming more and more apparent that a stronghold was needed, for the war only promised to get more fierce. Once Agralin decided on a proper location, the main construction was completed in an astounding four years, although minor maintenance, expansion, and mining



continued for the remainder of the time that the dwarves occupied Wawmar. The discovery of a lethal red dragon already making the site its home set back construction briefly, and cost many dwarves their lives, but the industrious khazak quickly got back on schedule after the dragon was slain. Later, several dwarven towns, most devoted to mining the rich ores nearby, sprung up around the focal point of the great fortress, and Kibil-Gund for several centuries ruled a large domain.

Because Wawmar was designed first and foremost for defense, its founding officially marked the period that dwarf historians came to call the Age of Fortification. This era, spanning the vast majority of Wawmar's history, was marked by intense battles and strife. The first notable war that the dwarves engaged in was the great battle against the early orc kingdom of Rothnog, in 8605 E.R., but this conflict

was small compared to the struggle that was to follow. The remnants of the defeated nation of Rothnog headed south and established the even stronger nation of Stor-gris in 9332 E.R. Wawmar and Stor-gris immediately became fierce enemies, and for many centuries, the two monumental nations contended against each other, at times making treaties of temporary peace and at other times engaging in hot bloodshed. Stor-gris is the worst enemy that Wawmar ever faced, and the war is getting bloodier.

STRUCTURE

The dwarf community had decided it would be advantageous to build a singular, distinctive city that would be an impressive, lasting monument to their ingenuity and work ethic, as well as to be a highly defensible structure capable of instilling the feeling of oneness and family within the clan hierarchy. A dormant volcano was chosen, as it offered the advantage of already being mostly constructed as well as having geometrical simplicity.

Initially, the dwarf population had to scout out the land for an extinct volcano. The volcano had to be fairly steep along the outsoles to enable the construction of additional secondary exit passageways. It was necessary to use one that was still slightly warm at the bottom of the hole, as the heat could be funneled and used to perform various tasks and would maintain at least a livable temperature all year round. It was important that the volcano have a very steep inner cone, preferably 10 to 20 feet of splay per 100 feet of elevation, to enable cutting access ways into the side.

The project team of dwarves from the famous engineer Agralin's company scouted the countryside for the ideal location for several years. It was believed that a colder environment would be more suitable for everyday life, since the interior of the cone would already be subject to a great amount of heat from the magma lying below the floor. At first, not much could



be expected in the way of available volume for the construction of adits and drifts, since the requirements for steep inner and outer sides restricted the available thickness of the cone. The initial plans only envisioned several thousand dwarves as being comfortably housed within its walls. A dome volcano would not have the impressive profile of the cone, but would house many more.

Finally, after a few years of searching, a suitable structure was found in the north, in the middle of the Erethel Mountains. Its exterior was of the proper shape, but was only 200 feet high from the base to the top of the cone. Upon climbing it, however, the volcano was discovered to be well over a thousand feet deep to the bottom. The inner sides were steep and very regular, only slightly distorted from a perfect circle. It appeared to be constructed mostly of columnar basalt, an impressive, foreboding surface. The columnar surface was expected to cause some problems with construction, however, as the columns would tend to form natural vertical planes of weakness, and care would have to be taken to prevent excessive undermining and subsequent rapid failure. It was believed to be preventable with the proper design, and the scouting team met with the rest of the teams at a predetermined location to debrief the rest.

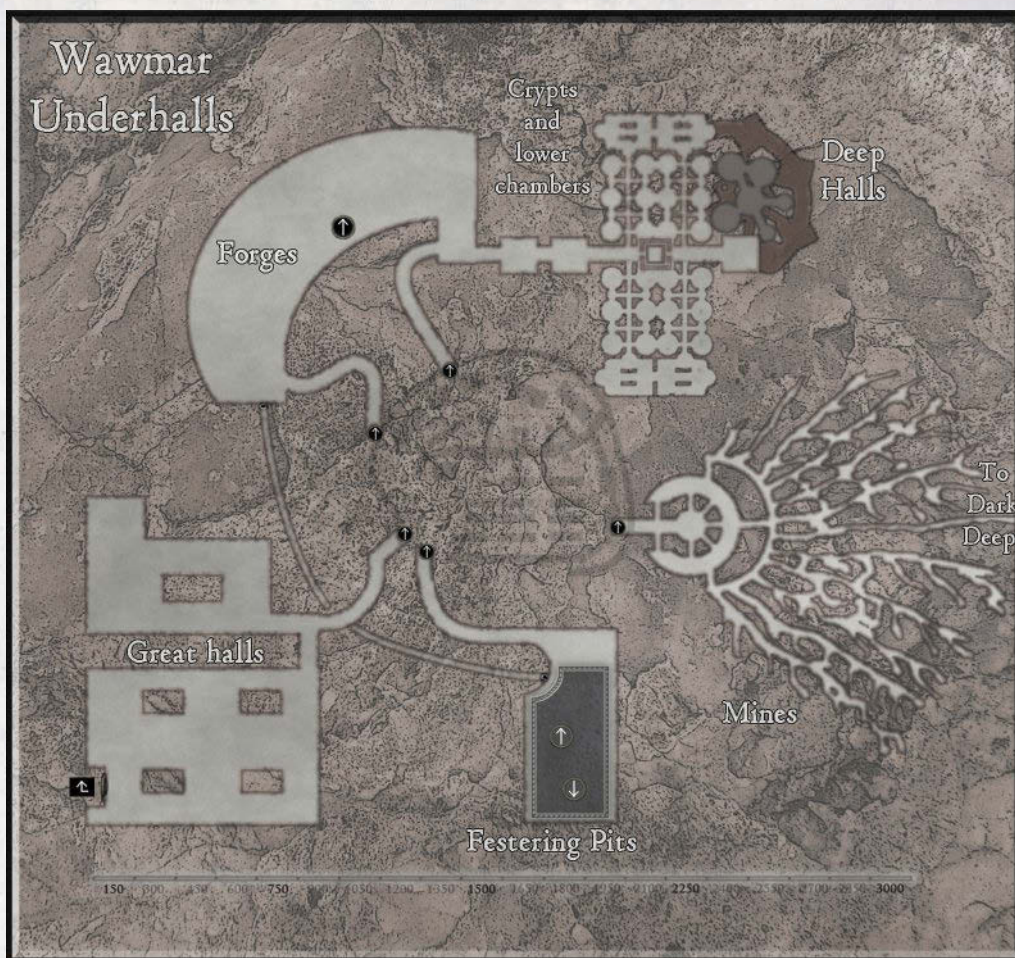
Agralin was wary of the basalt at first but had a plan for the housing units that should prevent structural problems. The teams ventured out to inspect the find. Once he arrived, Agralin was impressed with the stature of the mountain. It did not soar over the rest of the surrounding peaks, but the starkness of its shape made a statement of security, industriousness and prestige for which he was looking. He proceeded to detail the plans, work schedule, manpower requirements, and costs in a detailed report, which he presented to the Clan and King Mar I. After much haggling, their trust in the fabled fortress-builder won out and plans began to proceed.



LAYOUT OF WAWMAR

Wawmar is made up of ascending and descending levels or layers. The lowest layer is the Underhalls. This subterranean complex consists of the Festering Pits, which contains the sewage generated by the inhabitants; the Great Halls, the Throne Room, Governing Halls, and personal chambers of the King and his staff; the Smithing Forges, wherein the most important work of Wawmar is completed; the Crypts and Lower Chambers, where the kings of old are interned in cairns and where great treasures are stored; the Deep Halls, where prisoners are kept and where locked vaults protect ancient secrets; and the mines, where the khazak delve for mithril and gems. This last area contains a well-guarded, gated passage to the Dark Deeps; few dwarves ever pass this way.

The next level up is the Floor Level. This area is where the commerce of Wawmar is conducted. It contains the large merchant and blacksmith "city," a collection of permanent stalls and shops. It also contains warehousing, stables, and beautiful gardens replete with fountains. This level is dominated by the King's Walk, an arching central ramp that ascends to the Cathedral of Khuldul and which also provides access to the Great Ramp that one can use to access



all of the levels of Wawmar.

Level 1 sits above the Floor Level. It contains the mansion-like dwellings of important personages, as well as a barracks to house the standing armed forces of the dwarf citadel. The barracks intersects the Great Ramp at several different locations, a tactical decision made to allow surprise and to allow the surrounding and isolation of invaders. Two tactical tunnels also lead from the barracks to the two gates on Level 1.5 and allow soldiers to enter the entrance tunnels from above to again surround and surprise attackers. Another tunnel runs from the barracks to the outside, an exit chute, and it and the tactical tunnel to the south entrance are both equipped with a stone plug system to quickly and semi-permanently close these tunnels. Finally, Level 1 contains an elevator mechanism to allow the raising and lowering of cargo to the Floor Level.

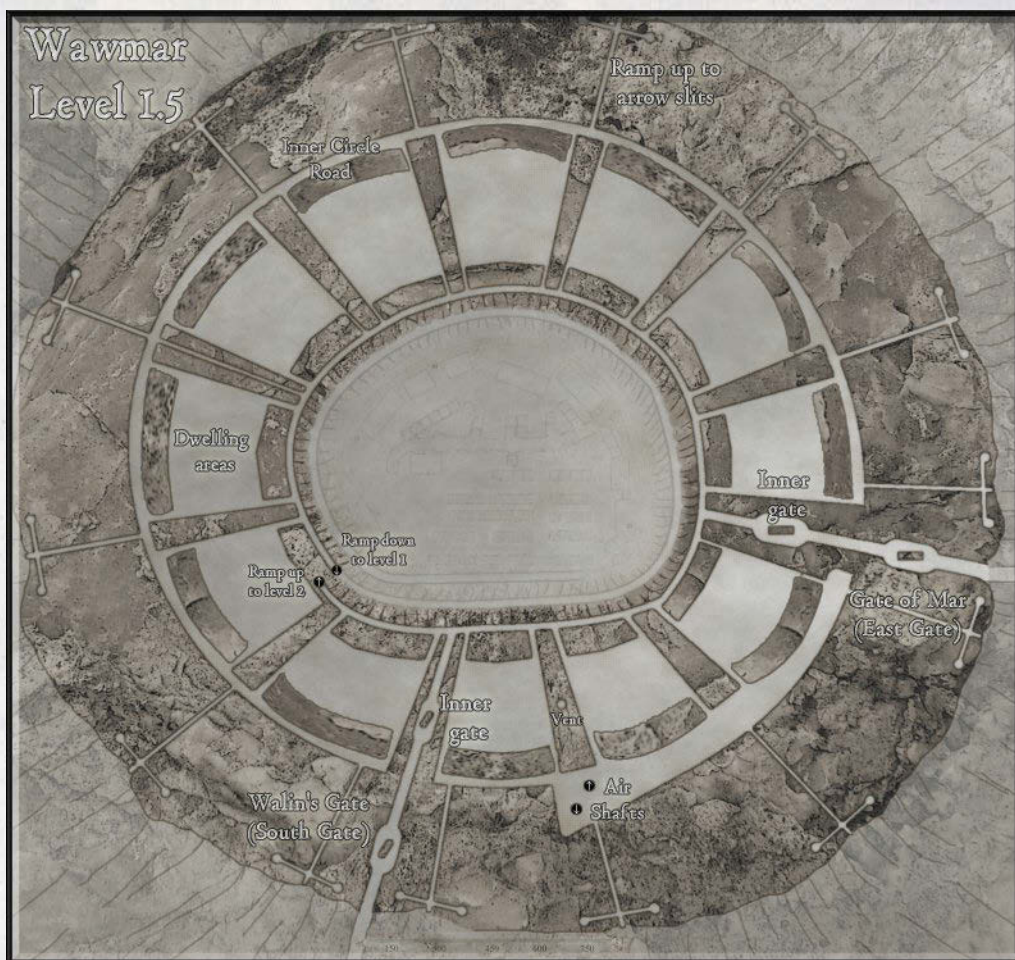
One enters Wawmar on Level 1.5, which contains

two gates: Walin's Gate, also called the South Gate, or the Main Gate; and Mar's Gate, also called the East Gate. Both entrances are protected by massive external and internal doors, which can be opened and closed easily but, once closed, are nearly impenetrable. The passages into the volcano consist of wondrously crafted hallways containing mechanical traps and murder holes to protect the fortress. The rest of this level consists of dwelling blocks.

The next level up is Level 2. Level 2 is made up entirely of dwelling blocks, full of individual housing units. Each dwelling block consists of multiple streets and is a community unto itself, complete with public bathrooms, shops and a tavern, a chapel, and a communal meeting area. Dwarves take pride in their block, and a block is often made up of one clan.

Level 2.5 contains more dwelling units, but as the most central level of Wawmar, it also consists of two





schools and a university, where dwarven scholars labor to understand the mysteries of the world.

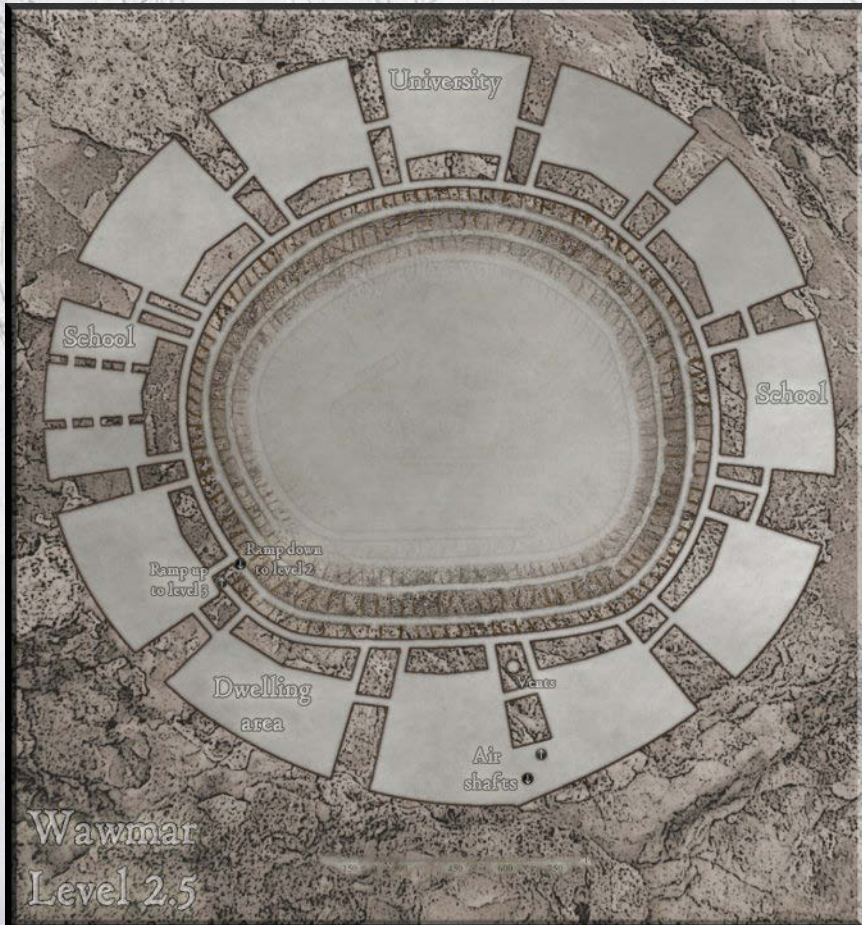
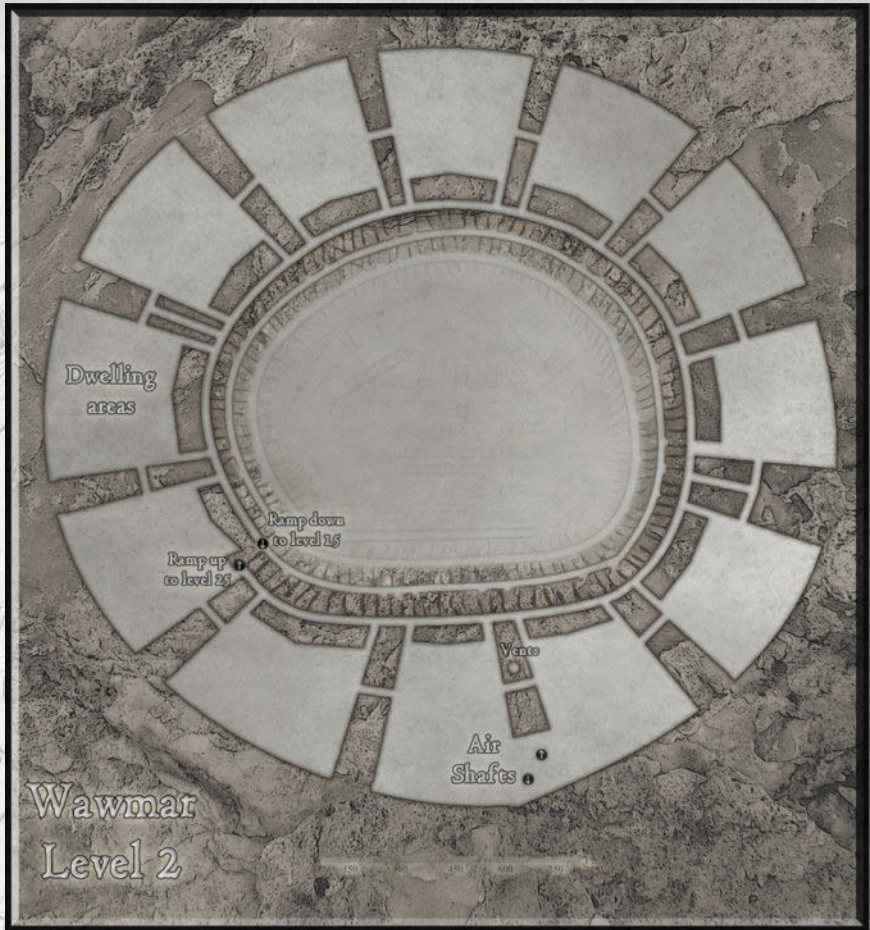
Level 3, like Level 2, consists entirely of dwelling blocks. Smaller and draftier, the less economically successful dwarves make their home on this level. This level also offers shelter to the rare criminal elements in Wawmar.

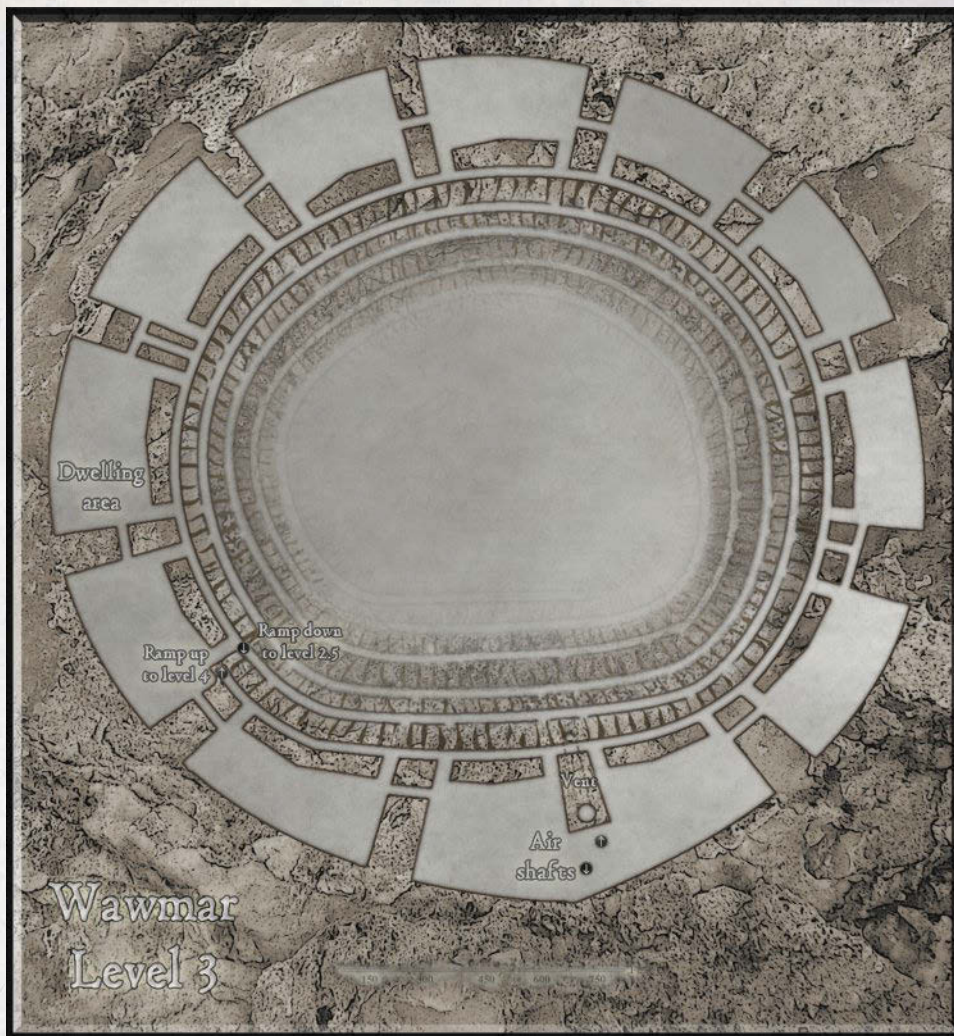
Level 4, the highest level, contains the other industries of Wawmar. A hospital, shop areas for silver and gold smithing, paper working, wood working, leather working, clothing and textiles, mushroom farming, and a brewery call this level home. A fan/turbine, for moving air through the workings of the entire fortress, is situated on this level. A large community hall can also be found on Level 4. This level is always busy with the industrial dwarves moving to and fro.

MILITARY AND DEFENSE

The forces of Wawmar, like all dwarves, are quick to fight when their home is threatened or when they feel their honor has been insulted, and the khazak of Kibul-Gund have perfected the art of Dwarven warfare. At all times, a battalion of 500 dwarven warriors is within a horn blast, and in times of war, several thousand dwarves can quickly take up arms. Moreover, the dwarves of the great volcano can call on their kin in the nearby towns to provide soldiers, and two of the human tribes of Aelfrand—the two nearest to Wawmar—owe the dwarves fealty and will provide human soldiers when called upon to do so. Thus they can, given enough time, field an army of close to 10,000 soldiers.

Their primary advantage in any fight, however, is their home, the great fortress of Wawmar, and they





use it to its fullest extent. When from the vantage point of the high walls of the volcano they spot an approaching army, they take their time and adjudge the strength of the enemy. If they decide that the enemy is of a manageable size, they sally forth in force and attack their foes in typical dwarven fashion, softening them up with volleys of axes and crossbows. Then they employ their heavy infantry to drive toward the center of the enemy formation, attempting to cleave into the heart of the opposing army and destroy their leadership with surgical precision. During this action, flank and rear guard units protect the heavy infantry, making certain that the frontal assault is not disrupted. These units are supported in their defensive mission by dwarven cavalry mounted on dire boars. These highly mobile troops, called Tuskers, are designed to counteract the

enemy worg riders.

If it is determined that the enemy army is too large, the dwarves of Wawmar typically march out with a small regiment of lightly armed axemen supported by Tuskers, engage the enemy, and attempt to fight a retreating action in order to draw the enemy into range of the siege engines (primarily ballistae and steam weapons) and the crossbowmen firing from hidden arrow slits. The strategy thenceforth is simply to stay inside the mighty fortress and allow the enemy to break themselves on the massive gates, wasting their manpower as they do so. When the enemy, weary and disheartened, finally retreats, the same shock troopers and Tuskers emerge again to punish the foes before disappearing once more behind the gates. If any of the outer gates are breached (which has not yet happened), the

dwarves would simply retire behind the inner gates, which are nearly as strong as the outer gates. On the way, however, they would engage the seldom-used mechanical traps, including deep pits, crushing blocks of stone, and sharp wall-spikes that guard the approach to the crater. They would also fire on the invaders from hidden murder holes and arrow slits. Thus, the khazak would make the enemy pay dearly with his own blood for every step he took inside the fortress.

In this manner the dwarves of Wawmar have been able to weather several small sieges by the forces of Stor-gris. Indeed, a huge stock of excess non-perishable food is kept in the lower works, and rumors of a hidden "King's Exit" mean that Wawmar can potentially withstand a very long siege. In fact,

this is a good thing, because rumor has it that it may soon be called upon to do so. Spies report that Stor-gris is massing an army of a size never before seen in Siriand.

ECONOMY

It was the skill of the dwarven surveyors which led the dwarves to Wawmar. They realized that the volcano would be the perfect spot to establish a community, and they also conjectured that fine ores could be located near the intense heat of the defunct Wawmar volcano. Later inspection by dwarven sappers confirmed that there were indeed deposits of several types of metals that could be easily mined.



These deposits were quickly brought to the attention of dwarven miners, who immediately began excavating the fine metals, establishing the planned community within the very volcano of Wawmar itself.

It was not long after the dwarven miners began excavation of the great city that they encountered that which they did not expect: a slumbering dragon, a great red known as Axxytklysstykor. But dwarven might prevailed against the wyrm in the form of a small group of heroes who struck down the beast outside the volcano.

Despite the popular belief that mithril was discovered immediately after the dragon was defeated, it wasn't actually found until nearly a century after the first mining expedition began in Wawmar. Obviously, the discovery of such pure mithril deposits helped change the fortress into a community of great wealth.

Commerce in Wawmar centers around the mining, smelting, and forging of fine metals, with mithril having the highest profile of all of them. However, the overwhelming volume of goods that are traded from Wawmar are mundane items, everything from pots to horseshoes to metal buckets. The weapons and armor produced in Wawmar are among the finest in all of Siriland, although the actual amount of such items produced is smaller than most would expect. The governmental council holds smiths to stringent requirements in the production of these weapons and armor, and all such items forged in Wawmar are of mastercraft quality. In fact, platemail has only recently been invented by the dwarves of Wawmar, and they are still the only true masters of its creation, though others are trying to imitate them.

The area surrounding Wawmar grew as the mighty volcano fortress began producing the finest hard-goods ever seen. Sheep and pig farms sprung up and lumberjacks plied their trade in the nearby wood. Fabric mills and tanneries were built, the clothing created from these facilities particularly geared towards the rigorous needs of the dwarven mining community.

Wawmar is a bustling trading community. Despite restrictive regulations on the trading of armor and weapons with non-dwarves, trade with elves, humans, and gnomes has flourished as a result of the quality products created by the highly skilled dwarven smiths. This trading community peaked during the reign of the mighty dwarven King Dwarin who authorized the shipment of several hundred pounds of mithril to the elves, in exchange for magically enchanted roots and herbs, bred especially to survive in the volcanic soil of subterranean Wawmar. Rumor has it that there is a black market within Wawmar itself, where unscrupulous dwarves illegally sell Wawmar-crafted armor and weapons to non-dwarves, but evidence of this has not yet been found.

However successful Wawmar has become as a trading destination for other races, the government council has always felt it important to make sure that they retained the ability to become self-sustaining if need be. Thanks in part to various financial incentives granted to farmers, large farms of edible fungi and mushrooms are grown in the deep, rich volcanic soil of subterranean Wawmar. In addition to the naturally grown products of subterranean Wawmar, vast stores of foodstuffs--preserved with the enchanted herbs garnered in the monumental elven trade of 9531 E.R.--are stored in the event of a siege from enemy forces. The famous dwarven cleric Rîmun Goldsight prophesied that the mighty fortress would never fall from an enemy siege, a prophesy which has so far held true.

No dwarven settlement is complete without breweries, and Wawmar is no exception. Local dwarven spirits are brewed, as well as ales, the most popular of which are a rich, heavy spirit called "Spruce Beer" and a thick, nutty brown ale brewed from fermented mushroom stems known to the locals as "Old Number 9." Not surprisingly, this hearty brew, preserved with the enchanted *maenaie* root (another of the magical roots gathered from the elves) quickly became a favorite among the gnomes and is one of Wawmar's largest exported items.

DAILY LIFE IN WAWMAR

A day in the life of a Wawmar dwarf is guided by routine that has served each of his companions well over the construction of the stronghold. The typical dwarf hearth consists of a husband, wife, and one or two children. A few are larger and taxed the proportions of the standard dwelling unit in Wawmar. But this is not a problem for the hard-working dwarves. Most of them come from a mining or construction background, and as such, it is no problem to find a friend who can aid in extending their homes. Each level of the extinct volcano is at least 100 feet higher than the last, offering ample room to expand into three or even four floors.

The dwarves live, for the most part, in the upper levels of the community, far above the warmer, more humid lower levels. The great fan on the fourth level, fueled by composting wastes and gasses from fissures, continually pumps fresh air to all the homes. Other air movement occurs naturally in the windy, compartmentalized workings. Fresh water supply and sewage are handled by an ingenious set of shafts cut into the rock between levels.

The lower levels of the city house industry and trade. Mining, smithing, woodworking, leatherwork, clothing manufacturing, brewing, mushroom farming and maintenance of the city's infrastructure offer plenty of jobs to the over 20,000 dwarves living healthy, long lives in the complex. The long trek to work, whatever it might consist of, would be arduous for other races, especially up the ramps at the end of the day; the dwarves of Wawmar have grown used to the exercise and are naturally a hearty lot.

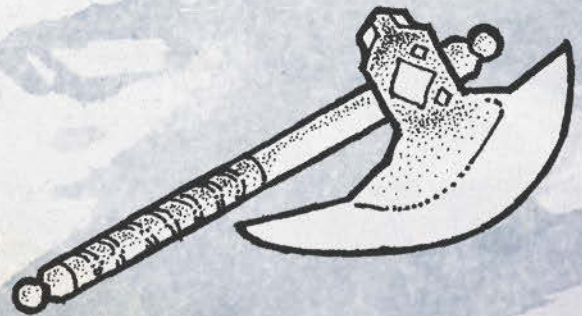
Fire for warmth, light, and cooking is made from burning wood, predominately the tall spruce trees outside the stronghold. Being situated in the high plains and mountains of the north, the weather is warm and dry in the summer and bitter cold in the winter, but in the cone of Wawmar, the magma far below the bottom of the floor keeps all but the top levels fairly comfortable.

Children lead active lives, attending one of two large schools in the crater. Women shop and prepare food for the family and have an important hand in the upbringing of the children; a few even work in the trades, such as leather, clothing and wood manufacturing. Dwarven women choose whether to lead domestic lives or lives of economic toil, though like all dwarves, they love work of all kinds.

From late spring to early fall, if times are relatively peaceful, many inhabitants venture out to the surrounding hills and forests to enjoy, whenever possible, the fresh air and beauty of their surroundings. But they do not dally for long, as a dwarf's emotional life is dedicated to work and the pursuit of craftsmanship.

Being an industrial hub of varied disciplines, the city and surrounding areas thrive on trade. The dwarves mine, log and build many sought-after items that are used to buy necessities of life that they can't make for themselves in great quantities, such as grain, vegetables, and some meats. For these items, they trade fine jewelry, forge farm implements, swords and armor, cooking items, leather goods, and clothing. They even export some fine ale, brewed in the mountain. A balance of trust and money enables them to maintain a synergistic relationship with tribes and communities near the stronghold, as goods flow in and out over the hewn stone ramps.

It is not as if these industrious beings are devoid of fun, frolic and laughter, however. Whistling and singing as they trudge through their busy day, hard work is its own reward for them. Many times, a simple song such as "Carve for me a Rock" or "Khuldul's Children" will be repeated in step by passers-by without thinking.



CARVE FOR ME A ROCK

*I want to build a hearth
A dwarfhold for my kin
I need your help, oh Khuldul,
I want to carve again.
I need a place of shelter
Beneath the skies of blue,
I need desire, oh Khuldul,
I want to carve for you.
I want to keep my children
Within your holy fount
I need the strength, Oh Khuldul,
I want to carve your mount.
I have to keep my wife
Safe in our own home
I need the will, Oh Khuldul,
I want to carve a dome.
I need to feed my hearthlings
And keep their bellies filled
I need knowledge, Oh Khuldul,
I want to carve the hill.
I need to build a door to you
And hold it with a lock
I can't do it without you,
Carve for Me a Rock.*

Dwarves love music nearly as much as elves do. They prefer percussion instruments and horns, although nobles favor harps and flutes. Dwarves tend to have strong alto and baritone voices. Oh, and if a dwarf tells you he doesn't like poetry, he's lying.

Once a week, on the Eve of the Day of Rest and Atonement, they stop work before their regular workday and convene in Gelmar's Room. This hollow, huge hall is located on the fourth level, not surprisingly near the brewery, where tribute is paid to Khuldul and Dhurli. Weight lifting, throwing, leaping, wrestling, battle skills and, of course, drinking are the order of the next six hours, as they revel in life and the rewards for a hard day's work. Even shouting, insults, staring, and poetry contests result in beer to the winner, and to the losers as well. They leave the hall with a renewed sense of camaraderie.

Wawmar is a fortress, but even more, it is a way of life. The city basks in its own legendary status, in its believed impenetrability, in its grandeur; as such, life in the Crater of Kings demands excellence from all. Traders from the outside are treated with courtesy, unless situations demand otherwise, and the quality of goods accepted in trade or purchase by the dwarves has to meet their standards. Often, arguments arise at the trading center, the floor of the city, over quality or insufficient amounts of food, or the craftsmanship of other items. These disputes keep the local lawmakers busy just to keep ahead of specifications for quality control. Consumables, be they food, clothing or other types, have to pass tests to assure that trade is fair and just. Palming or bait-and-switch tactics are looked upon as stealing and are treated with swift justice, landing more than one wayward shyster behind bars. On the other side, inspectors often frequent leather and clothing factories, the blacksmith shop, the brewery and other places of industry to assure that no dwarven items fail their strict checks.

The extreme lawfulness of Wawmar society does not preclude extra-legal dealing, though. A black market does exist in Wawmar, thriving in the poorer blocks of the city on Level 3. At least two groups, the "sanitation guild" and the "chimney sweep" guild, are actually organized crime syndicates that run protection rackets and the black market. They are dangerous groups that sometimes get violent.

But these gangs almost never actually kill dwarves, for though they pay hush money to several politicians and powerful clans, they know that the heavy hammer of dwarven law and the justice of the Church of Khuldul hangs over their heads and can fall at any moment if they overstep. The dwarven legal system may have a great deal of law and may require paperwork and barristers, but it rarely fails to dispense justice.

RELIGION

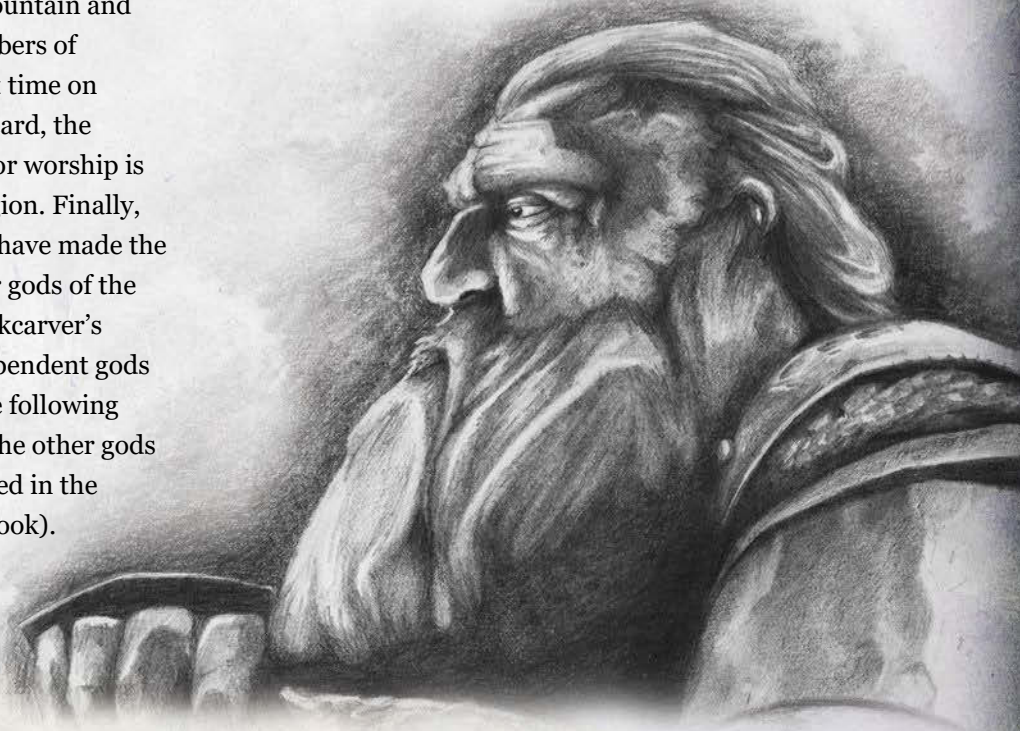
On the Day of Atonement, several worship services are held during the course of the day, as seating for the population is limited and attendance is always high. The Cathedral is considered by dwarves to be the most beautiful, enduring symbol of life on the continent. The quality and quantity of workmanship instills a feeling of importance to each member of the hearth, at the same time reminding him or her of the greatness and majesty of Khuldul Rockcarver himself.

Dwarves are highly religious and worship their lord and creator Khuldul Rockcarver, who carved them from the stone of his Celestial Mountain and laid them sleeping in the deepest chambers of Liferock, where they awoke for the first time on Núrion. They also revere Dhurli Ironbeard, the servant of Khuldul Rockcarver. Ancestor worship is another major component of their religion. Finally, like the elves, the dwarves of Wawmar have made the theological mistake of casting the other gods of the multiverse as members of Khuldul Rockcarver's pantheon (though they are in fact independent gods that owe no allegiance to Khuldul). The following charts explain the dwarven names for the other gods of the multiverse (these gods are detailed in the *World of Farland Campaign Setting* book).

INDUSTRY

The industrial prowess of the dwarves is well known and well deserved. Out of varied raw materials are made articles of everyday use and some of the better valuable items found on the continent. The fine woodworking shop is a prime example. Most of the wood from the immediate area surrounding Wawmar consists of spruce and pine, but through trading, many other types are available, such as linden, polonia, oak, lignum vitae, sycamore, hickory, cherry and maple. From the blacksmith's forge comes woodworking tools, including saws that cut on the pull stroke, hand planers and jointers, pit saws, and fine carving tools.

The woodcarving alone is a beauty to behold--intricate figures of the nine original gods of the universe, imagined scenes from the Ontological War, of Khuldul Rockcarver, Dhurli Ironbeard and many other historical and theological figures carved in actions from the creation of the Multiverse to the creation of Wawmar itself. The strong, talented hands of the carver bring to life the beings of history, prying them out of cold, dead wood for all to enjoy.



These articles are sold on the open market on the Floor shops, paying for wages, tools, and more raw materials. Children of woodcarvers often leave at the end of school to learn their parents' tedious, exacting craft and to carry on the proud tradition.

Clothing manufacture is another of the light industries in which the dwarves of Wawmar excel. Sheep from elven and human farms provide quality wool in trade for expensive clothing. Very little use is made of some of the better materials, such as silk, as dwarves generally have little purpose for fancy, frilly clothing. Most of the garments needed by dwarves are of the tougher variety, due to the constant work ethic of that sturdy race. As with woodworking, children tend to follow their family traditions and footsteps in learning the trade.

Mining continued after the completion of Wawmar, as delving in stone is etched in the very heart of the dwarf community. Several mine slopes were driven from the floor, which is below the level of the surface outside the stronghold, following veins of moderate assay value into adjoining mountains. Once there, they widened into room-and-pillar work and airshafts were driven to the surface. The room-and-pillar workings consist of long entries driven parallel

to each other, and sometimes up to 100 feet apart, for several hundred feet, where cross-connecting entries were driven to allow better flow of air. These systems of entries follow various minerals, including galena, taconite, copper-bearing ores and tin-bearing siderite. When rich deposits were located, to either side, ahead or above and below, other finger entries were driven until the ore was exhausted. For vertical development, raises and slopes are driven up and down, as the deposits rarely remain on a level plain.

At each several miles of entry development, the long trip back to Wawmar is too far to tram out the ore, and other slopes are driven to the surface to transport it to overland travel methods. Further, it is too far for the miners to travel home each day, and several underground stations have grown up for living away from the hearth. Usually, the miners walk several miles to work, then at the end of the first day, travel to the next station to mine again, then return to the first town on the third day, and then to home for a few days' rest. The miners enjoy the three-day-on, two-day-off work week, and for the remaining work day, they aid transport of materials and ore, as well as other related jobs.

Taconite and other iron ores are used in creation of steel. Galena is smelted to produce lead, a very valuable metal used for the manufacture of steam-driven weapons. Copper enables the smiths to produce eating utensils, beer vessels, and other finer works of art. Tin enables them to alloy the copper to produce brass, a metal approaching steel in strength. When it is safe to do so, smelting is often accomplished outside the walls of Wawmar, as it is a very messy, heat-producing affair.

There are fewer young miners joining their fathers, as the turnover rate is not very high-- dwarf miners sometimes work in the mines until they can't physically do the strenuous labor, and some spend 100 or more years at their craft.

Brewing is a very prized occupation in Wawmar, and some of its fine ales and stouts are well-known throughout the land, although they are restricted to the confines of the crater itself. King Mar 1, in



c. 8310 E.R., at the behest of the colony's first master brewer Galim, proclaimed that dwarven ales and stouts are to be consumed within the walls to prevent them from spoiling on a long journey, thereby tarnishing its good name. Barley is procured from elven and human farmers in trade and transported to the brewery on the fourth level. Here, it is wetted, spread out on polished floors, and turned often and continually ventilated until it sprouts. Then heat from vents in the crater's walls dry the barley, and it is tossed to remove the chaff from the active rootlings. The roots are heated in great vessels to steeping temperatures, changing the starch to malt sugar.

At this point, a peculiarity of dwarf beer is introduced. Fresh twigs and shoots from the spruce trees surrounding the volcano are snipped and harvested during growth months and dried for year-round use. The twigs are boiled with the steeped mash, imparting a rich, strong taste that compliments the barley's natural malt sweetness. Some hops from farmers nearby are thrown in at the proper time, and the mash is then cooled by moving it to the outer portions of the workings.

Galim had discovered that the sludge that formed at the bottom of actively fermenting beer actually contained the essence of the fermentation, although it was not known why this happened. He saved the sludge and "fed" it small amounts of fresh mash, and upon drying the sludge into cakes, it was found that it would "come alive" again when introduced into the cooled mash. He did not understand the basic principles, but through drying and reusing this sludge, he assured that the ale would be consistent over the generations. The consistency of the beer is something the dwarves treasure.

The finished beer is dispensed in turns and buckets to households and sold at shops and taverns on the Floor. It is considered by most to be an excellent drink and has become a staple of Dwarven food and life. It is even prescribed by doctors for lactating mothers as a fine food for good nutrition of babies.

Greater God	Dwarven Name
Heshtail the Merciful	Harbhund, Wise Staff
Bestra, Lady of Goodness	Bûndaya, Green Lady
Kantor the Crusader	Kâlab, Faithful Soldier
Neltak, Lord of Law	Nulburk, Lord of Law
Dekk, Lord of Balance	Dhurku, Keeper of the Tome
Bel, Lord Thief	Bundur, Cloaked One
Vornoth, the Dark Walker	Varkhûn, the Fell Shadow

Lesser God	Dwarven Name
Reeanan the Bright	Rhella, Solar Maiden
Calbran, Lord of Luck	Khalan, the Fortunate Thrower
Thrantan, Lord of Lightning	Tharzak, Lightning Lance
Aknor the True	Aklôr the Smith
Janora, Goddess of Fate	Jinbara, Celestial Maiden
Flamgart, Fire God	Flamok Flame-Beard
Grlarshh, Death God	Gunzin the Skull

Drinking has become such a part of dwarven life that it is considered sacred. Dwarves also distill a powerful whiskey using rye. The whiskey is used in religious ceremonies to consecrate the proceedings. It is also used liberally by the attendees throughout the ceremony, and when the worshippers return home.

WAWMAR'S CONSTRUCTION

The method of construction of Wawmar consisted of simple, backbreaking hard work. Thankfully, it was performed with the use of special metals. Simple tools were constructed with high-quality iron and techniques developed by skilled blacksmiths. Then the equipment was given to a dwarven wizard, and with the help of the lead blacksmith, the tools were treated. Treatment consisted of applying magical dwarf runes to the steel and then "soaking" it in a mixture of special, enchanted elixirs at yellow-orange heat, before wooden handles were attached. Once treated, they gained special properties, including heightened flexibility and durability, along with the ability to "focus" and amplify a hundredfold the striking impact of the user. A simple swing with an enchanted pick could break apart hard basalt immediately, almost explosively, giving the wielder incredible power and control.

The construction consisted of ramps driven upward and downward at about an 8 to 10 percent grade. Special drill steels were used to drive shafts between the levels of the mechanical rooms for water, sewage, and venting. The exit chutes were driven upwards at a slight slope to daylight, but widened in one place. A hole was driven in the inner side of the rock and a rope attached. This created a "plug" that could be pulled from the inside to seal off the chute, in case of attack, or pushed to open the chute, allowing dwarves to walk around the sides of the rock. This was a perfect defense and has proven to be very effective.

As work continued, the last masses of rock at the

bottom of the crater, dug from the lower workings, were laid in with some mortar, but mostly interlocked, rock-by-rock, to form sturdy pillars. Special ceramic buckets lifted the lava from the volcano to the pillars and to the bridging pieces between them to "weld" them into place. These pillars were used to support the King's Walk. This walkway is employed for final defense, focal points of gatherings, ceremonies, and as a lasting symbol to the ingenuity of the dwarfs capable of constructing such a city.

The fissures at the Floor Level usually convey to the surface flammable gasses, such as methane (or Fireatin), hydrogen sulphide (noxin) and carbon monoxide (Devil's Breath).

These were tapped at places under the floor of the cone and are pumped by an ox-driven machine, compressed into copper tanks, and used to fire steam burners, then used for steam-powered weapons.

MATTOCK OF MINING (MATTOCK OF THE DWARVES)

Weapon (maul), rare (requires attunement)

Created by the dwarves of Wawmar, this digging implement is made of special hardened magical steel. The properties of the steel make it more flexible and durable and give it the ability to amplify the natural strength and striking power of the wielder. The Mattock is a +1 weapon. The wielder of the Mattock can use it to cast *thunderous smite* (save DC 13); the melee weapon used to inflict the thunder damage from *thunderous smite* must be the Mattock of Mining from which the spell has been cast. This spell can be cast from the Mattock three times per day. Expended uses are regained at dawn.

By digging with the Mattock, it can also be used to cast the spell *move earth*. Concentration is not required to maintain this spell; instead the user must continue digging with the Mattock, which he can do for 2 hours maximum. The Mattock can only be used to cast this spell once per day. Expended uses are regained at dawn.

Some of the gasses are fed into the mechanical room, where they are mixed with sewage gasses and burned.

The basic structure of the workings mined to create Wawmar is that of a spiral ramp, carved along the inside of the cone and angled downward toward the bottom. Along the length of this ramp are other entrances mined into the thickness of the cone. As these other entrances were mined, the mining spread out to form useable workings, such as housing, industrial sites, military barracks, community rooms and industrial sites.

The mining was begun from two directions; one from the top of the crater downward, and the other from the ground level on the south side of the crater through the cone to the inside. For the purposes of communal organization, these workings were grouped into levels. The first, or Level 1, was cut from the lip of the crater down to where the south entrance would intersect with it. While it was being driven, a few dwellings were created to house the miners, and it was believed to be important to build a barracks on this level, to maintain security while the rest of the work was being performed. The barracks intersects the ramp at several different locations, a tactical decision made to allow surprise and to allow the surrounding and isolation of invaders.

During the initial phase of the construction, some rumblings were detected at the bottom of the crater. Agralin placed a simple but ingenious device, a pan of water and oil, on the cut ramp away from the workings to monitor the vibrations during a few days' time. The vibrations ceased with the work and re-appeared when work commenced.

The entrance crews created quite an impressive tunnel, and rightly so, as this would be the first, most lasting view of the development. The opening of the entrance tunnel was widened into a large foyer, where a huge door was installed. The door is actually a huge slab cut from the rock in the tunnel, fitted with pockets and suspended on steel pins and arms. The resulting door can be moved with a mere touch, but is so thick and heavy that to open it fully requires

a crew of dwarves. The tunnel, once completed, was in itself one of the most incredible miracles out of all the amazing engineering feats that created Wawmar.

At the beginning of Level 2 construction, the rumblings were detected again, accompanied by some other strange sounds and belching of fire from the side of the crater, near the bottom. There was concern that the volcano was not completely dormant. Agralin directed crews to continue after a short investigation and to dump most of the rock over the area where the flames were coming from. This was done, the rumblings stopped, and construction continued.

Level 2 was the first level built with a "standard" housing unit concept. The plan view was separated into 12 wedges, with a set of roads leading to the main ramp. Each wedge could house over 500 dwarves. A concentric inner road was formed across each wedge, connecting them for access, emergency exit, and ventilation. Level 2.5 was designed and built along the same lines as Level 2, but two of the housing wedges were sacrificed to be worked in different configuration and to serve as schooling units. It was believed that this location would be the most centrally located of the levels.

Level 3 was designed and built with the same configuration as Level 2. Room for more housing was available along the outer edge of the housing units, but Agralin felt that the stress calculations did not allow for more mining.

A source of water was needed. It was relatively simple to acquire drinking water, as there are several sources of water on the surface near the cone. A few streams were dammed and water was fed into a shaft to a series of cross shafts, where it flows to the individual public rest rooms.

A cargo system was developed to provide a method of transporting bulk materials, goods, and supplies to the levels below. It consists of two wooden rails, about 4 feet apart, affixed to the front edge of the ramps, running between each ramp, all the way from the first level to the floor. Each set of rails has a swinging, hinged piece about 8 feet long,

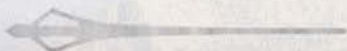


which can be released and swung inward to direct the cargo transport to the ramp to be loaded or unloaded. When ready, the signal is given to raise the transport above the swinging location, the moveable ramps are swung and locked into place, and the transport continues down or up. The transport consists of a simple wooden cart with wooden wheels with a cage for retaining the goods safely.

The workings of Level 4 were extensive, but as the pillars took stress, they were hollowed out and arches were formed in the roof to help support the greater spans. It worked well, and several large rooms were created. A hospital, shop areas for silver and gold smithing, wood work, leather work, clothing and textiles and a brewery were created. A fan/turbine room was created for moving air in the workings, and another room was started at the north side of the ramp.

At this point in time, the rumblings began again. They were quite violent, shaking the entire mountain. Some of the rocks in the area of the floor, where the

belching of flames was seen several months earlier, moved and heaved upward. A head of a beast appeared, immensely large, and began shooting flames and roaring a deafening sound. Crews ran for cover within some of the workings. The creature wrenched itself free to stand on the rocks of the floor, roaring and spouting flames. It leapt vertically, then flared its wings and landed on the ramp at Level 3. It was a huge dragon, clapping its claws on the ramp and holding on to the workings vertically, much like a woodpecker holds on to the side of a tree. It craned its neck and tried to push its head into a working, but was repelled when several of the dwarves struck it with their magically-enhanced picks and drill steels. Many of the dwarves were killed in the fierce battle, being burned and bitten, but the dragon was loosened from its perch, partially from attacks above and also from attacks from workers on the fourth level. The creature spread its wings and soared around the crater, liberally spewing fire, until the crossbow bolts that the dwarves shot from cover



drove it off. Over the next few weeks, the dragon appeared again and again, harrying the construction and nearly bringing it to a halt. Ultimately, Agralin put together a war party to hunt the beasts in the wild lands around the mountain, and they managed to track it down. After a pitched battle, the beast was slain and buried where it fell. See the *World of Farland Campaign Setting* publication for more details about this dragon, which would later become the Lord of Greed.

Finally, the task could proceed. First, the great Cathedral was completed, and its interior was left mostly natural, for it was made from a beautiful cave, then the ramp was extended and the Underhalls were built. Then, the Festering Pits were installed. The blacksmithing area and the Great Halls were mined at the same time. Many of the ramp and housing crews were finishing, and manpower was not a problem. These workings were mined below the proposed finished floor elevation, and were accessed by driven ramps. The Great Halls were to be used by the king as quarters and by his staff to govern. The main hall enclosed four huge pillars, stark and rectangular, leaving separate halls approaching the throne. He so revered the work performed on the Cathedral that he decided not to have the halls done in such beautiful fashion but left the pillars and walls squared off and only slightly smooth.

The blacksmithing area was a model of industrial design. At one end, a melting pit was formed to allow heat to be accessed to melt iron to form ingots. A shaft was driven downward to intercept some fissures, for quick access to magma. Following this, around the side of the shop, are quenching pits and hammer forges, used to convert iron and steel to ingots of manageable size and shape. An area is set aside for storage, then forges and bellows are used to do fine smithing. Another area is used for sword and axe making.

Finally, the King's Walk was formed. Agralin decided it had to be impressive in both size and shape, so he built it into a vast, gentle arch. The arch was then continued to the cathedral in much the

same way. The resulting figure towers over the floor of the crater.

The design of the floor caused Agralin to switch from structural and geological engineering to urban development planning. First, shops, dwellings and business offices were laid out to provide the best foot traffic flow possible. Several warehouses and distribution buildings were built along the east and north sides of the floor, to be used to store goods and sell them to the shops. Several gardens were placed near the "feet" of the King's Walk, and vines were planted and trained to wind up around the legs. The city streets were lined with bricks mined and cut during the excavation of the Great Halls.

Outside the crater, the main roads were constructed. They were built partly incised into the solid rock, with the cut stone used to raise the road several feet. The cone was completed by adding simple wooden towers at three points around the circumference to be used as lookout stations. Thus, the primary construction of Wawmar was finished, although the dwarves spent centuries after widening and deepening the Underhalls into multiple levels and creating extensive mines under the fortress.

FACTIONS IN WAWMAR

Clan Blacksilver: Led by the shady Lord Tordrun Firebeard, Clan Blacksilver is both one of the most powerful clans in Wawmar and one of the most amoral. The clan has connections to the organized crime syndicates that operate on Level 3, and it also has a link to the former Court High Mage Nár the White, who two years ago disappeared into his guarded hold in the Underhalls, where rumor has it he is working on a way to cheat death.

The Paladins of Nulburk: A newly-founded sect that is associated with the great Church of Khuldul, the Paladins of Nulburk have taken it upon themselves to clean up Level 3 and to oppose Clan Blacksilver.

THE DWARVEN KINGDOM

The fortress-city of Wawmar controls the large area around it as far south as the Falls of Dimrune north of Lannael, as far north and west as the Erethel Mountains, and as far east as Aelfrand. Three main dwarven communities can be found in this kingdom, namely the town of Zigil, the town of Felek, and the town of Baraz. All three are mining and working communities, and each is built near valuable natural resources such as salt, timber, and, of course, ore.

Baraz, the southernmost dwarven community, is the most racially diverse town in the kingdom. A community of elves and gnomes exists in the fortified town, and several halfling families also dwell therein. Baraz is a trading center, shipping goods south to Lannael. The town is built near rich timberlands and a productive salt mine. As the town that lies most near the border of the dwarven kingdom, it is heavily fortified, with a solid stone wall some twelve feet high and half as thick. Runin Deepminer, a canny business-dwarf, rules Baraz at the pleasure of the dwarven king.

Felek is the town that lies north of Baraz. Most of the community is carved into the sides of a weathered outcrop, a round hillock. All the houses and buildings are delved straight into the sides of the circular hill, although they tend to be self-contained; the center of the hill is not riddled with tunnels, and one generally needs to walk around the hill to get from one home or business to another. Felek is a rich community, built near a silver mine. Balan Swiftshot, a white-haired dwarf who favors simple dress, is Lord of Felek. Felek lies on the most direct route to Aelfrand, and as such, the dwarves of the town have the most contact with humans.

Zigil is the dwarf community that lies nearest to



Wawmar. Located far into the dwarven kingdom, it lacks a wall or other defensive palisade, and its houses and business are stand-alone stone buildings. Zigil is a religious center of the greater dwarven kingdom, having a famous temple called the *Gabil-Uri*, and it's also known for the massive (75-foot tall) statues of famous dwarves located in the town.



THE TOWN OF ZIGIL

POINTS OF INTEREST IN ZIGIL

- 1 Sigin mine
- 2 Felek mine
- 3 Miners Guildhall
- 4 Great Statue of Mar II
- 5 Brewers Guildhall
- 6 Saw mill
- 7 Baraz mine
- 8 Axe and Flagon Inn
- 9 Island Row
- 10 Zirik mine
- 11 The *Gabil-Uri*, the Great Temple Hall
- 12 Great Statue of Agralin
- 13 Great Statue of Walin
- 14 The *Gundol*, the underground hold and Great Hall
- 15 Great Statue of Mar III
- 16 Smith's Guildhall
- 17 General store
- 18 Elven embassy
- 19 School hall
- 20 Craftsmens Guildhall

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOWN IN THE KINGDOM OF WAWMAR

Who Rules: Kurin Strongheart, lord of the town, in close concert with the 99 Judges of the Khazakim of Zigil. Strongheart is the first judge.

Other Power Centers: Holy Hain Axehand, High Priest of Khuldul (2nd of 99); Bis Stoneshanks, head of the miners guild (3rd of 99).

Population: About 1000 dwarves, 100 gnomes, 10 elves, and 5 halflings.

Major Products: Zigil is a mining town. Its mines produce iron and copper. It also exports beer and whiskey, leather, timber, and worked steel products.

Armed Forces: Deep in the north of the Kingdom of Wawmar, Zigil does not maintain any sort of standing armed forces, save for the five guards of Lord Kurin Strongheart and the paladins of the Great Temple Hall, the Order of the Axe.

The Town: Zigil is first and foremost a mining town. Built over two rich veins of iron and copper, the dwarves of the town work joyfully in its four mines to bring the ore to the surface, smelt it, and ship it to Wawmar or to the Sarumvest. The sounds of industry fill the small valley in which the town is built. The town is ruled by the 99 judges of Khazakim, made up of priests, dwarf lords, guild heads, and dwarves of note. The town is in the domain of Wawmar and is answerable to the dwarf king.

The town is also known for its landmarks. It is built between four hills, which the dwarves keep clear of trees, both because they like the look of bare hills and because it provides them a vantage point. Carved out of the living rock of each of the hills is a huge statue of a dwarven ancestor; each statue towers at least 75 feet high. The statues have something of a religious significance to the dwarves of Zigil, given the importance of ancestor worship in the dwarven religion. At the foot of each statue is a shrine to the ancestors. A small, swift river, the Bundlân, runs through Zigil, providing the town with clean water and energy for its industrious mill. The masterfully-delved town hall of the dwarves, the *Gundol*, is built into the side of the southernmost hill and serves as the meeting place of the 99 judges and as a keep in times of war.

Besides its industry and landmarks, Zigil is known for its great temple, the *Gabil-Uri*. A vast stone hall dug into the easternmost hill, the temple is said to have been blessed by Walin I and as such is a sacred spot to dwarves. The main hall of the temple is devoted to Khuldul and Dhurli, but multiple side halls exit from the main hall, and each side hall is a temple to the "lesser dwarven gods." The high priests of Wawmar often make trips to the *Gabil-Uri* to visit the holy spot and consult with the priests of Zigil.

ZIGIL



250 feet

Few important decisions are made without consulting the priests of Zigil, for the power of the temple is said to affect the wisdom of its priests.

THE WAR

The dwarves of the Kingdom of Wawmar have been in a relatively good position compared to the other races, possessing as they do the fortified and nearly impregnable volcano fortress. Yet they were hit hard in the Great Plague, and like the elves they only recently rebuilt their forces. The Kingdom can field an army of nearly 10,000 armored dwarves, almost entirely light and heavy infantry. Yet, they know that the forces of Stor-gris outnumber them by some five or ten to one....

DWARVEN STEAM WEAPONRY

As the great stronghold of Wawmar was nearing completion, the dwarves turned their attention to the design and fabrication of weapons. They had a few parameters in their favor. First, the nature of dwarves is such that they are willing to work hard to build such machinery, and they find a fascination with simple machines (levers, screws, wedges, etc.) and their applications to more complicated gadgetry. Second, the abundance of metals of high tensile and compressive strengths and good workability (steel, iron, copper, brass) made it possible to leap from the usual wooden construction to more durable, dependable equipment. Third, the dwarves have great understanding of the physical world and of static and dynamic systems.

For the most part, these weapons were designed, prototypes built, and plans were sold to gnomish tacticians who, with help from Wawmar's industrial prowess, were able to build and operate them. Wawmar's defenders and military minds at first saw little use or need for such weaponry, as the stronghold was generally considered to be

impregnable. Of course this was before the rise of Stor-gris.

Several types of siege weapons were already in use in the known world, starting with the standard bows, onagers, trebuchets, and crossbows. But the dwarven interest in steam and their very fertile imaginations led them to a study and eventual merging of the concepts of these weapons into very powerful, highly accurate and repeatable armaments.

STEAM DRIVEN BALLISTA

This powerful crossbow has a steam powered engine which automatically re-cocks the crossbow after a missile is fired.

The dwarves had already designed and built quite a few ballistas, but such weapons took on a different look with the introduction of steam power. The standard ballistae were built so that the power for launching was provided by twisted rope, which was a highly tenuous method. The skeins were short-lived, due to the tremendous strain applied and the fact that the strands were constantly rubbing on one another. And the mechanics of them were limited, as the bow only applied force to the projectile until the string was taught. The dwarves devised a different mechanism whereby the arms would travel inwardly, on an arc past each other, then push forward until the string was taut on the front end of the machine, almost doubling the amount of distance the force had with which to accelerate the projectile. This weapon was capable of increasing the velocity of the standard large bolt from the accepted norm of 400 feet per second to well over 700, which also made the arrow hard to track by sight and hard to avoid.

The method, as stated, of transfer of power had to be changed, however, as the wrapped skein of rope could only be counted on for about 90 degrees of arm swing before the rope became loose and ineffective, as compared to the reflex type of the mechanism, which needed almost 180 degrees of travel. For this, the dwarves applied a rack-and-pinion type of motivation, whereby the rack would spin the

spindles, which would in turn move the arms. To reload a standard ballista, it was necessary to pull back the arms against a twisted-rope-force, where in this instance, it was merely necessary to pull back the rack against little force.

Steam Driven Ballista

Large object

Armor Class: 15

Hit Points: 75

Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

It takes a bonus action to load this massive crossbow, an action to aim it, and an action to fire it.

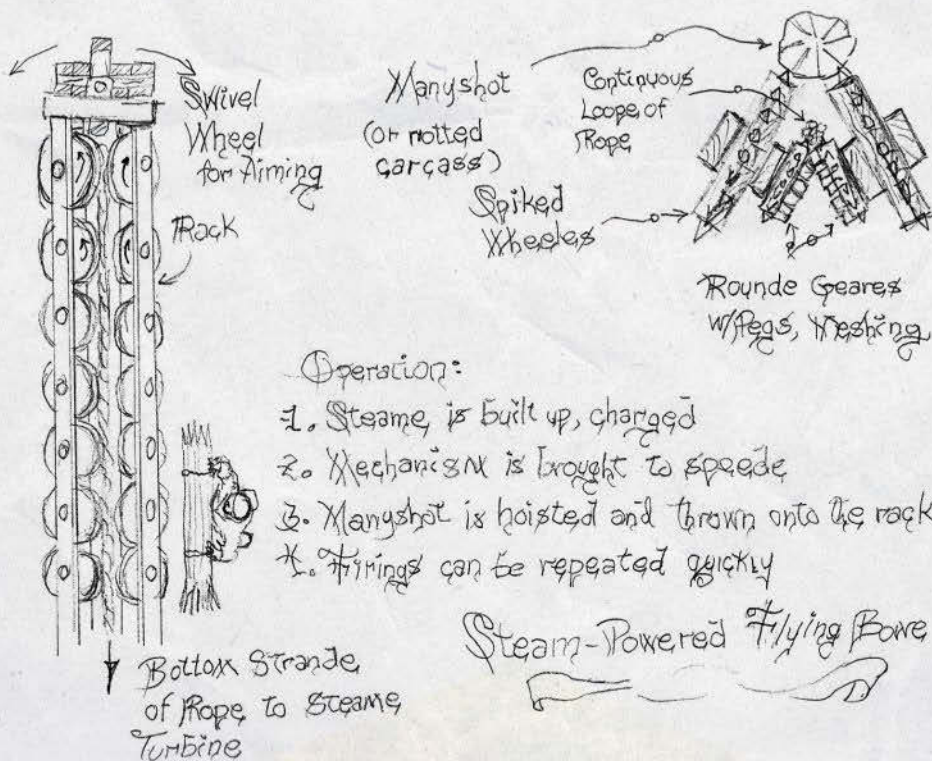
Bolt. Ranged weapon attack. +6 to hit, range 120/480 ft., one target. **Hit:** 16 (3d10) piercing damage.

FLYING CROSSBOW

This rare steam-driven weapon harnessed the power of steam to move several wheels/gears and pulleys. The advantages of this machine was the wide range of ammunition it could fire as well as

how rapidly it could fire. Typically, one sharpened log was used as ammunition, although it was specialized ammunition known as "Many Shot" that made this weapon devastating on the field of battle. Five crew members are required to man the Flying Crossbow, and it takes 5 minutes for the steam engines to warm up before use. However, once activated and manned by a full crew, the Flying Crossbow will fire at a quick rate. The steam engine functions for 5 minutes on 4 gallons of water.

Another weapon invented by the dwarves was the steam-powered Flying Bow. It was not really a bow, but a trough, or ramp, lined with wooden wheels. The wheels were arranged in pairs, each tilted inward, with successive pairs lining the length of the ramp. They were motivated by wooden-cog gears on the bottom, thereby synchronizing them from one side to the other. The power was supplied by a steam vane turbine through an endless rope loop, which contacted the spiked rims of the bottom cog gears, synchronizing each set of two wheels with the next. During operation, the matched set of 12 to 20 wheels



spun in unison. Along the outer rim of the wheels were spikes pointed radially outward. To fire, the weapon was brought up to speed and a projectile was simply dropped on the rear wheels. The spikes grabbed the bolt and "passed" it on to the next pair, accelerating the shot forward to the end. The beauty of this weapon was its repeatability. Once the first bolt had been fired, the wheels would take 2 or 3 seconds to reach speed, and another bolt could be dropped. Needless to say, this was not a very transportable machine, and was used in defensive postures only. Due to the highly complicated nature, only two were ever made, as rope, gears, spikes and bearings were high-maintenance items. But when operating properly, it was a feared death-dealer.

To power these weapons, a dependable source of steam had to be designed, tested and built. The design consisted of two tanks, made from hammered and riveted copper. The upper tank served as a pre-heater, using exhaust from the fire that heated the lower steam tank. Water was introduced into the upper tank, and when the steam was used for a firing, the water was released to the lower one, where the pressure was built to working limits.

The pressure was monitored by an ingenious method of "pinging," whereby the operator tapped the tank at the same precise location, listening to the sound. When the proper pitch was attained, he knew that sufficient pressure was available. Usually, most operations involved several tank systems for each of the heavier weapons, depending upon the amount, purity and pressure of the fuel gas. The dependability and working life of the generator, and of the weapons themselves, varied greatly, as many parameters were involved and many could, and did, go wrong. Several times, the equipment had to be shut down and carted away as piping or riveted seams burst, sometimes causing injuries to the operators.

The chosen projectile for most of the mass guided weapons was the Many Shot. This was a simple but deadly tool. A 2 to 4-inch diameter tree was cut to length and trimmed of bark. A sharp axe was run down the length of the trunk, cutting the fibers most

of the way through, leaving a few in place to hold the individual arrows together. The front end of the bundle was dipped in molten lead and quickly quenched. The rear of the bundle was roughed up with a sharp hatchet to provide "feathers" to the arrows. When fired, the Many Shot would break up and split into several arrows, and depending upon the pressure, velocity, and shape of the tube, would spread into an adjustable pattern to strike multiple targets.

Flying Crossbow

Large object

Armor Class: 13

Hit Points: 60

Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

It takes a free action to load this massive crossbow, an action to aim it, and an action to fire it.

Bolt. *Ranged weapon attack.* +6 to hit, range 100/450 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d10) piercing damage.

Many Shot

Flying Crossbows also may use Many Shot, an alternate ammunition, which is in essence several smaller bolts tied together. Anywhere between 7 and 19 of these bolts could be assembled, causing a devastating (if erratic) barrage at the enemies. The range of Many Shot is significantly less than normal, only 1/4 of the typical range. Treat a Many Shot bolt fired from a Flying Crossbow as separate attacks (between 7 and 19), but each attack is made with disadvantage. Cost per unit of ammunition ranges between 35 sp to 95 sp, based on the number of bolts per shot.

CATAPULT

The large catapult has a steam powered engine which aids in the reloading and aiming of the device. It takes five crew members to load and prepare this device.

The Steam Powered Catapult was then invented. It was a direct descendent of the standard catapult that was used by the elves and dwarves for centuries, but with a very important difference. Other such weapons were driven, or fired, by using twisted skeins of rope. The rope was twisted by turning geared lugs along the sides of the frame, with the throwing arm thrust in between the plies of rope. As the arm was pulled back with winches and capstans, the rope twisted, providing a tremendous source of stored power. But this method of loading required time and a lot of mechanical movement, resulting in a long cycle time. Therefore, several catapults were required to be effective. Further, its rope system was susceptible to breaking and wearing of the rope.

The dwarves solved this by using steam. One end of a long rope was attached to a steam cylinder, the other to the arm, which, when activated, pulled the arm forward. As the steam cylinder could only produce limited speed, the rope was attached very close to the axle, providing very high mechanical advantage. For each inch of travel of the rope, a foot of travel could be expected for the projectile, thereby multiplying the speed of the cylinder twelvefold. The size of the piston, when multiplied by a meager 100 pounds per square inch of steam, would give tremendous force to the load.

The Steam Powered Catapult had its drawbacks. Many soldiers feared using it, as it was tricky to operate, and required constant monitoring and maintenance.

Steam Catapult

Large object

Armor Class: 16

Hit Points: 75

Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

It takes an action to load this weapon, two actions to aim it, and an action to fire it.

Catapult Stone. *Ranged weapon attack.* +4 to hit, range 200/800 ft. (can't hit targets within 60 ft. of it), one target. *Hit:* 27 (5d10) bludgeoning damage.

MONAGER (LIGHT CATAPULT)

This small catapult has a steam powered engine which aids in the reloading and aiming of the device. Two crew members can load and prepare this device.

The dwarves next invented the steam-powered monager. It was fired using twisted skeins of rope, as with earlier catapults, but the reloading of the weapon was aided by steam, instead of steam providing the driving force. The monager was preferred by many dwarven commanders over the steam catapult, although its range was not as great nor its final projectile weight as great. The interesting name was derived from the fact that it would kick like a wild ass, or "monager," each time it was fired. This was because its cylinders were mounted low, providing little resistance to the overturning effects of the residual torsion, making it "kick."

Monager

Large object

Armor Class: 14

Hit Points: 65

Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

It takes a bonus action to load this weapon, two actions to aim it, and an action to fire it.

Monager Stone. *Ranged weapon attack.* +4 to hit, range 180/720 ft. (can't hit targets within 40 ft. of it), one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d10) bludgeoning damage.

Monager and Catapult Shot

Also known as Grapeshot, this alternate ammunition is made of several small, hard items, designed to hit a large radius of creatures (20' radius). Super-heated sand, small pebbles, and even silverware have been used for shot. Cost per unit is based on what is used-- typically whatever may be available at the time. Damage is piercing and bludgeoning, affecting all in a 20' radius, but the attack is made with disadvantage.

TREBUCHET

The most powerful of the steam-powered siege weapons, the trebuchet has a steam-powered engine which aids in the reloading and aiming of the device. Six crew members can load and prepare this device.

The most majestic of all siege weapons, the Trebuchet, was a feared machine. Its most important parameter was its range, and naturally, the use of steam was a very interesting possibility. The limiting factor, however, was the range of motion and movement of the hurling arm, as it had to swing through an arc unimpeded, just to release its left-over motion and energy. This precluded the use of steam, in the design stage, for quite a few years. The dwarves solved this problem in a simple manner: with sheer mass. The dwarves beefed up the axle and pinions of the hurling arm, building them by joining the framing sides in a triangle, allowing the heavy side logs to support the axle, rather than using a separate pinion. The front logs were extended and used, along with a sling, to "catch" the arm after it released the projectile. The steam cylinder was then installed as close to in-line as possible, but just far enough to the side to allow proper operation.

The performance of the mighty wooden monster was impressive. A modest charge of 100 pounds per square inch of steam, over the breadth of a 12" piston, was sufficient to accurately hurl a 150 pound stone a distance of up to 800 feet. This allowed the trebuchet to be operated out of the range of accurate arrow volleys. Its mass also allowed gnomes to hide from the arrows, as few could navigate through the mass of heavy logs positioned in various directions. The most effective weapon to use against a wooden trebuchet, that of fire, was still a possibility. A few flaming arrows could be launched from a castle, and a gnomish artillery company had to guard against this. The log sides were often fitted with ladders to allow buckets of water to be carried to put out flames. The dwarves realized that a machine of this size was too cumbersome to haul around, so they wrote and

drew up a detailed specification for the sizes of the members, so that the weapon could be fabricated from logs and a few other items, normally found in the woods and forests found around most castles of the day. Most of it had to be built laid down, then assembled under cover of darkness or, in some cases, a darkness spell.

Steam Trebuchet

Huge object

Armor Class: 15

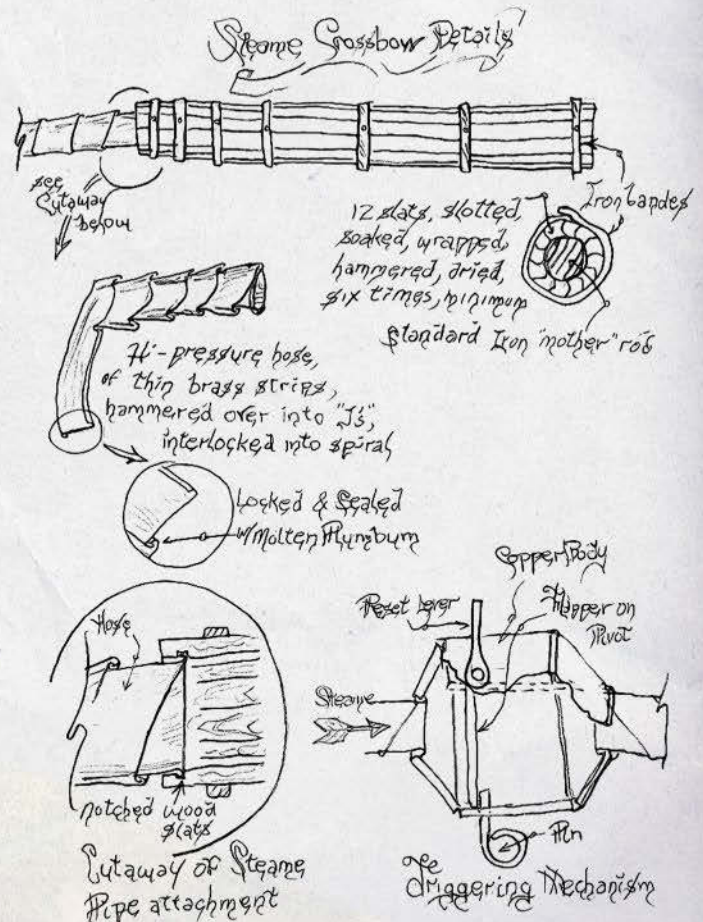
Hit Points: 130

Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

Damage Vulnerabilities: fire

It takes an action to load this weapon, two actions to aim it, and an action to fire it.

Trebuchet Stone. Ranged weapon attack. +4 to hit, range 300/1200 ft. (can't hit targets within 60 ft. of it), one target. *Hit:* 39 (7d10) bludgeoning damage.



ALCHEMIST CANNON

Also known as a *Scorpion*, this is a tube shaped object, approximately 5 feet long. It uses steam to hurl alchemist fire in a spray. Reloading an Alchemist Cannon requires 5 flasks of alchemist fire (as well as 1 gallon of water for the steam engine).

The Alchemist Cannon is an anti-personnel weapon. A quart of water is usually good for quite a few shots.

Alchemist Cannon

Medium object

Armor Class: 12

Hit Points: 20

Damage Immunities: poison, psychic, fire

It takes 5 actions to load this weapon (whereupon it can be fired five times without loading it), a free action to aim it, and an action to fire it.

Alchemist fire. *Ranged weapon attack.* +4 to hit, range 30 ft./60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) fire damage at the start of each turn. A creature can use an action to make a DC 10 Dexterity save to put out the fire and end the damage.

BESSY MAULER

Only a strong creature can wield this weapon, which is in essence a large-sized heavy crossbow. A Bessy Mauler is a martial ranged weapon.

The second steam-fired weapon was the Bessy Mauler. It bore a resemblance to a normal crossbow and was capable of being carried by a single soldier. The soldier had to be very strong, as the Mauler was a heavy weapon with equally heavy recoil. Soldiers prefer to use a tripod to fire it due to the recoil.

Bessy Mauler

Cost: 100

Damage: 2d8 piercing

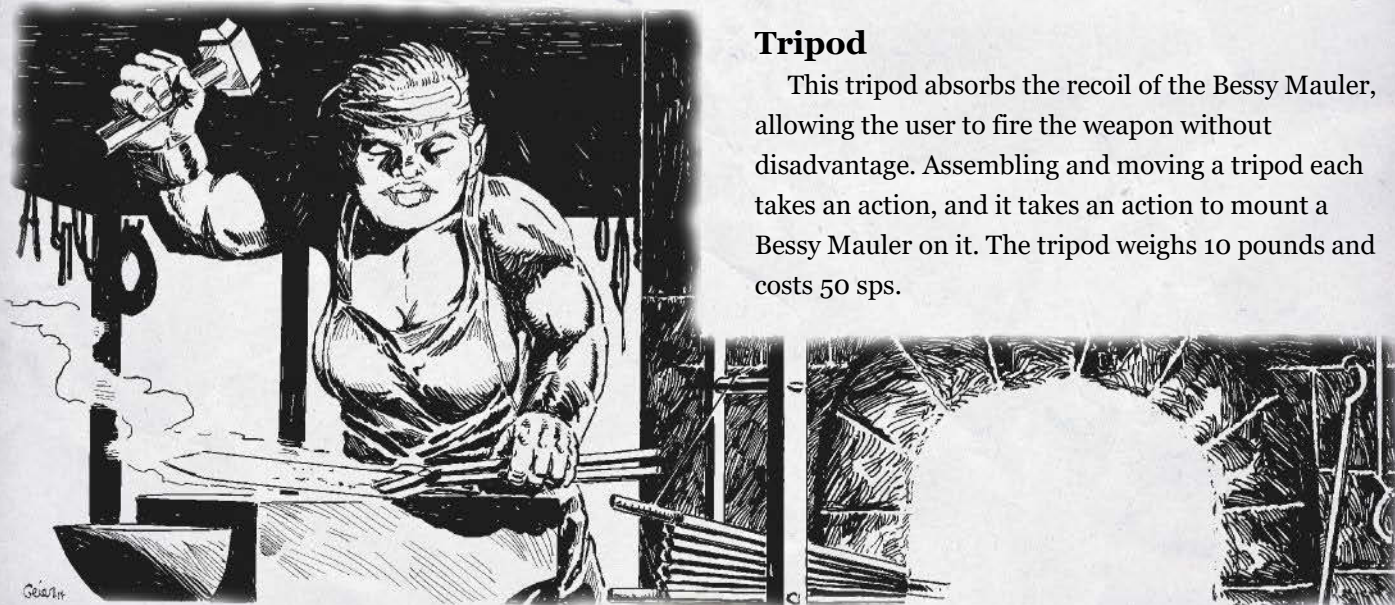
Weight: 30 pounds

Properties: ammunition (range 120/420), heavy, loading, special, two-handed

A user makes attack rolls with disadvantage, as the weapon has a powerful recoil. The user may avoid the disadvantage by either using a tripod or by lying prone when firing. After every 10 shots, 1 quart of water must be added to the steam engine. Refilling the steam engine takes two actions.

Tripod

This tripod absorbs the recoil of the Bessy Mauler, allowing the user to fire the weapon without disadvantage. Assembling and moving a tripod each takes an action, and it takes an action to mount a Bessy Mauler on it. The tripod weighs 10 pounds and costs 50 sps.





CHAPTER 3: HUMAN CIVILIZATIONS

HUMAN SOCIETIES

Human civilization is new and growing, but the privations caused by Stor-gris have made it a struggle for human society to advance at all. Severally culturally unique populations of humans exist on the continent of Siriand. Communities can be found on the northern edge of the Deep Marshes and in the Hinterlands south of Lannael. One group of nomads has journeyed all the way to Hathiand to escape the Dark Kingdom and now lives generally unmolested by any organized evil, although they face dangers from monsters of the wilds. Humans are most populous in the area south and east of Wawmar, an area called Aelfrand. The following section details the human communities extant on the continent of Siriand; after each section is an optional human subrace available to human PCs in the War of Immortals Campaign Setting.

HUMAN TRAITS

Age. Humans reach adulthood by their late teens and live less than 100 years.

Alignment. Humans tend toward no particular alignment. The best and the worst are found among them. Choose any alignment.

Size. Humans vary widely in height and build, from barely 5 feet (or shorter) to well over 6 feet tall. Females tend to be shorter and lighter. Your size is medium.

Subraces. Humans come in several ethnicities and varieties. Choose one of the subraces below. Alternately, if you don't wish to choose a subrace, increase all of your ability scores by 1.

During the War of Immortals, humans are struggling to build their civilizations. Contact with elves and dwarves is helping them. If you want to play a character who is uncivilized but has a brave, passionate heart, consider playing a human. Of course you know what a human is, now don't you?

PEOPLE OF AELFRAND

The most notable human society exists in the region of Aelfrand. The elves named it thus nearly a thousand years ago because the region contained an abnormal number of Toadstool Rings, which the elves believed, often rightly, led to Tanis, the land of Fairies. Indeed, "Ael" is elvish for "Fey or Fairy," so the name of the region signifies "North Fey Land" or "North Fairy Land." Since the humans have come to live here, though, the frequency of Fairy Toadstool Rings has steadily decreased.

The human society in Aelfrand is the most advanced of all human cultures primarily because they have had relatively frequent contact with the elves of Aeltal (where the Satellite Cities are located) and the dwarves of Wawmar. These human tribes migrated to this area from a region somewhere to the south and west some four centuries prior to the current date. It's not known where they originally came from.

Upon arrival in this land, they were greeted by the elves of the Satellite Cities, who were curious about these new creatures that were so similar but different. The elves invited representatives of each tribe they met to journey to their cities as honored guests. The four main tribes of the area each sent a

notable member of their community, and when these lucky individuals returned, they were so revered by their fellow tribe members that each tribe eventually came to call itself by the name of the hero who had gone to meet the fabled elves. They go by the following designations: Tribe of Aelfarus, Tribe of Alexandros, Tribe of Ledesus, and Tribe of Patros.

The most powerful of these tribes is that of Aelfarus, which is a bastardized version of the elven title "Friend of the Fey," a name the tribe's representative adopted. His original name was Hectorus, and of the four envoys, he was indeed the most favored by the elves, who admired his courage and strength of character. Hectorus mistakenly altered the title, misreporting it to his people. The four tribes live in semi-peace, but they often skirmish. These skirmishes range from relatively bloodless to brutal and bloody.

Right now, the two western tribes are allied against the two eastern tribes. What keeps the tribes from degenerating into open warfare is the specter of the Wintervale to the east-- orc raids out of the icy mountains into Aelfrand are frequent, and all four tribes need to be willing to band together to fight the orcs. However, their skirmishes are nonetheless bloody, and captives are exchanged often between the tribes.

Human society in Aelfrand is provincial and confined; what they call cities are simply large villages protected by wooden walls. Any communications between distant communities is accomplished by courier or messenger, or by signal fires ignited on the tops of hills. In fact, though, communication between communities is not frequent. Travel is challenging because the area lacks proper roads and bridges and is heavily wooded and swampy in parts. Only recently in trade with the dwarves did the humans of Aelfrand learn of the wheel. In the last decade, they have made carts boasting four wheels; even so, most goods are carried on the backs of mules or men.

APPEARANCE AND DRESS

Both the men and women of Aelfrand favor long hair; facial hair on the males is optional but only tends to be favored when men gain a position of authority, either in the household or the tribe. One of the greatest honors that a man can do a friend is to cut off his hair and lay it on his friend's funeral pyre (the Aelfrangers burn their dead on wooden pyres). Men who have been honorably defeated in combat are also duty-bound to cut their long braid. Thus, the skill of a warrior can often be observed by the length of his hair, but enemies have learned to be careful, for a powerful warrior might have short hair due to the recent loss of a bosom companion—so woe to the man who recklessly challenges short-haired fighters.

Both men and women wear a quadrangular raiment folded over the shoulders, fastened with a



clasp pin, and which reaches almost to the knees; lacking the ability to sew as well as the elves, this is their strange approximation of the tunic they observed the elves of the Satellite Cities wearing, though in truth it is little like it. The women further wear a girdle and a veil, and the men pants. They throw a fur cloak over this ensemble to protect against the northern cold. In warmer weather, the men wear loincloths instead of pants, and the women leave their arms bare. Both sexes wear boots outdoors, sandals in summer, but often go barefoot within the home. Men and women favor jewelry, usually unworked silver bracelets, necklaces, and circlets, and the women splash rose-scented water or oil on themselves by way of perfume.

SUBSISTENCE AND TRADE

Those who do not fight work the lands, taking great pleasure in their labor. The land is not particularly fertile, and much of it is swamp, wooded hill, or mountain. Still, the people of Aelfrand are resolute and make more than an agricultural living from the land, though their farming is primitive--they make enough to trade with the dwarves and elves. They eat with knives in place of utensils. Hunting is also a large part of their culture, although hunting is still a necessity and is not yet viewed as a sport.

The humans of this region do not mine and know nothing of metal-working. What metal they have is greatly prized, and mostly obtained in trade with the dwarves. They do not use money and instead employ a system of barter and trade. For crops, the dwarves give agricultural implements and their surplus weaponry. The Aelfrangers trade with the elves crops and animal skins for wine and textiles. They are expert at making war clubs, spears, and axes (the latter two from blades they've traded for), but they can't make other weapons of steel. The only armor they produce is leather or padded, although captured



armor from orc raids is repurposed, repainted, and shined. They take great pride in armor gotten through trade with elves and dwarves and only the richest or most famous Aelfrangers own those.

MORALS AND GENDER NORMS

Aelfrand society is a patriarchy, but the flashing anger of women and the fierce love for their children and families tempers this despotism. Still, women and children have few rights and are viewed as property. Marriage is hence a purchase of the daughter from her family, and the purchase is usually made in crops or oxen. Homosexuality is not particularly frowned upon, though, and married men and women sometimes engage in same-sex relationships that are looked upon as a different kind of friendship.

The people of the region know of writing from contact with elves but do not themselves write. They communicate legends by memorizing them and

telling them as stories. Men are expected to be either warriors, by necessity if not by profession, and honor is one of the highest male virtues. The society is extremely honor-bound. As herders, Aelfrangers must be quick to return insults with violence to discourage theft of animals. A man must be willing to fight for his family and his chieftain, and what is most important is not even that he win but that he be willing to die. Living with dignity and dying with honor is one of the best things a man can hope for. Fame (to be remembered) is one of the highest goals, and possibly their only immortality, for humans recognize that their lives are short in comparison with the elves and dwarves. The only art they really care for is music and poetry, and they were taught to use lyres by the elves. They do not paint or embellish their goods, nor do they overly appreciate the intricate decorations on the goods they receive in trade from the non-humans.

RELIGION

For the early part of their histories, Aelfrangers worshiped the spirits of the rocks and the hills. In the last few hundred years, they were taught of the existence of the gods by the elves and the dwarves, although both accounts were biased. The dwarves said their god was paramount, and the elves said theirs was. The dwarves said that all of the other gods (like Heshtail, Bestra, and so on) were dwarven gods serving Khuldul, and the elves said they were lesser elven gods in Tal-Allustiel's pantheon. The tribes were influenced by the dwarves and elves to start worshipping their Pantheon of Khuldul, Dhurli, and the "lesser dwarf/elf gods." But over the years, the people found the "lesser gods" to be more to their taste and started focusing almost all of their worship on them. They invented great tales and myths about these lesser gods, and the stories kept changing until barely was there mention of their ever having served the dwarf and elf deities. The "lesser gods," originally pictured as dwarves or elves, are now said to look like

Greater God	Human Name
Heshtail the Merciful	Hestiodos, Old Healer
Bestra, Lady of Goodness	Berenstra, Maiden of Harvests
Kantor the Crusader	Kastor the Warrior
Neltak, Lord of Law	Nerksos the Judge
Dekk, Lord of Balance	Deikkos the Wise One
Bel, Lord Thief	Belon the Trickster
Vornoth, the Dark Walker	Viablo, whose name should not be spoken

Lesser God	Human Name
Reeanan the Bright	Rhiana, Sun Maiden
Calbran, Lord of Luck	Caliphon the Blessed
Thrantan, Lord of Lightning	Theon the Thunderer
Aknor the True	Achon, Lord of Craft
Janora, Goddess of Fate	Jasa Star-Crowned
Flamgart, Fire God	Flauchus, Flame Lord
Grlarshh, Death God	Gaides, Lord of Death

humans straight from the four tribes. The preceding charts illustrate the true names of the gods (which are detailed in the *World of Farland Campaign Setting* book) and the names the Aelfrlanders call them.

WARFARE

Besides tribal skirmishes, the Aelfrlanders prey upon the even more primitive humans who live in caves to the north of their lands. They do so primarily to steal their women. Nominally, the Western tribes, the tribes of Aelfarus and Ledesus, have sworn fealty to Wawmar in return for trade rights; they are duty-bound to send bands of warriors when Wawmar calls upon them to do so. The eastern tribes of Alexandros and Patros have sworn fealty to the elves of the Satellite Cities and have a similar arrangement to the western tribes. All of the humans fight the wild orcs and the orcs of the Wintervale that encroach upon their lands.

Aelfrlanders know almost nothing of battle tactics, and their warfare is primarily a matter of each individual warrior trying to distinguish himself as a

champion. On the rare occasions when they gather in mass for warfare, each small group of soldiers crowds around their war chief. Upon sighting the enemy, they race towards them, shouting, and cast their spears when they get within range. They then equip their shields (large wooden boards covered in hide, when they can't obtain shields from the elves or dwarves), draw their hand arms, usually short swords, and move to engage. They will meet the enemy in a brutal and bloody skirmish and either triumph quickly or withdraw quickly. The people of Aelfrand know little of horses, though they have observed the elves riding them, and do not employ cavalry. Their armies consist entirely of light infantry.

HUMANS OF AELFRAND

Humans of Aelfrand are a warlike, honor-driven subrace. They are taller than the average human, tend to be good-looking and well-muscled, and usually have dark hair, although blond hair is not rare among them. Their skin is white or swarthy.

Names

Male names: Abad, Adelphius, Adonis, Aethon, Borus, Botur, Chares, Cleonymus, Damos, Diores, Doros, Eubalus, Eurybiades, Evenus, Faenus, Farius, Gelon, Gryllus, Hector, Heirax, Hyperenor, Icarius, Itheus, Kallias, Kebalinos, Kreon, Lampus, Lydus, Marcion, Menax, Menexinos, Neritos, Nestor, Oeneus, Orion, Pantares, Pheres, Plades, Polydectes, Rhexenor, Rizon, Skiron, Stentor, Syloson, Telephos, Thon, Tychaeus, Ucalegon, Vettias, Xanthos, Xenophon, Zenicetes, Zosimus

Female names: Adeia, Agarista, Amplias, Baucis, Briseis, Calliphana, Chloë, Cytheris, Danaë, Dianeme, Drosis, Eos, Eris, Feradne, Glauce, Gygaea, Harmodias, Hekabe, Iaera, Iomene, Iphis, Jocasta, Katina, Kynthia, Laodamia, Lyra, Megare, Monima, Nephele, Niobe, Omphale, Orthia, Persis, Phaia,



Polydamna, Raisa, Rhea, Sebasteia, Stratonice, Thaleia, Thessala, Thetis, Xanthe, Xanthippe, Zena, Zenobia, Zita, Zoe

Languages: You can speak Common (*Altarian*) and Aelfrandish.

Ability Score Increase: Your Strength and Wisdom scores increase by 1, and either your Intelligence or Charisma score increase by 1 (your choice).

Skills: You gain proficiency with the Athletics, Intimidation, and Performance skills.

FACTIONS IN AELFRAND

Four human tribes exist in Aelfrand. The tribes live in semi-peace, but they often skirmish. Right now, the two western tribes are allied against the two eastern tribes. What keeps the tribes from degenerating into open warfare is the spectre of the Wintervale to the east-- orc raids out of the icy mountains into Aelfrand are frequent, and all four tribes need to be willing to band together to fight the orcs. This is something they have had to do on a regular basis over the past few years, and it seems like the frequency of orc attacks is increasing.

The Tribe of Aelfarus: This tribe is named after the most famous of the human heroes, an ancient warrior who visited the Satellite Cities and lived among the elves. This tribe is located in Western Aelfrand, and they are nominally subjects of Wawar. They are allied with the tribe of Ledesus. This tribe can field about 150 warriors.

The Tribe of Ledesus: This tribe is also located in Western Aelfrand, and they are allies of the Tribe of Aelfarus. Like the latter tribe, they are subjects of the dwarves of Wawmar, who trade weapons and other metal goods with them for leather and foodstuffs. The Ledesians can field about 100 warriors.

The Tribe of Alexandros: This is an eastern tribe that feuds with the Aelfarians and Ledesians. They are subjects of the elves of the Satellite Cities and are allied with the Tribe of Patros. They can field about 125 warriors.

The Tribe of Patros: This tribe of Eastern Aelfrand is allied with the Tribe of Alexandros and are subjects of the elves of the Satellite Cities. They can field about 115 warriors.

HINTERLAND HUMANS

After the humans of Aelfrand, the people of the Hinterlands are the second most advanced human culture. Living south and east of the elven kingdom of the Sarumvest, these humans have benefited from the little they have been able to glean of the culture of the elves. Still, the Sarumvest has not taken the same interest in humans that the Satellite Cities have, and so human culture has not benefited to the same degree here as it has in Aelfrand.

The humans of the Hinterlands have not developed agriculture, although they fortunately find themselves in a region that is rich with plant and animal foods, and until recently, the proximity of the elves has protected them against the menace of Stor-gris. They are hunters and gatherers, but they erect semi-permanent villages, because it takes them quite a while before they have hunted and gathered all available food in the region.

Because they have little to trade, they possess few elven goods. Sometimes the wood elves of the Southern Sarumvest will take pity on them and give them weapons, textiles, or jewelry as gifts. Invariably, these items are treasured and make their way into the possession of the highest-ranked person in a village.

Because of the requirement that both genders contribute to food-gathering, there is great parity of the sexes among the humans of the Hinterlands. Men and women also tend to contribute equally to the



raising of the children.

In terms of war, these people are fierce in a pinch but try to avoid open warfare when they can, and prefer to flee from a fight rather than face it. Unlike humans of other areas, though, they have learned to construct bows, probably through contact with the elves, and like the elves, they are rather adept at sniping from a hidden position. But they are actually a rather friendly group as a whole and are welcoming of others, once they are sure they do not present a threat.

Like all humans but the communities of Aelfrand, the Hinterlanders are animists, worshipping the river, hill, and forest spirits.

Recently, their way of life has become threatened as the evil kingdom of Stor-gris ramps up for war. They find themselves caught in the middle between the dwarves, elves, and Dark Folk.

HINTERLANDERS

Hinterlanders are a peaceful but resourceful subrace. They tend to be of medium height or taller and are usually stockily built. Their hair is often brown, but many have red hair. Their skin is pale.

Names

Male names: Aden, Ador, Bair, Brado, Cael, Codin, Devot, Duncor, Finn, Forn, Gannon, Gral, Horul, Horut, Init, Irol, Jorun, Kasey, Kaal, Kelyan, Lorcan, Lortin, Mador, Mattit, Nale, Nevan, Oison, Orla, Quinn, Rorn, Ryne, Senan, Shornan, Tagan, Taran, Ulot, Zacat

Female names: Ada, Borada, Cata, Dunteel, Finna, Fortra, Gorel, Inia, Jora, Kasey, Kala, Lorcin, Mada, Macin, Nala, Nella, Ola, Orla, Orlette, Rain, Raina, Rali, Sheila, Sheila, Tora, Tara, Ullin, Zorca, Zorkin

Languages: You can speak Hinterlander; there is a 50% chance you can also speak Common (Altarian).

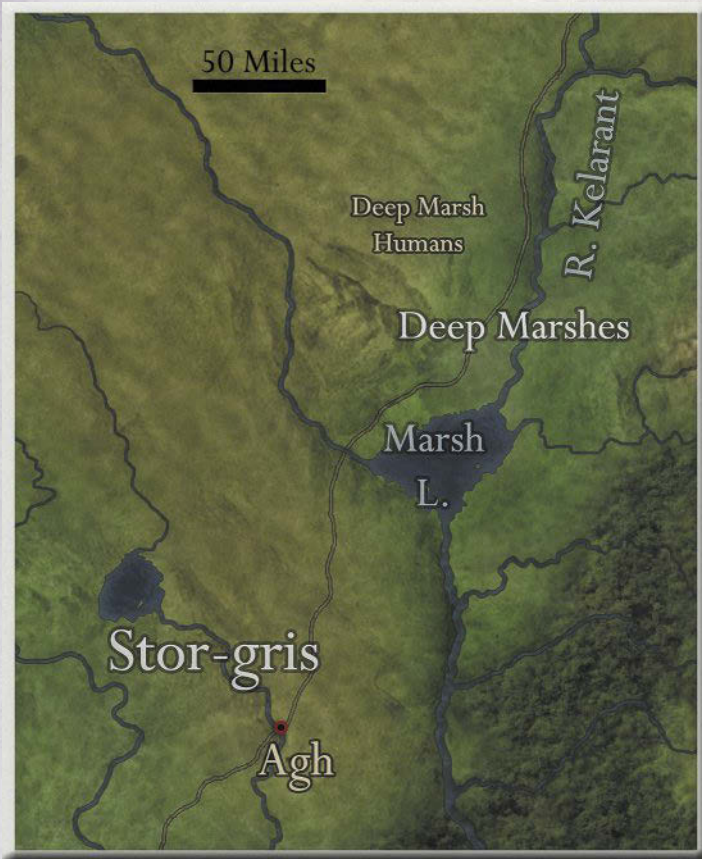
Ability Score Increase: Your Wisdom score increases by 2 and either your Dexterity or Charisma score increases by 1 (your choice).

Skills: You gain proficiency with the Insight and Survival skills.

DEEP MARSH HUMANS

A small human community exists on the northern edge of the vast swamp called the Deep Marshes. Several hundred years ago, a group broke off from the humans of the Hinterlands and migrated to the south, following the great river. They found themselves blocked by the vast marshlands, but food was plentiful in the area, so they remained there and became estranged from their ancestors in terms of language and culture.

These humans are broadly similar to those of the Hinterlands, but, having had even less contact with



the elves, they are even less culturally advanced. They are also hunter-gatherers, but they move around more, and their villages are less permanent. They have become expert swamp-dwellers, though, having learned how to hunt and trap swamp animals, and which plants in the swamp are safe to eat and which are not. Thus, they rarely venture far from the edge of the marsh.

The women of the Deep Marsh folk were quickest to learn about the plants, animals, and paths of the swamp, and they have jealously guarded their knowledge. For this reason, women are revered as healers and wise-ones, and the society has become rather matriarchal. Women even hunt with the men and serve as guides in the trackless swamp.

The swamp has an evil reputation among the creatures of Stor-gris, and they avoid it. Hence, the humans of the Deep Marsh enjoy a bit of protection from the dark kingdom. But the swamp has its reputation for a reason: in the center of the marshes

is a ruined tower, and in that tower dwells Black Danarus fel Sule and her coven of hags. These terrible beasts have begun to prey on the hapless humans who live near the swamp, driving them further and further north and west and reducing their numbers.

DEEP MARSH HUMANS

Deep Marsh Humans are a wise and retiring subrace. They are shorter than the average human, with tan or swarthy skin and dark eyes. They are usually of medium build.

Names

Male names: Aaut, Abeld, Adol, Balduin, Beltran, Bernd, Cort, Corin, Didrok, Dirk, Ditmar, Ebbe, Edzard, Eldrack, Falko, Farar, Farolt, Fiete, Gerd, Heimo, Hendrick, Lovis, Meiko, Meinrag, Ramon, Raul, Sieger, Sigfrid, Tommo, Thankmar, Ulrik



Female names: Abelarda, Adalberta, Adalyn, Aldana, Alysa, Bernada, Bertrada, Billy, Carly, Carola, Carlote, Della, Dietmut, Ebba, Edelgard, Edvige, Freda, Franka, Geltrude, Gerhilda, Hattie, Hedda, Helgard, Ilda, Jerika, Kia, Lamberta, Landry, Melna, Nilda, Odine, Ramona, Roz, Seida, Ute

Languages: You know Marsh Speak; there is a 50% chance you can also speak Stor-gris Dark Speech.

Ability Score Increase: Your Wisdom score increases by 2 and either your Intelligence or Constitution score increase by 1 (your choice).

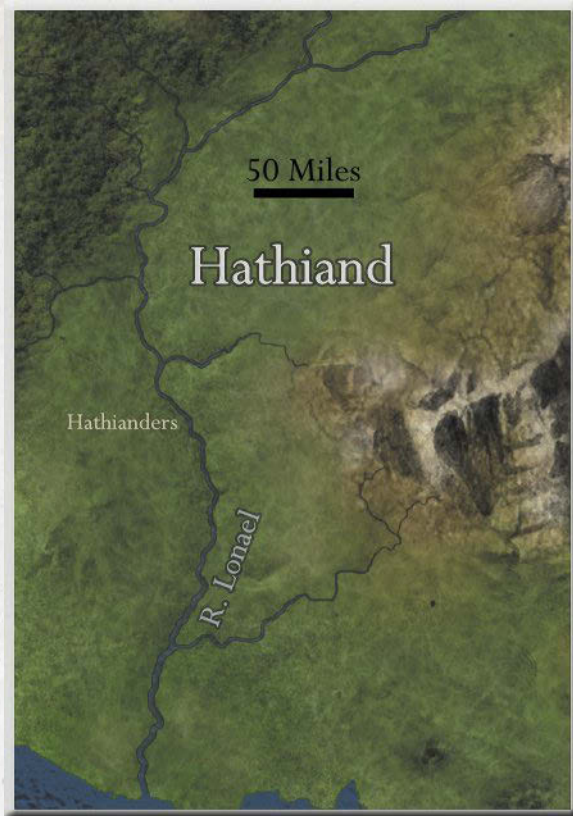
Skills: You gain proficiency with the Medicine and Nature skills.

HUMANS OF HATHIAND

The humans of Hathiand are wild and free hunters and gatherers. They know nothing of any culture belonging to speaking creatures besides their own, although in their distant past they did have contact with elves as well as the orcs of Rothnog, before that kingdom fell to civil war. They have forgotten these contacts and retain those ancestral memories only as myths.

Their society is arranged around tracking and hunting game, especially the wild elk that are plentiful in the region. They also kill wild oxen, bears, and cougars. Both men and women hunt and gather equally. They don't know how to make bows, so they hunt with slings, spears, and thrown rocks.

While they dress in animal skins, they have a very developed language full of adjectives and multiple words for animals, plants, and beautiful vistas. They neither write nor know anything of writing, but they are very accomplished singers, and their nights are occupied with regaling each other with songs that tell of their myths. Of all human societies, the humans of wild Hathiand come closest to the elves in love of and skill with song.



HATHIANDERS

Hathianders are a wild and free subrace. They usually have blond or brown hair, lean to medium builds, and are of medium height. Their eyes are often blue or green.

Names

Male names: Adan, Anfel, Artun, Baldwa, Bren, Christoph, Clemen, Edmor, Ethelreeth, Fult, Galfra, Gorget, Gyn, Hanth, Herlun, Jene, Joce, Kail, Kaler, Lanfre, Matris, Nikolat, Ollo, Osbet, Philipe, Ren, Robe, Rotan, Sinon, Tomas, Valen, Tacre, Yon, Zatre

Female names: Ala, Algeth, Arlette, Betrice, Brala, Catrila, Clare, Conla, Elenna, Elloy, Felitra, Forla, Gesla, Gunwel, Gwyen, Hewis, Heleyne, Ilayn, Iselotte, Jola, Jone, Juliette, Karena, Kerethe, Lafra, Letia, Lutrille, Mab, Maylne, Marjette, Olice, Olive, Olivia, Payla, Ronette, Rosamon, Sarra, Sibil, Vergrette, Ysabel



Languages: You can speak Hathiander; there is a 50% chance you can also speak Old Speech.

Ability Score Increase: Your Dexterity score increases by 2 and either your Wisdom or Charisma score increases by 1 (your choice).

Skills: You gain proficiency with the Nature and Performance skills.

NORTHERN CAVE-DWELLERS

The most primitive society of humans on Siriand (there are additional human cultures on the other continents of the planet Núrion), the humans who dwell in the caves north of Aelfrand are also physically distinct. They are less gracile and more robust than the other humans on the continent, being generally shorter, stockier, and stronger. Their vocal apparatus seems less suited to speech, and they employ a language that is simpler in terms of phonemes and vocabulary. Some elven scholars theorize that they are actually a different type of humans, cousins to the more common variety. Whatever the truth of this contention, they are clearly humans.

Northern humans dwell in caves found in the southern edge of the Erethel Mountain range. Well

adapted to cold and altitude, these humans wear thick furs on their bodies and feet. Because the growing season is short (and because they know little to nothing of agriculture), they depend primarily on hunting for their subsistence and are adept hunters.

These humans are fearful of dwarves, elves, and especially other humans, for they are preyed upon by the bellicose humans of Aelfrand, who raid them to take their women. The Northerners have no concept of organized warfare, and while their physical strength and hunting skills can make them formidable one-on-one opponents, they are easy prey for any organized band of warriors.

The Aelfrangers consider them “cave men,” and though they are right in a sense, the Northerners have tender hearts, loving their mates and kin, and they engage in touching burial ceremonies, interring their dead in the fetal position and covering them



with flowers or other symbolic objects.

They know little of art, and while they do enjoy music, they are unskilled in it, and have unlvely singing voices. It is almost as if their vocal apparatus are unsuited to it. They decorate the walls of their caves with fanciful images of animals and monsters they have encountered. The only other art they engage in is the tattooing of their bodies. Only males get tattooed.

CAVE-DWELLERS

Cave-Dwellers are a hearty, primitive subrace. They are short, powerfully built, with barrel chests and strong limbs. Their hair is brown or black, and they rarely style it in any way.

Names

Male names: Adon, Akama, Allambe, Bulun, Bardo, Borwon, Deran, Dorak, Ganan, Jarrah, Jerah, Kolet, Kolya, Koora, Koorong, Maka, Mallee, Mandu, Marron, Matari, Mogo, Monti, Mowan, Myall, Noka, Orad, Tuart, Uwan, Warrain

Female names: Akala, Alba, Allora, Borina, Binda, Darri, Eerin, Ekala, Ellin, Gana, Jannalli, Jiba, Kaya, Kala, Kirra, Kolora, Koorine, Korra, Maiya, Mallana, Manya, Marlee, Morree, Norlee, Olba, Orana, Orani, Pangari, Tirranna, Toora, Umina, Warri, Woorane, Yoori

Languages: You can speak Cave-Dweller; there is a 50% chance you can also speak Aelfrander with a thick, garbled accent.

Ability Score Increase: Your Strength score increases by 2 and either your Dexterity or Constitution score increase by 1 (your choice).

Skills: You gain proficiency with the Survival skill.

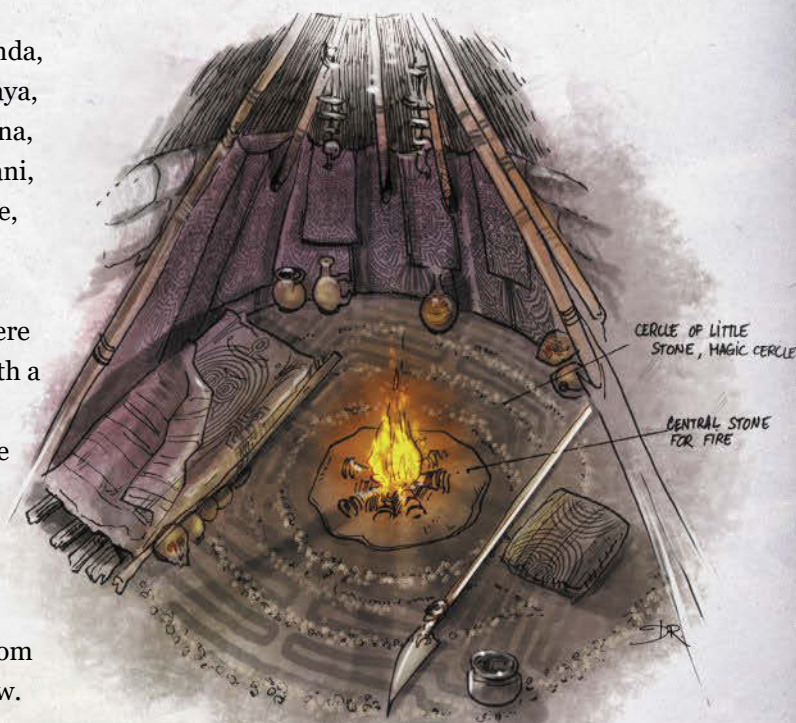
Adapted Eyes: You ignore penalties to Wisdom (Perception) checks caused by dim light or shadow.

ENSLAVED HUMANS

Humans from all cultures on Siriand can be found enslaved in Stor-gris. The Dark Folk of the evil kingdom prize human slaves for their adaptability and intelligence, and they seek out humans to capture when they can. Humans who are enslaved in Stor-gris face a terrible life of manual labor, starvation, and eventual early death. The humans long ago realized this, and most flee at the sight of Dark Folk, save for the Aelfranders, who fight them fiercely.

THE WAR

The only humans that engage in the War in any official fashion are the people of Aelfrand. The four tribes provide troops on demand to the elves and dwarves in exchange for favorable trade and payment. Under the command of dwarven and elven officers, these human war bands gain a semblance of organization and can be fearsome opponents.





CHAPTER 4: GNOME AND HALFLING CIVILIZATIONS

GNOME SOCIETY

Gnomes live primarily in and around their hill-warren of Haltulontelim in the western foothills of the Grand Peaks. They call themselves *Tendenarruk* [ten-den-ARE-uck]. They are an odd race that stands between 3 and 4 feet tall and weighs between 40 and 60 pounds. Physically, gnomes vary a great deal in appearance, and elven scholars have questioned whether they should even be considered a single species, but this is not a question that seems to worry gnomes themselves: they have no problem considering all gnomes as the same species, regardless of their disparate appearances.

Some gnomes are thin and waif-like, while other gnomes are portly and rather dwarfish. Some gnomes are bald with huge eyes, while others have flowing hair and tiny, dark eyes. Some gnomes have round ears that appear like human ears. Some gnomes have large, pointed ears that are substantially bigger than elvish ears, and some gnomes have ears that are even more exotic and oddly shaped. Gnomish hair color ranges from natural colors (like brown, blond, black, and gray) to strange colors (like purple, green, and pink). Eye color also varies but it is usually paler: light blue, green, or gray; gnomish eye colors are rarely exotic in hue.

Gnomish society is divided into castes, and although their society is not so regimented as it will later become, nor are there so many castes, their society is still defined by its restricted caste structure. Gnome castes are defined first by the subrace of gnome (each subrace has its own caste, or more than one caste) and second by the profession of the gnomes within the caste. Gnomes don't, though, use caste to discriminate. Gnomes are often quite proud of their caste and don't ever seek to change castes.

Gnomes and halflings would rather be left to their own devices. Both races have been rather isolationist, but don't let that fool you-- they're resourceful and surprising. If you want to play a small person with outsized courage and unique powers, consider playing a gnome or halfling.

GNOME TRAITS

Ability Score Increase: Your Intelligence score increases by 2.

Age: Besides elves, gnomes are the second most long-lived race. As a gnome, you mature at the same rate humans do, and you are expected to settle down into an adult life by around age 40. You can live 350 to almost 500 years.

Alignment: Gnomes are most often good. Those who tend toward law are sages, engineers, researchers, scholars, investigators, or inventors. Those who tend toward chaos are minstrels, tricksters, wanderers, or fanciful jewelers. Gnomes are good-hearted, and even the tricksters among them are more playful than vicious. You can choose any alignment.

Size. Tunnel and Fairy gnomes are between 3 and 4 feet tall and average about 40 pounds. Your size is Small. Crown gnomes are taller.

Speed: Your base walking speed is 25 feet.

Darkvision: Accustomed to life underground, you have superior vision in dark and dim conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Gnome Cunning: You have advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.

Languages. Gnomish, common (*Altarian*) or Dwarven.

Names. Common gnome names are detailed at www.farlandworld.com.

Subrace. Three gnome subraces exist: Crown Gnomes, Tunnel Gnomes, and Fairy Gnomes. Choose one of these subraces.

CROWN GNOMES

The ruling class of the *Tendenarruk* are the Crown Gnomes, the Bal caste. The Bal caste gnomes tend to be quite stout and are the most dwarf-like of gnomes. Elven scholars have speculated that dwarf blood is strong in them. Crown Gnomes don't mind this idea, but the dwarves are resistant to it. Crown Gnomes are skilled diplomats and politicians, and tend to be bold; they often serve as the first point of contact with other races.

Size. Crown Gnomes are the physically largest gnomes. Average height for these gnomes is around four feet tall. Average weight hovers around 60 pounds. Female and male Bal gnomes are around the same size. Your size is small.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Born Leader. You gain proficiency in the Charisma (persuasion) skill. You know the *friends* cantrip. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for it.

TUNNEL GNOMES

The Tunnel Gnomes, as they refer to themselves, are physically smaller than the Bal caste, but still larger than their cousins the Fairy Gnomes. Outsiders call these gnomes Rock Gnomes. They are mostly miners by profession but also are well known for their inventions and illusions. Gnomes of the Dam and the Ka castes are all members of this physical type. Tunnel Gnomes are equivalent to Rock Gnomes from the 5e SRD.

FAIRY GNOMES

This group of gnomes are physically the most disparate—and most strange. They seem almost as much fairies as they are gnomes. They are the smallest gnomes, rarely growing taller than 3 feet, and they rarely weigh more than 40 pounds. Their hair color, ears, facial features, and body structure vary widely. Sometimes (albeit rarely) they even have animal features, such as dog tails or cat ears. Fairy Gnomes are members of the Pal and Sag caste.





Size. Fairy Gnomes are between 3 and 3.5 feet tall and average about 40 pounds. Your size is small.

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Fairy Magic. When you complete a long rest, choose a cantrip at random from the Bard spell list. You can cast that cantrip until you complete a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for it.

Forest Camouflage. You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide in forested terrain.

HISTORY

Gnomish history is a bit confused. The gnomes themselves have a legend that the genesis of their race occurred when the dwarven god Dhurli Ironbeard mated with a powerful demon temptress. The fruit of this union was the gnomish god Barlifandorf, who then created the gnomes in her own image. Elven sages doubt this tale, deeming it mere mythology, because they note that the gnomish race have no traits that are in any way demonic. The elves believe that the origin of the gnomes may lie in the mating of dwarves with fey or fairies from Tanis, the Feywild.

The dwarves find this idea sacrilegious and try to

suppress any discussion of it. Mention of this idea in Wawmar is enough to cause some serious displeasure among the priests of the Church of Khuldul and Dhurli.

The earliest histories that speak of the gnomes have them appearing around 500 to 800 years after the founding of the first dwarfhold Liferock. The origin of the gnomes seems to be something of a mystery to the dwarves, but from the first, the gnomes were treated as cousins by the dwarves. Many were invited to dwell within Liferock, but most gnomes seemed to prefer tighter, smaller, more warren-like tunnels; they lived near Liferock in a maze-like warren they called Entelukaz.

The gnomes seemed to have lived in harmony with the dwarves for several thousand years, with the dwarves protecting them from enemies. However, sometime in the early history of the Realm of Rothnog, the dwarves and gnomes seem to have had a falling out over some sort of trade dispute. The gnomes then suffered deprivations at the hands of the evil kingdom of Rothnog without the dwarves being as diligent in their protection as they had been in the past. When the dwarfhold of Liferock was destroyed by Rothnog, the gnomes fled the Erelom Mountains and began a long migration south and east. Over the centuries that followed, they founded several homes, only to desert them as danger or famine encroached. Finally, the gnomes founded their most permanent home since Entelukaz: Haltulontelim, a hidden warren in the foothills of the Grand Peaks, on the eves of the dark wood called the Lutanium.

Breathing a sigh of relief that they'd escaped the ravages of Rothnog and other dangers caused by the Dark Folk, the gnomes were horrified to later find themselves too close to the newly-founded Dark Folk kingdom of Stor-gris; and this evil realm, under its ruthless leader Karoxfang, made Rothnog look appealing.

CULTURE

Although it did not start out so, gnomish society has grown more regimented over the years until five castes have developed. This is odd to outsiders, as gnomes appear so carefree, but it seems to provide a sense of security and comfort to the gnomes themselves.

The leader caste among gnomes is the Bal caste, the Crown Gnomes. Dwarven blood seems strongest in these gnomes. Males wear long beards, and all Bals are stout and quite tall for gnomes. Their hair color is normally some shade of brown or gray. Their ears look quite round and have little of the elongation, pointiness, or odd variation that some of their brethren show. The position of the Bal caste leaders on any important matter is almost always the position of the gnomes as a whole. Rarely do any gnomes disagree with Bal decisions. This caste of gnomes tends to be swarthy skinned and have the darkest eye colors. Although it is rare, Bal gnomes sometimes even have black eyes. Individuals with black eyes are considered quite mysterious and powerful by the gnomes. Eye color is very important to gnomes, with darker colors being considered more blessed. The gnomes of the Bal caste are often politicians, judges, and warriors when need be. When these occupations are not needed, they mine or engage in inventing odd instruments and creations, although they don't tend to be as talented in this respect as the Dam or Sag castes.

Tunnel Gnomes belong to the Dam and Ka castes. Many of the Dam caste engage in the arts and become poets, bards, and writers. Other professions in this caste include guards, miners, and strategists. The Dam caste is most honored, after the Bal caste, and the Bals respect the Dams a great deal. Many Dam caste *Tendenarruk* are also skilled magicians, and they tend to be wizards, choosing to study magic from books. The majority of renowned gnomish inventors and tinkerers come from the Dam caste, and in fact the skill of the Dam caste in this regard has caused outside races to look on all gnomes as

being good with inventions.

The *Tendenarruk* of the Ka caste are mostly miners and usually take great pride in their skill at appraising precious metals and gems. Many gnomes of the Ka caste have some ability in sorcery. They use their magic to assist them in their mining, but they also have a special penchant for illusion, and have used such magics to hide the approach to their warren-home. Within this caste there is a sub-caste of sorcerers specializing to an even larger extent in illusion magic. They are a very mysterious group and are known as the Mountain Shadows (if the translation is correct).

Half of all Fairy Gnomes are members of the Pal caste. These gnomes are fond of pranks and practical jokes. They have often been employed over the years as court jesters. They prefer to dwell in the wooded areas of the Lutanium near their warren-capital. They are quite gifted farmers and are able to bring impossible yields out of the rocky hills and woods surrounding their home. They also hunt and gather, and their skill with woodlands makes them great rangers and trackers. While they don't tend to write down their creations, members of this caste love to invent poems and songs, and their squeaky, high-pitched voices, raised in song, often fill the forest where they dwell. When the very rare animal features appear in gnomes, it is invariably on a member of the Pal caste.

The other half of Fairy Gnomes are members of

Gnomes are rather localized in terms of geography. The only places they can reliably be found are their burrow of Haltulontelim and the surrounding valleys and woodlands, and several dwarven communities within which they have created small sub-communities.

the Sag caste. They too work primarily as farmers, but they tend to prefer to live in open, rolling hills and valleys. They are just as given to pranks and tricks as the Pals, and they use their natural magic ability to amuse themselves when they can. They rarely sing, though, and prefer instead to engage in skits and plays, acting out stories for their own pleasure and using their magic to enhance their performances. After the Dam caste, many Sag caste gnomes have a talent for tinkering and inventing. And while the average Sag gnome is not as good as the Dam gnomes, the most famous inventors among the gnomes have actually come from the Sag caste.

INTERACTION WITH OTHERS

Gnomes have waffled between a policy of strict isolationism and limited isolationism. Right now, they are pursuing a policy of limited contact with other races. Gnomes used to be most kindly disposed towards dwarves, but they have never forgotten their ancestral falling out with the dwarves of Liferock.



Today, they tend to view dwarves as friends, and many gnome traders live among the dwarves, but they also view them with a reserved wariness, seeing the dwarves as ultimately greedy at heart.

Tendenarruk view elves as allies, but they see them as aloof and ultimately uncaring of what happens to the gnomes (this view may not be entirely fair). Gnomes prefer to do their business with dwarves but will trade with and even lend military aid to the elves when necessity dictates. The gnomes do seem to find comfort in the fey ancestry of the elves, perhaps viewing them as distant kin on some level; the elves would likely take exception to this view.

Gnomes are suspicious of humans, seeing them as overly violent and unsophisticated. Moreover, too many humans engage in behavior that sometimes seems orc-like. Yet their isolationism has blinded the gnomes to the courage and sensitivity that can also be found in the hearts of humanity.

Gnomes like halfings the most out of all the good races. They see halfings as lacking the brutishness in humans and as being primarily a good-natured people; plus, if truth be told, gnomes appreciate the size of halfings and feel that they can deal with them on equal footing, rather than being intimidated by someone who is larger than they.

Gnomes hate all Dark Folk races. They prefer to stay far, far away from them but will fight or hinder them when they can.

THE WAR

Gnomes are not cowards by any means, but open warfare has never been their forte. Initially, they were largely protected by the dwarves of Liferock and saw no need to know the art of war. That changed all too soon, and gnomes had to learn to defend themselves. They engaged in multiple skirmishes to support the elves and dwarves, and gnomes did indeed send troops to the final battles against Rothnog, but their might has never been in open

warfare. Because of their small size, gnomes prefer not to take the field against armies of orcs, hobgoblins, or other Dark Folk. They would rather use guerrilla tactics, or even better, lay traps or sabotage supply lines and bridges. They make good use of their illusion magics to mislead and waylay their enemies, and they are often able to use their interesting inventions in a bellicose manner. If pressed, they could field an army of 1000 gnomes, half archers and half infantry.

They have avoided engaging in action against Stor-gris for the last few centuries, so as not to draw the attention of the Dark Folk kingdom and give away the location of Haltulontelim, but lately it is becoming more and more apparent to the gnomes that they need to do something to aid the elves and dwarves against the threat of Stor-gris.

HALFLING SOCIETY

Halflings, like humans, live scattered throughout the continent, but they have two main settlements: the primitive shires of the Western Delvings, located in the southeastern foothills of the Erelom Mountains, and The Hills, located near the gnomish homeland of Haltulontelim. *Hositan*, as halflings call themselves, look like humans, save for being half their height. They are often mistaken for human children. Halflings are given toward rotundity and savor every meal. They go barefoot as a rule, and the soles of their feet are as hard as leather, allowing them to travel over rough terrain without injury to their feet. The tops of their feet are covered with a thick hair that allows them to go without shoes even in winter. *Hositan* don't relish combat and prefer to avoid it, using their natural skill in hiding and stealth.

At this stage in their history, halflings come in two varieties: Shire-Dwellers, called "Outsiders" by their brethren, and Hold-Dwellers, called "Insiders," by the Shire-Dwellers. The Outsiders are halflings who never availed themselves of the offer of the dwarves

to come live in dwarfholds. These halflings eked out a living in the Hinterlands, slowly developing their cultures and eventually founding primitive shires. The Insider halflings are those *hositan* who accepted the offer of the dwarves and lived for centuries in their hold of Liferock and later their fortress of Wawmar. Only recently have the majority of Insiders come to live among their shire-dwelling brethren, having tired of the ceaseless strife that the dwarves have been forced to engage in with the evil kingdom of Rothnog and now Stor-gris.

HALFLING TRAITS

Ability Score Increase: Your Dexterity score increases by 2.

Age: As a halfling, you reach adulthood at the age of 20 and generally live into the middle of your second century.

Alignment: Most halflings are lawful or neutral good. You can choose any alignment.

Size: Halflings average about 3 and a half feet tall and weigh about 50 pounds. Your size is Small.

Speed: Your base walking speed is 25 feet.

Lucky: When you roll a 1 on the d20 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

Brave: You have advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Halfling Nimbleness: You can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than yours.

Languages: Insider halflings speak, read, and write Common (*Altarian*) and the language of the human community they live nearest to, albeit with a very different dialect that makes the language nearly a different one entirely. Outsider halflings do not write, although they have excellent memories and a very strong oral tradition. Insiders speak Common (*Altarian*) and Dwarven and can read and write both languages.

Halflings are a peaceful people who find themselves in a war-torn world. All the worse for them. But make no mistake-- they have a metal in their souls, and enemies underestimate them at their own peril.

Names. Common halfling names are detailed at www.farlandworld.com.

OUTSIDERS

Outsiders, also called Shire-Dwellers, have grown canny and tough living in the wild Hinterlands. They can endure great privations, and even though they really, really hate to do so, they are capable of weathering famines and droughts. They can also avoid their enemies or ambush them if they need to do so.

Ability Score Increase: Your Constitution score increases by 1.

Naturally Stealthy. You can attempt to hide even when you are obscured only by a creature that is at least one size larger than you.

INSIDERS

Insiders, those halflings who grew up in a dwarfhold or who come from ancestral stock who lived among the dwarves, are sophisticated and canny. They are often trained in a certain profession.

Ability Score Increase: Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Learned: You are proficient in one of the following skills: Animal Handling, Arcana, History, Investigation, Medicine, Nature, Performance, Persuasion, or Religion. You have advantage on checks for your chosen skill.

HISTORY

Halflings appeared with little warning. The dwarves seem to have encountered them first, because their largest community was near Liferock. It was situated in the foothills of the mountains, in a pleasantly wooded area. The dwarves first took them to be a particularly small race of humans; in fact, elven scholars still dispute if halflings are in fact best classified as a subrace of humans. The dwarves' first contact with halflings was when they rescued a great deal of the little folk held captive by orcs. They initially intended simply to help them heal and then release them into the wild, but they ended up growing fond of them. To the dwarves' discredit, while they loved the *hositan*, as the little folk called themselves, they viewed them as little more than pets, albeit remarkably intelligent ones.

For centuries, populations of halflings flourished in the dwarfholds. They were often put to work as a type of household servant. While they treated them well, the dwarves paid little attention to the capabilities of their pet servants. Unsubstantiated gossip of *hositan* able to read, write, or even speak a language began to spread among the dwarves, but these rumors were usually dismissed. Why would the dwarves believe such a thing? In the meanwhile, wild halflings continued to live in primitive communities in the wilderness, much as humans did.

Finally, an elven dignitary from Alustel who was visiting Liferock made the indisputable discovery that *hositan* were intelligent, indeed as intelligent as other races! Legend has it, he made this discovery when he was given a detailed and polite explanation of why nectar from the silver mossflower was superior to that harvested from the golden mossflower, provided it has been cultivated on a clay-rich soil, hence the unusually rich taste to that particular vintage. The tales say that the halfling servant responsible for this speech was Aldo the Quick, a lively young creature. He was immediately subjected to intense questioning, upon which it was discovered that the halflings had been developing

their own subculture within that of the dwarves for centuries.

The dwarves realized their mistake and made efforts to set it right. They encouraged the *hositan* to live free if they wished to do so, and they watched with pride as “their” halflings formally established an independent community within theirs. They also supported the Western Delvings, a prominent community of Outsiders. For a thousand years, the *hositan* near Liferock continued to flourish, living simply and keeping out of site. Even after the fall of Liferock, they continued their lives in relative peace. But they were not idle. Rare, adventurous *hositan* Outsiders made contact with elves and even gnomes. A story has it that one Ballin the Stalwart left his shire to learn the grand secrets of high alchemy from the gnomes. The legend says he returned with a recipe for mead that was grudgingly acknowledged as superior to that of the dwarves, but the resultant scandal caused the first true rifts in *hositan* society. This is also notable as one of the earliest confirmed breaches in gnomish isolationism.

Owing to their skill at stealth and avoiding notice, halfling culture both in and out of the dwarfholds continued to flourish. The halflings developed new subcultures within their own cultures. For example, the Stalwarts, stout gnome-friends and lovers of the societies of both dwarves and elves, were acknowledged as an emergent culture at this time.

Yet the *hositan* did not escape the evils caused by the ceaseless wars with Rothnog and Stor-gris. A peaceful people by nature and choice, fighting of any sort struck them hard. Many shires and hames worked to hide all evidence of their existenc. Meanwhile, just a few years ago, horrified by the recent battles between Stor-gris and the elves and dwarves, the last halflings still in Wawmar abandoned their ancient homes among the dwarves, unable to bear witness to more slaughter and hatred. The shires they founded or joined continued to send aid and supplies to Wawmar for many year. But now the *hositan* are fully on their own as the great war with Stor-gris looms.

CULTURE

Halflings are at this stage in their history more advanced than most human cultures but less advanced than dwarven, elven, or gnomish culture. They have a rich and intricate oral mythology and tradition. They are in their hearts a conservative people and they pass down their many traditions, myths, and stories by memory. They also have a great deal of varied rituals, conventions, and polite requirements that they transmit from one generation to the next via oral recitation and simple observation.

Until quite recently, there were largely two separate halfling societies: the “Outsiders,” those who were never “adopted” by the dwarves and who never dwelt among them; and the “Insiders,” those halflings who lived for centuries in dwarfholds. In the last few decades these societies have merged, and it’s been something of a rocky transition.

The “Outsiders” live in primitive shires, communities constructed mostly underground with



individual homes burrowed into the sides of hillocks and tors. These settlements are made to be hidden, and the round doors are usually painted green and disguised with brush. Those shirefolk who know the art of agriculture will set their tilled fields and livestock areas well away from their homes so that any who discover their fields won't know immediately where they live. In centuries to come, in safer times, shires will become more civilized, friendly places, with well-tilled gardens, hedges and decorated trees, and the wafting smell of baking bread. In the times of the strife with Rothnog and Stor-gris, shires are well-guarded and kept secret.

The *hositan* who live as Outsiders are rough and ready, and though they venerate their polite traditions, they are ready to flee or hide at a moment's notice, or if backed into a corner, to fight—long enough to enable themselves to flee. Many shires possess only the bare minimum of agricultural knowledge and subsist primarily on fishing and foraging.

Insiders have recently fled from Wawmar and the towns in its kingdom to be reunited with their kin. Unlike the Outsiders, the Insiders consider themselves civilized—they come from a long tradition of servants who pride themselves on their manners

and their skill with herbs, cooking, cleaning, organizing, and animal husbandry. Insiders invariably have long dwarf poems or songs memorized and will take any opportunity to recite or sing them. Outsiders regard the Insiders as odd dandies, while Insiders regard Outsiders as country bumpkins. Still, both cultural groups recognize the other group as kin, and they help and defend them.

INTERACTION WITH OTHERS

Halflings see gnomes and dwarves as friends. Gnomes they have come to especially like, primarily because they are similar in size and have made friendly overtures to them. While gnomes are very different from halflings, every halfling appreciates good humor and entertainment, and the gnomes manage to entertain them, whether they intend to or not. Dwarves the halflings view as something of an ancient benefactor—they recognize that the dwarves helped them in their times of need and sheltered them for many years, but they simply can't find much in common with them. Dwarves love mining and things made of gold and silver; halflings like family, food, polite company, and tradition.



Halflings see elves as proud and distant folk, far above them in their concerns and dealings. They recognize that they are a force for good in the lands, but they also feel that their presence has often caused more strife than it has prevented.

Humans the *hositan* view as cousins—perhaps rightly so. They note the similarities in appearance and anatomy and ponder whether the two races had similar ancestors. If they did, it was in the distant past, at a time neither race can remember. But they see humans as often representing what is unpleasant in their race—aggressiveness, anger, recklessness, and even destructiveness.

None of the good races like the Dark Folk, but halflings especially fear them. They have been unable to resist them through force of arms, and *hositan* are favored slaves in Stor-gris, so they do everything they can to flee and hide from orcs and other goblinoids.

THE WAR

The only contributions halflings have made have been by way of support to the dwarves of Liferock and Wawmar. *Hositan* made the lives of the dwarves more bearable as they fought their vicious conflicts against the Dark Folk. Because of their small size and generally peaceful demeanor, they have been unable and unwilling to engage in open conflict against the evil kingdoms. And even now there is little prospect that they will ever field an army, for these reasons and also because their society consists of separate, independently-governed communities. But some of the Insiders who left Wawmar chose to dwell in Lannael or in the dwarf towns, and there they have met those who machinate against evil. Some halflings have even been enlisted by the Intelligence Services of the elves and dwarves as spies. Time will tell if these rare few will make a difference in the War. The halfling communities are not capable of fielding an army in any sense.

Halfling factions are more of a source of amusement among halfling communities than they are a source of strife. Most halflings get great pleasure out of razzing the other faction, but if danger threatens, the factions will come together faster than... a thing that comes together really fast.

HALFLING FACTIONS

Stalwarts: Not yet a biologically distinct subrace, the Stalwarts (named after Ballin the Stalwart), are those halflings who as a result of the Great Mead-Brewing Scandal, took themselves off toward gnomish lands and coasts to found their own shires. The Stalwarts view the Hairfoots as dwarf-loving lickspittles, though they have no real animosity towards them, and do help them in times of need. The Stalwarts came up with the name “Hairfoot” for the other faction, claiming they had hairier feet (though this is objectively not true).

Hairfoots: Those halflings who viewed Ballin the Stalwart’s claim of having brewed mead superior to that of the dwarves as ridiculous puffery stayed behind in their traditional shires. They don’t call themselves “Hairfoots,” seeing it as a besmirchment; they prefer Shire-Dwellers. Ironically, in centuries to come they will adopt the term “Hairfoot” with pride. They look on the Stalwarts as arrogant, but like the Stalwarts, they hold no true animosity toward the other faction. They would band with the Stalwarts if danger threatened either faction.

CHAPTER 5: EVIL KINGDOMS

STOR-GRIS

The word "Stor-gris" has multiple meanings: it refers to a fortress-city, a domain, and an era. The fortress community of Stor-gris, built on the cliffs of a nameless bay, is to this point one of the most secure castles in the history of Nürion. Built under duress by a captured dwarven architect, its walls were constructed to deflect missiles from siege weapons, its location was carefully chosen for its defensibility, and its supply lines were well maintained. Indeed, the citadel is nearly as impenetrable as the mighty dwarfhold Wawmar itself.

The citadel of Stor-gris is the nerve center and capital city of the domain of Stor-gris, an area in the south of Siriand (the continent that would later come to be known as Farland) that stretches from Lake Sarnegar in the west to the Lutanium in the east and as far north as Alandel Lake in the center of the Hinterlands. The domain of Stor-gris is populated almost entirely by Dark Folk: orcs, hobgoblins, goblins, kobolds, and recently, oluk orcs. At first Stor-gris only controlled the land immediately around the fortress, but as dispossessed Dark Folk flocked to the protection of Karoxfang the Vile, its influence spread. Several cities, satellites and possessions of Stor-gris, sprang up in the surrounding lands, and many small towns grew up around these cities until the fortress indirectly controlled a domain encompassing some 75,000 square miles.

Because this kingdom has been in existence for such a long period, its borders often change as its enemies encroach and conquer the towns that lie on its edges or as the armies of Stor-gris return the favor. Internal strife sometimes threatens to split the kingdom as well, but having learned the lessons of Rothnog, Karoxfang the Vile has thus far not allowed

The evil kingdoms of Stor-gris in the south and the Wintervale in the east have caused near-limitless suffering thus far... and with the looming war, things look to get even worse. If the races of the light don't pull together to resist, the final curtain could fall.

this friction to blossom into full-blown civil war.

The policies of the domain of Stor-gris have also fluctuated over its existence, sometimes allowing trade with its enemy kingdoms, sometimes locking down its borders, sometimes persecuting or killing any non-Dark Folk found within its boundaries, and other times merely heavily taxing non-goblinoids. Stor-gris policy, however, has been consistent in several ways. It has always been a slave kingdom, and often simply being a member of a non-goblinoid race is reason enough to be sold into slavery. Stor-gris always brutally enforces its laws, often killing its citizens for what would be considered minor offenses in the realms of the elves and dwarves. Dark Folk in Stor-gris are also always responsible for serving in the military at a moment's notice, whenever their respective lord or boss orders them to do so.

Having been founded by loyalists to the Dweller in the Wintervale, whom they call the White Lady, Gorgwath in the Wintervale heavily influences the policies and decisions of the ruler of the kingdom of Stor-gris. Often decisions that are seemingly nonsensical can only be understood by considering the interests of the White Lady, and the rulers of Stor-gris communicate with the Wintervale on a regular basis. As the Dweller recovered from her defeat at the



Battle of Thunder Pass and slowly rebuilt her ruined capital city of Gorgwath (later to be known as the Nameless City—see the *World of Farland Campaign Setting* book), her influence has become more pervasive and more insidious.

Last, Stor-gris is an era. If one were to ask any inhabitant of Siriand what most affects his life, he would surely name the Dark Folk kingdom. The elven rulers in Alustel and the dwarven rulers in Wawmar rarely make a decision without first considering how it would affect their standing in respect to Stor-gris. The ceaseless wars that Stor-gris provokes have caused untold hardships for the residents of Siriand, and countless creatures have suffered privation or death because of it. In the long periods when there is not open combat between the non-human kingdoms and Stor-gris, a cold war of sorts is waged, and thus the origin of much military technology, weaponry, and spells can be traced to this period: fear of Stor-gris has caused the elves to create new offensive magic, and it has caused the dwarves to devise new weaponry and armor. In fact, the dwarves have recently invented plate mail because of the looming invasion by Stor-gris.

THE FORTRESS OF STOR-GRIS

In 9330 E.R., the armies of Rothnog and the White Lady were defeated at the Battle of Thunder Pass and were forced to flee, led by the evil Karoxfang, the White Lady's general. He saw the need for a greater, more magnificent citadel in which he could amass a huge army in order to withstand the leagued forces of the elves and dwarves and from which he could launch an assault on all of Siriand. He enlisted at sword point the rather unwilling services of Agralin X, the talented ancestor of the famed genius Agralin, builder of Wawmar. Agralin X was kept in chains, fed well, but nevertheless knew his



chances of returning home to his family were small. He was forced to design the most impenetrable fortress possible. This went against his love for his people and his better judgment, but he knew that if he didn't, or if he failed to produce a mighty home for the loathsome half-breed general, he would be killed and someone else would be forced to do so. So he resigned himself to his fate and decided to do his best, hoping that somewhere in the process, he would be able to pay back Karoxfang.

He and the general searched the southern shores of Siriand (the continent that would eventually come to be known as Farland) and found a suitable locale along a nameless bay to be of sufficient strategic position and geographically sound. Karoxfang set the parameters for the castle to be able to house 10,000 orcs, goblins and hobgoblins, segregating them by race; to have a grand courtyard capable of training and drilling the armies; to have imposing keeps; and to possess secret rooms and halls.

Agralin at first thought this to be a difficult task, but he was the latest in a long line of fortress designers and consultants. He knew that each inhabitant, even in the rigorous and Spartan living conditions of a military keep, would require about 200 square feet of living, housing and necessities.

This calculated to 2 million square feet of quarters. Added to a massive courtyard and footprints of several equally massive keeps, he found it would take a castle of about 2200 feet on a side to accomplish what was required. Karoxfang balked at such a huge undertaking and almost killed the dwarf for his seeming insolence, but after it was explained to him sufficiently, he realized that the project was on the scale of the construction of the hated Wawmar itself. He assigned his army to search the countryside to find orcs and hobgoblins in great numbers, to bring them to the site (as of this point, still undetermined) to work. Agralin got to the work at hand, that of locating the exact site.

He searched a 100 by 100-mile radius in a circle centered at the bay but found few places that would serve. Most of the locale consisted of rolling hills and shallow valleys, but none of them were flat enough, and at the same time of strategic value, to warrant use. He came upon a flank off the northwestern edge of the bay, however, where the hills were smaller, irregular, and jutted out from the fields. The southeasterly side of the main field bordered on an impressive sea cliff, almost 400 feet above the water of the bay. His grandfather had taught him of some

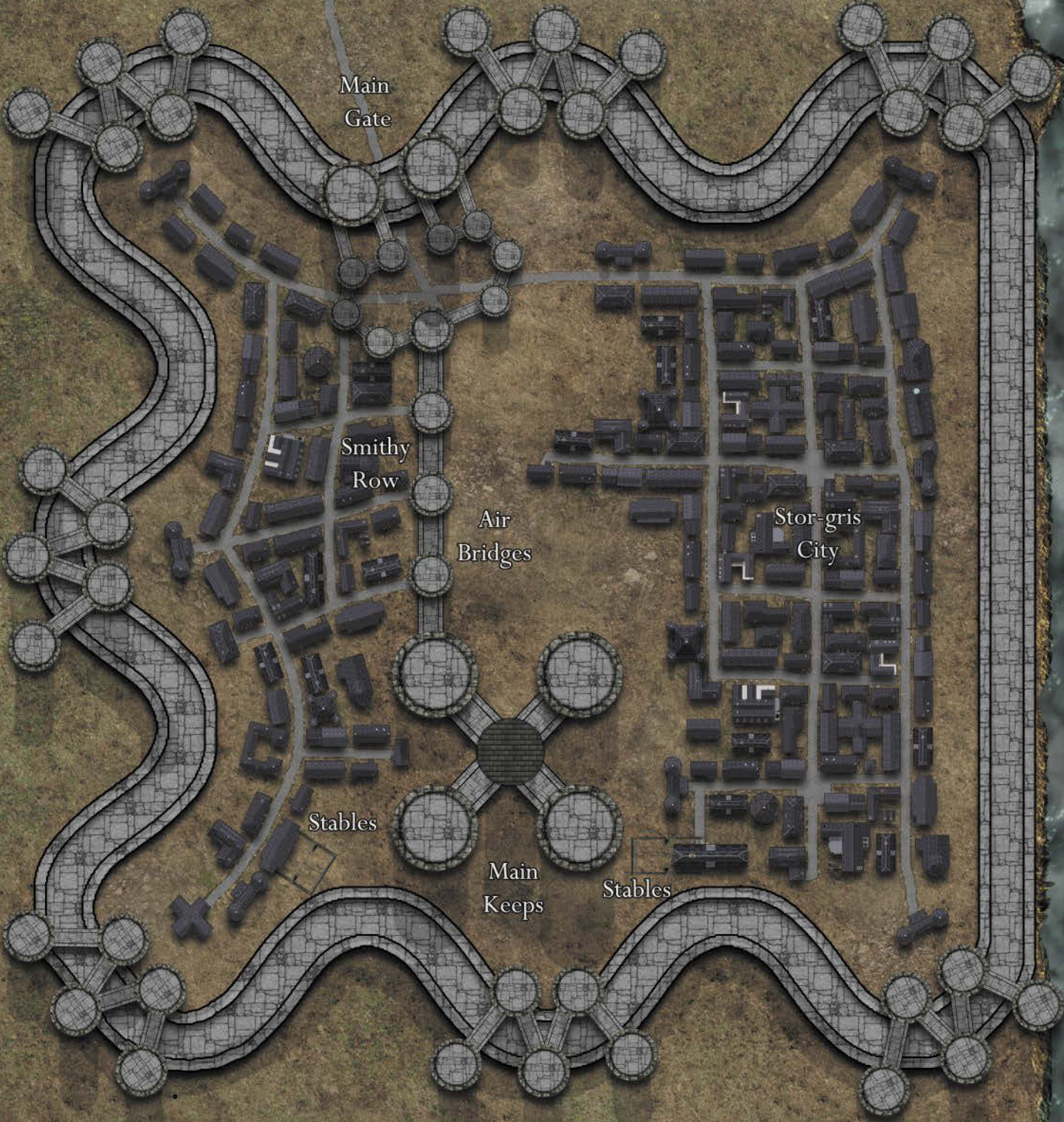
of the wonders of geologic formations, and he recognized this as a catastrophic seawall failure. The wall was semicircular, nearly vertical to a point about 200 feet down, where it began a gentle curve to the water's edge. At the edge was a beach, and about 200 feet beyond the quiet surf was a series of rocky peaks jutting eerily out of the water. It was as if a giant bowl of rock and soil had loosened from its perch, probably from constant wave action undermining it at sea level. It had slid with tremendous force and speed, rotating as it reached the water, then breaking up and depositing the large chunks of rock just beyond the beach. By sea, it was nearly inaccessible, as the surf roared between the rocks at high tide. This side of the fortress would be very safe indeed.

Satisfied, he returned to Karoxfang with the news of the possibility. The general was pleased, even elated, when he saw the bowl from a side bank. He imagined great halls beneath the ground, where he could employ dark sorcery to create armies of perfect soldiers, and secret passageways to remain safe. He quickly gave Agralin whatever help he would need to continue with the design.

Agralin and a team of several goblins began their survey. He realized that the hills within the large



The Fortress of STOR-GRIS



Main Gate

Smithy Row

Air Bridges

Stor-gris City

Stables

Main Keeps

Stables



100 yards



2200-foot square would be encompassed by the walls and would have to be removed. But since his captor was now so enamored with the venue, he knew he would have to incorporate the hills into the castle. He surveyed the base of the hills and the relative positions with respect to the proposed walls and calculated the amount of stone to be excavated. He assumed a certain percentage of rock could be removed in blocks, and knowing he would use the smaller sizes of stone and dust to make mortar, he realized he would have enough rock to create a dozen or more inner keeps, double walls, and sets of towers along those walls.

He then translated the quantities into dimensions. Knowing that curved walls would deflect blows from siege machines, he gave the walls a sinister, sinuous look, curving them in and out several times along each side. The outer points would have towers to allow direct attack on marauding troops. This would protect against those trying to attack the inner curves, firing on them from both sides at the same time. A second wall, placed inside and parallel to the outer, would allow troops to fall back if the latter was breached. This structure, coupled with a large main gate, would enable Karoxfang to house enough workers to continue building the inner keeps and lower halls, while soldiers began using the castle as a base of operations.

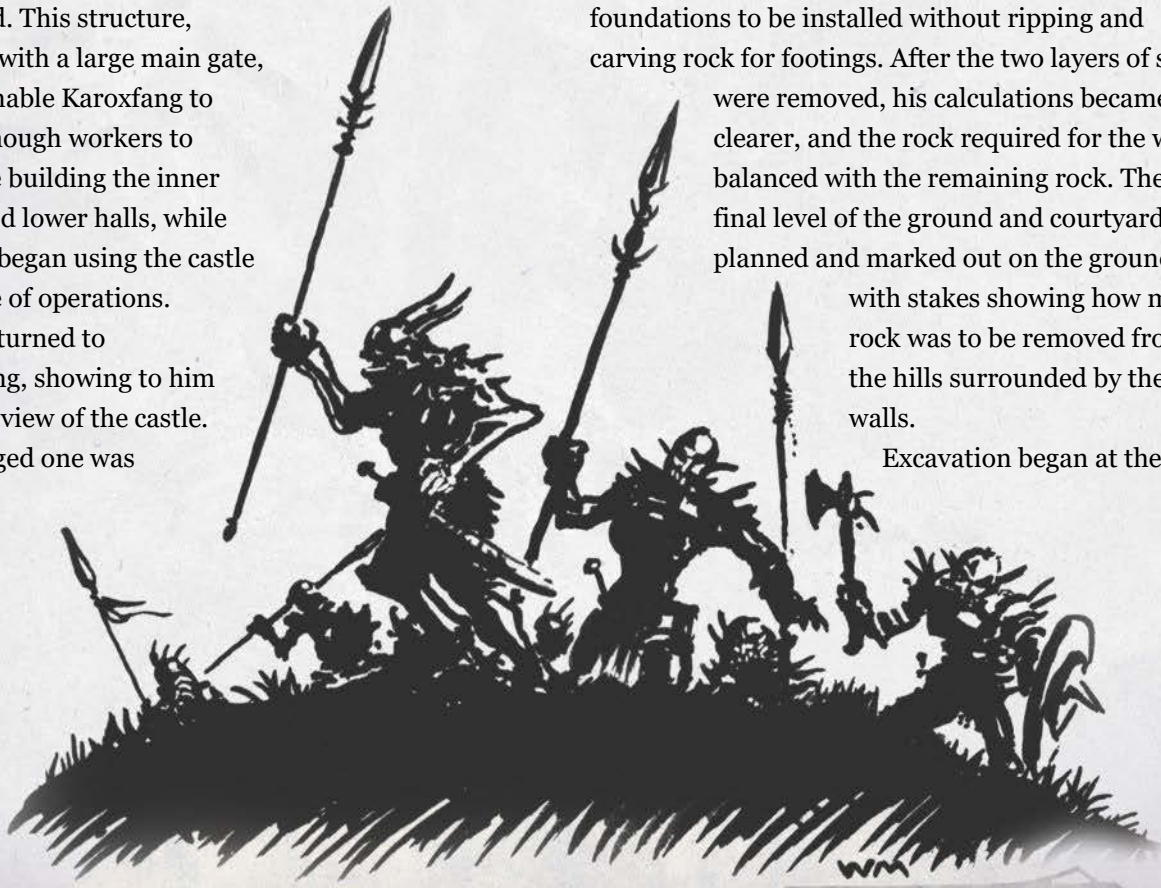
He returned to Karoxfang, showing to him the plan view of the castle. The winged one was

impressed by the scope of the project and knew his armies, returning with a huge labor force, could perform the work. He gave the engineer notice to proceed.

The dwarven engineer was blessed with a great understanding of construction and highly efficient organizational skills. He convinced the General that Karoxfang's time was best spent plundering and extending his reign and that he should relinquish control of construction to Agralin. He would run all decisions through Karoxfang but handle details and small points himself, to which his captor agreed. Agralin knew that generals are capable organizers but often are led astray and focus on minor points to distraction, and the dwarf didn't need that type of confusion. Besides, it would allow him the flexibility of design he would need.

The survey continued, this time not in a design- to-build mode, but in a construction phase. Topsoil was removed to locations outside the walls, and then the upper several feet of good, compactable soil was stockpiled within. This would provide a good base over the eventual sub-base of rock, allowing building foundations to be installed without ripping and carving rock for footings. After the two layers of soil were removed, his calculations became clearer, and the rock required for the walls balanced with the remaining rock. The final level of the ground and courtyard was planned and marked out on the ground, with stakes showing how much rock was to be removed from the hills surrounded by the walls.

Excavation began at the wall

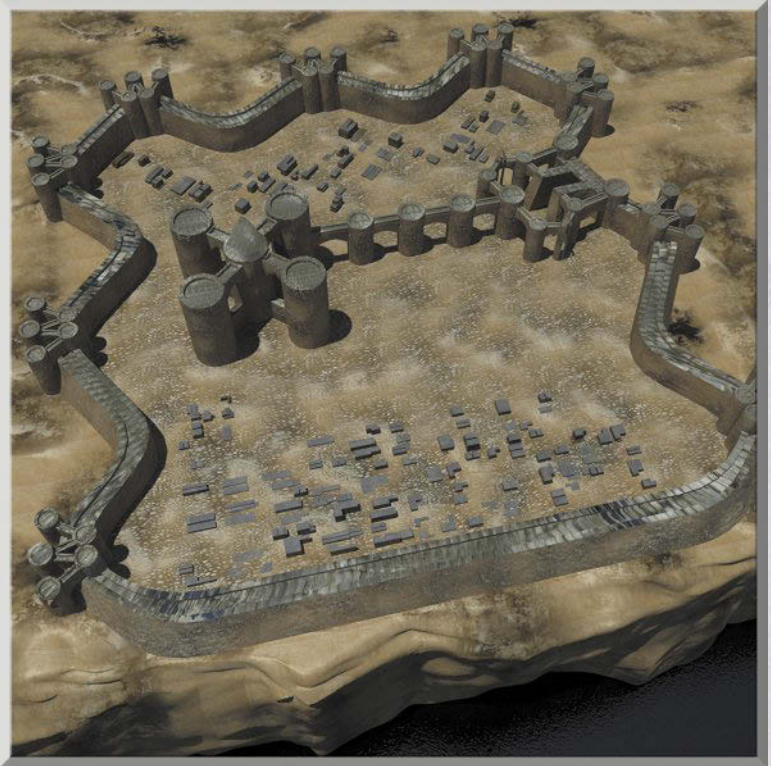


footings, an extensive platform created at the base of the proposed walls. At most locations, the bedrock was reached at the final footing elevation, but in some, most notably the western walls, earth was tamped to produce the desired footing. The built-up footings sometimes had to be tamped as deeply as ten feet, but final bearing pressures were achieved that would allow walls to be built.

The project turned from clearing and preparation to one of mining. The stripped hills were picked and drilled to release the limestone rock in blocks. The heavy, hard rock was removed in chunks as large as possible to maintain their structural integrity, and in as rectangular a shape as possible, to allow mortaring them tightly. Smaller stone and dust were collected, added to silica from the nearby beach and some iron deposits found nearby, fired over huge flames in several kilns built for just this purpose, and crushed to produce quite a strong cement.

The population of the workforce grew in the first year from a planning and survey crew of a 100 to about 5,000. Karoxfang extended his influence to dozens of miles, enslaving those who resisted and establishing treaties with other Dark Folk in the surrounding settlements. He allowed quite a few farmers to keep their land and raise food for the effort—at sword point, of course.

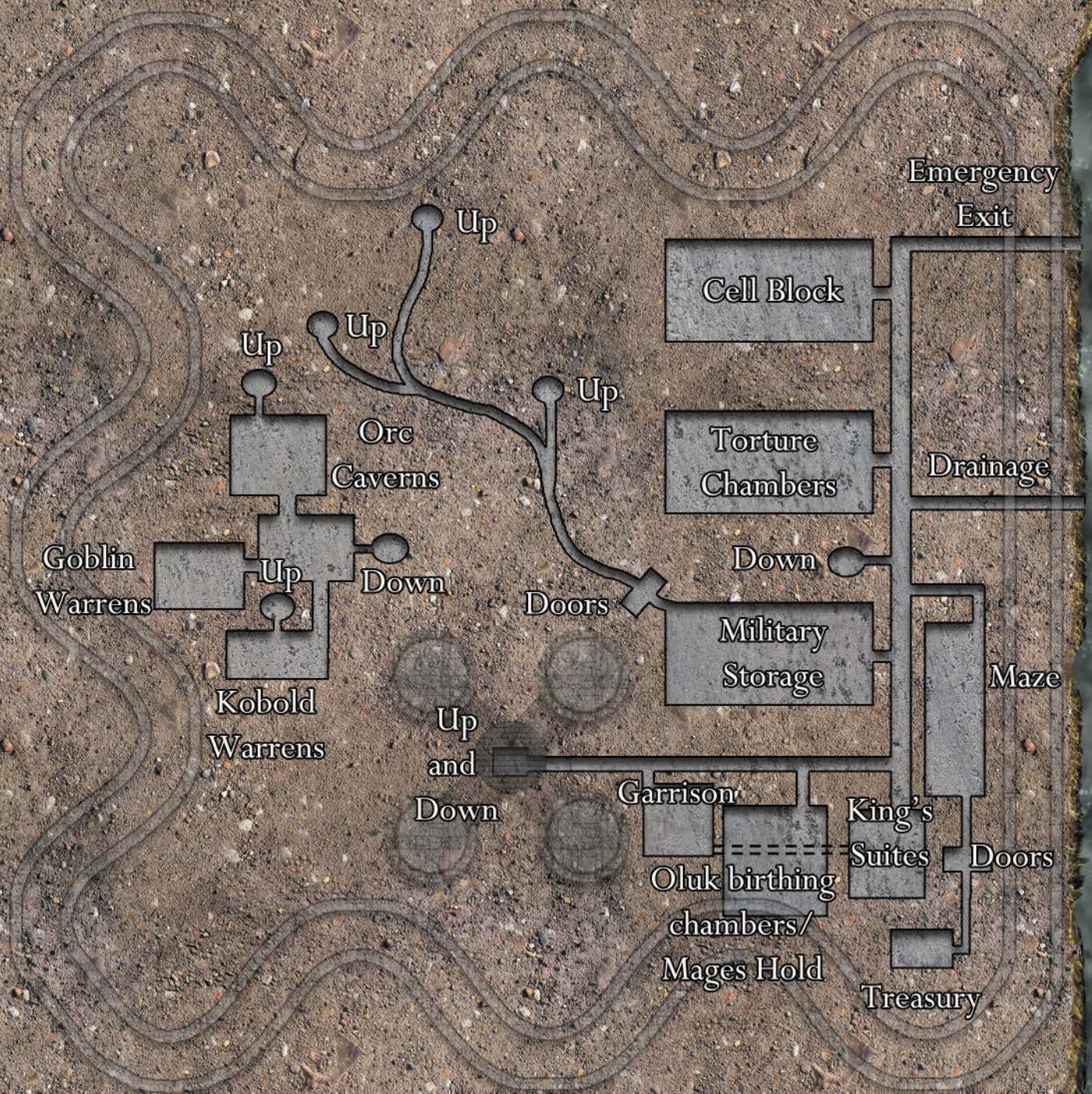
The outer walls were built with millions of tons of rock excavated from the hills, hauled to the site and carefully laid in by masons who, during the course of their forced labor, had become quite skillful. The five-tower systems were built along with the walls, integral with their construction. Curved stairs of rock were built inside the towers, which were adorned at the top with arrow slits, murder holes, and embattlements typical of those found in better castles of the day, but in greater numbers and scope. It was estimated that in the twenty-seven outer towers, plus the main gate towers, a force of as many as fifteen hundred archers could be brought to play. This



would be augmented by the eighteen rear towers and others stationed along the walls.

A "dead zone" of space was created between the outer and inner walls. This was used for housing for guard duty and castle maintenance crews. The annulus could be flooded with burning pitch if the occasion arose. The workforce expanded to 8,000, and work progressed more quickly. As the workforce settled in and the land became flatter and grew in size, housing began to spring up. Wooden buildings were built from trees felled outside the walls, and the castle's inhabitants naturally segregated themselves according to race and social structure. The wood was eventually replaced with rock excavated for construction of the lower workings. This action was required due to fires that eventually ensued from later sieges with flaming projectiles fired by dwarven steam-powered siege engines. The inner walls were built in much the same way as the outer, with two inner towers at each corner. After they were completed, there was still a sizeable amount of stone left for the keeps. The rock in the future location of the keeps was mined to produce the inner walls,

STOR-GRIS UNDERHALLS



Only general areas are shown.
Individuals chambers are not shown.
Hallways not shown to scale.

100 yards



leaving room for keeps to be built.

Another crew worked on the main gate. The main towers encompassed two huge gates, each pocketed into slots in the stone of the walls. The front, main gate was solid wood plated with steel on the front to prevent being burned. The inner gate consisted of a lattice-work of iron bars between which, in case of the first being breached, arrows could be shot. Both gates were counterweighted and extremely heavy, and the counterweights could be propped or disconnected if anyone attempted to lift them. Extensive embattlements were created, cantilevering out over marauding troops. Arrow slits and ladder repulsors were stationed along the walls to prevent the enemy from climbing the walls.

The main keeps were built in a square pattern surrounding the main tower. External stairs were built with rocks that could be pulled in from the inside to create a smoother surface to prevent climbing from outside. The four lesser structures would eventually house the lower officers and the city government, which would concern itself with the everyday workings of the castle and business. The inner keep was to exist as an entrance to the lower workings, which housed the more sinister doings of twisted military minds, as well as the quarters of Karoxfang himself.

A final set of eight towers was built from the main gate to the larger central towers. Each one was connected with arched spans to allow defenders to fall back as they were fighting, firing down on attackers. These "air bridges," as Agralin called them, would serve well in close fighting. The set of barbicans nearest the main gate consisted of five interconnected towers, serving to split the enemy into smaller, more easily defeated groups.

Agralin now began to focus on the lower workings. A main ramp was excavated downward from the main keep at a steep 10 percent slope toward the cliff face. At several hundred feet horizontal distance in, a guard dwelling and station was built, measuring about two hundred feet on a side. There, the elite guards would train and quarter, being in close

proximity to the General and in a location that would allow retreat and defense of a last-ditch nature. The ramp and surroundings were littered with traps and subtle defensive measures. A secret passageway was formed into the King's Suite (inhabited by the General), to be used for final battle. About four hundred feet further was the laboratory area, which later became the Oluk birthing keep. Wizards worked there, plying their sick and evil experiments, and their results, the Oluks, were eventually quartered there.

Four more hundred feet brought one to the military storage, an area for warehousing foodstuffs enough to feed troops during a siege, and for stowing weaponry. At the far end of this chamber was the beginning of about 1500 feet of passageways, ramping up to the surface. They exited in secret doors in the ground, sheltered and hidden beneath kiosks and wooden guard posts. These passageways allowed defenders to suddenly appear in the midst of battle, at and even behind the lines, spreading chaos throughout the enemy's ranks.

Emptying to the right was a passageway to the King's Suite. To get there, one first had to pass through an intricate, almost insolvable maze carved into the rock, often rearranged by wizards to suit the somewhat paranoid rulers of Stor-gris. The walk then led through massive doors to the chambers and the treasure room. Another passageway exited the workings onto the cliff face, accessible only by flight. A six-acre "persuasion" chamber was next along the path, followed by an equally large cell block. Wails of pain and horror often reverberate throughout the lower workings, even audible out the drainage holes to the beach and bay below.

At this point, Agralin had a suspicion that Karoxfang had no intentions of ever giving him his freedom once the castle was built. There was too much at stake to allow the engineer to go free with details of the structure, and both knew it. Agralin had a plan for the destruction of Stor-gris by sapping the walls, but it would be impossible for him to relay this information to the outside. So he began a

psychological plan to allow some sort of contact. He became surly with construction managers below him, belittling them to Karoxfang and building himself in the General's eyes. The demon-orc came to believe Agralin was the only one who could direct such a workforce, and in doing so, he became indispensable.

When the time was right, Agralin feigned deep depression, a move that he knew would not change the heart of the despot but which might allow him some sort of contact with his people. It was a risk, but it worked. He was allowed to write letters to his family, under strict guidelines. The letters were routed through the General's officers to make sure they didn't have any clandestine overtones or outright information that could be used to overthrow him or destroy the castle. Agralin then wrote quite a few poems, one of which was "The Ode to Great Stor-gris." Karoxfang was perplexed at the imagery, but when it was explained how it described the feeling of helplessness of those in chains in the castle, and that it was a tribute to its greatness, the demon acquiesced out of foolish pride. The poem became a

popular song among the dwarves, who guarded it carefully in their culture. It was reported that, upon the completion of Stor-gris, Agralin X was, in an unbelievable show of mercy, quickly and almost painlessly executed by the General himself.

In the distant future, the secrets of this poem were finally unlocked, and they brought about the eventual downfall of the fortress. When the Clan of Kain in due course brought it to the elven philosophers of the Lutanium, they decoded the lyrics and found that it contained hidden references to a method of destroying the seemingly impenetrable castle. These methods involved sapping the walls with acid, which ate away the limestone rock at specific places that were founded on rammed earth instead of bedrock. This poem, in a final posthumous act of irony and revenge, settled the score. Twelve hundred years later, Stor-gris was toppled with the help of simple acid at the hands of dwarven sappers, and the great castle was sacked by the dwarves and elves. But that is yet to come....



ODE TO GREAT STOR-GRIS

*The cold sea roars loudly at the face of the bay;
The cliff hangs heavy over the sand;
The fog moves in and covers trees
Where the stone walls reach over the land.*

*The trees to the west hide my heart and soul,
As the grass and shrubs line the road;
And the soft, sweet earth buries all my hopes
Of loosening all of my load.*

*Now Karoxfang, my new-found liege,
Directs my work and my strength and my will;
And I build a mighty castle of stone
On the side of a wind-swept hill.*

*His might and power does extend,
To the prostrate and the poor;
And they praise his name and sing songs to him
In the swamps and in the moors.*

*His fortress, tall and large and strong,
Will defy all attempts at breach;
Founded on sweet rock and tamped hard earth
To all lands its long claws will reach.*

*From the corner of my eye I can see
Five towers straight and true;
The curved walls and parapets do hide
My heart, so weary and so blue.*

*As the setting sun does play its shadow
Of the hill of rocky spires;
On the walls that will hold out all who dare
To brave the Great One's fires.*

*As I, in the Keep, sit to the East,
'Neath the starry moonlit field;
I breath the acid smoke of the fires
And to my master's will I yield.*

*The sweet lime rock of the Western world
Keeps my love for you at bay;
As the foundation of my heart does ring
At the close of another day.*

*In the cave I dwell that is this keep
Though it saps my will to leave;
As the walls of life come crashing down
In my heart, I will always grieve.*

*And as I lie beneath the soil
And gaze up at mortar and stone;
I will see you again on the other side
And will ne'er again be alone.
To My Love, Tossa-- Agralin X*

MILITARY AND DEFENSE

Leadership, order, and control are the keys to the success of the forces of Stor-gris. The growth of Stor-gris has ever been directly tied to their military leader Karoxfang. He rules with an iron grip, holding together vast hordes with his strength, cunning, and guile.

While the strength of the armies of Stor-gris is its vast numbers, that is also its weakness. With huge armies composed of undisciplined kobolds and goblins, leadership is essential. The great leaders of Stor-gris recognized this fact and set up a strict military hierarchy, with oluk generals and hobgoblin captains leading the armies, while goblins and kobolds serve as foot soldiers and canon fodder. Orcs are typically organized in groups of 20, known as "brutes," which are charged with keeping the lesser Dark Folk races in line.

Karoxfang established a standard for his armies to follow, a standard that has lasted for centuries and so far has brought unprecedented victory to the forces of Stor-gris. Ground troops always lead the way in combat, with goblins and kobolds plowing into the enemy first. The most fortunate of these troops fight

with weapons scavenged from dead elves or dwarves, although the majority of them are armed only with crude spears and clubs. In reserve are the orcish archers, vigilant watchers over battles. The first priority of these archers is not to destroy the enemy as many would expect, but rather to cut down any of the lesser Dark Folk ground troops who try to flee the battle without the order of the generals.

Several groups of special forces are employed by the armies of Stor-gris, including the famed worg and wyvern riders; powerful ogres with their orcish handlers; vanguards of strong oluk orcs; and magic wielders of power, particularly the clerics of the dark lord Vornoth himself. These special forces are always under the direct control of the field generals and are always held in reserve until the masses of ground troops soften up the enemy.

The Dark Folk rarely construct siege weapons, as the expertise and patience in crafting these is beyond most goblinoids. When they are able to gain such weapons, either by craft or capture, they are highly prized and controlled by the army generals directly and are typically manned by hobgoblin officers. While they occasionally use these siege weapons to knock down the walls of enemy structures, the favored tactics with this equipment is to launch captured prisoners--both living and dead--into



enemy fortresses. The objective in doing this is not only to dishearten their opponents but also to spread disease during long sieges. Currently, Stor-gris has patiently collected a large amount of captured siege engines, apparently in preparation for a grand invasion.

The fortress of Stor-gris itself is defended significantly differently from a typical location, as the majority of the occupants of the citadel are the "superior" dark races, primarily orcs and hobgoblins. While Stor-gris does include a large goblin and kobold population, the great mass of these creatures are housed outside of the fortress walls. The fortress itself does boast several siege weapons, including catapults and ballistae. Large stores of missile weapons and foodstuffs are available, and the soldiers of the fortress are well trained with their weapons.

SPECIAL WEAPONRY

As noted, the armies of Stor-gris generally do not develop special weaponry of their own; instead they rely upon overwhelming numbers and sheer ferocity to batter their opponents into submission. Sometimes they use captured siege engines to assault castles, and to create more weaponry, they produce crude but working copies of their captured engines.

Stor-gris has made some advances. The dark wizards of the Underkeeps of the Stor-gris fortress have produced new spells to terrorize their enemies. Generally, these spells are necromantic or otherwise mind-affecting, causing disease, terror, and death. The evil mages of the Underkeeps also devised new spells to raise undead to terrify their foes. Such creations are rare, however, for the citizens of Stor-gris are generally not inventive.

Stor-gris has nonetheless caused the production of special weaponry: they influenced their non-human opponents to produce it. Because of Stor-gris' overwhelming numbers, the residents of the Hinterlands have invented new and imaginative ways

to resist the dark armies. Elven wizards have created new, tactical combat spells to rain fire and ice on their enemies, and their productivity has far surpassed that of the goblinoid kingdom's evil wizards. Dwarves have been driven to construct heavier armors, such as full plate mail, and more dangerous weaponry, such as the dwarven Rune Axe. Most notably, however, the dwarves have produced weapons and siege engines powered by steam. These weapons are devastatingly powerful. Ironically the dwarves rarely employed such weapons, preferring to rely on their highly disciplined armies and mighty fortresses. The weapons and their plans have been sold to the gnomish race in trade, and the gnomes, physically weaker and lacking large armies, have employed them very effectively thus far to keep their hidden homeland safe. The dark armies do not use these dwarven steam-powered siege weapons when they capture them, as such complicated engines are beyond them; instead, when one of these engines falls into their hands, they destroy it beyond repair.

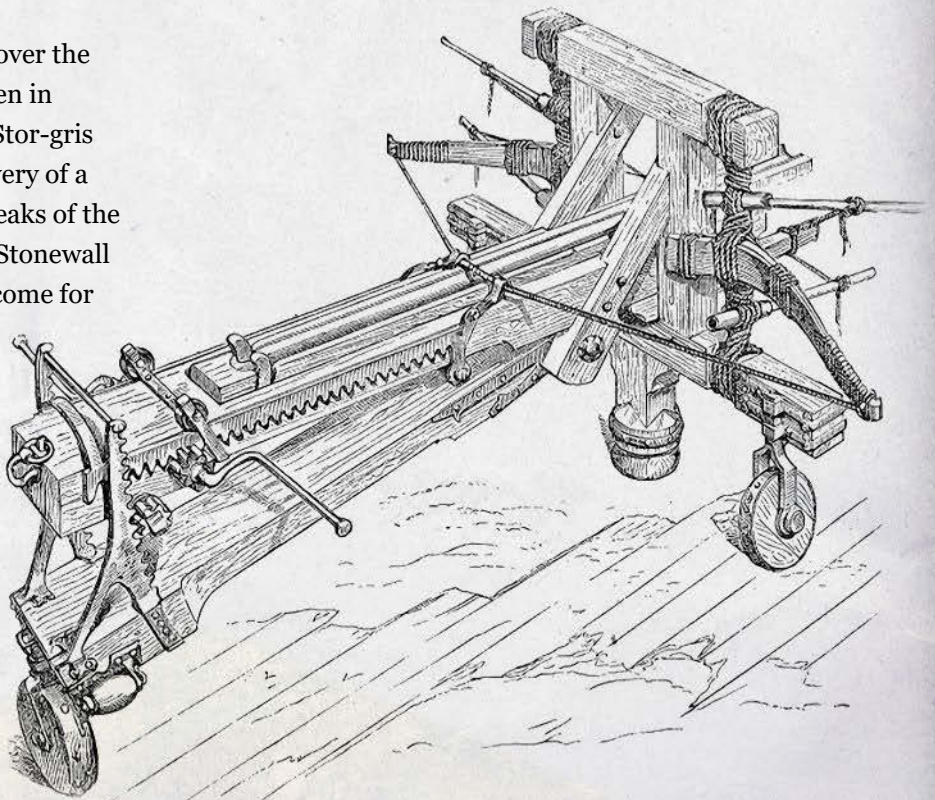
ECONOMY

The economy of Stor-gris has changed over the several centuries that the kingdom has been in existence. In the beginning of its history, Stor-gris was funded in large measure by the discovery of a rich load of iron ore in the southeastern peaks of the Balathil Mountains (later to be called the Stonewall Mountains). This mine produced great income for two centuries and even encouraged trade between Stor-gris and the non-human kingdoms, although this trade did little to bring about peace. In the third century of the kingdom's existence, however, the vein of iron ore was expended and the mine ceased functioning, sending the kingdom into a period of economic depression that encouraged the short period of relative peace that marked

the previous century; after all, fielding an army takes a great deal of money. But Stor-gris has apparently found a new source of income from the Wintervale, which has been trading crops and precious metals to the dark kingdom in return for slaves, weapons, timber, and crops. This wealth seems to be responsible for the build-up of armed forces in Stor-gris in preparation for the war of all wars that seems to be looming.

Some things are staples of the Stor-gris economy even during its economic down-turns. The domain is largely a feudal, agrarian society. The crops produced by the fields of Stor-gris are traded within the kingdom, to the Wintervale, and at times in the past even to the non-human kingdoms. Its agrarian foundation allows the riff-raff of Stor-gris to pay, barely, the exorbitant taxes demanded by the rulers in the fortress city.

The fields of Stor-gris are worked by thralls. Most slaves in Stor-gris are of the lesser Dark Folk races like goblins and kobolds, although non-human and human slaves are also common. The practice of holding slaves has had two effects on the economy of the dark kingdom. The ubiquitous slavery within



Stor-gris contributes to the high rate of unemployment that plagues the countryside during its periodic economic depressions, since slaves take the agricultural jobs that could employ the citizens of the kingdom. Since the rulers in the fortress city do not care if the inhabitants of the kingdom starve, however, this is not such a problem, at least for the rulers. On the other hand, trade of slaves in great open-air markets fuels the economies of the teeming evil cities, and slaves are a valuable commodity to be traded to the eastern lands controlled by the Wintervale.

The financial system of Stor-gris is further supplemented by constant raiding of elven and dwarven communities, and by the spoils of war captured by the massive armies of the Dark Folk kingdom. In fact, the entire economic apparatus is directed toward funding the domain's military machine, and often the treasures captured by the armies are simply channeled right back into the army. Still, the military is always the most reliable source of employment in Stor-gris.

DAILY LIFE IN STOR-GRIS

The quality of a goblinoid's life in the Dark Folk kingdom depends on which social position the goblinoid occupies. Those of the lowest echelons are often enslaved. Kobolds have it worst in this respect. Indeed, the tiniest of the Dark Folk are most often slaves themselves, although rarely do other Dark Folk bother to pen them up or keep a watch on them. It is cheaper to let one's kobold thralls fend for themselves, and if a few go missing, kobolds are plentiful and easily captured. It is well within the law of Stor-gris to enslave kobolds for any reason or for no reason at all, and everyone except the kobolds themselves agrees that they deserve this fate. Goblins have it little better, although they generally have to commit some sort of a legal offense to be enslaved. Often, however, the charges brought against goblins are of the flimsiest nature and are merely trumped up

to enslave the creatures.

Orcs can also be slaves, although they can only legally be enthralled to other orcs, hobgoblins, or oluks. More often, smaller orcs are simply peons and workers, performing for a low wage heavy labor too difficult for the tiny Dark Folk slaves; or they are unemployed residents of the slums of the large cities, living by theft and murder. Larger orcs spend most of their lives as infantry in the armies of Stor-gris, where they face bare-subsistence rations (if they are lucky), backbreaking labor, and an early death at the hands of a dwarf, elf, or another goblinoid.

Hobgoblins and oluks have it somewhat better: while they are still expected to fight at the behest of their lord and thus often face violent deaths, while they are alive, they can expect the best share of rations and the most comfortable living quarters available. Hobgoblins and oluks are the only residents of the domain that do not face constant starvation, for when they do, they simply take food from the weaker residents. Unlike the kobolds and goblins, who merely wish to survive, and the orcs, who only seek to inflict pain on others while avoiding it themselves, hobgoblins and oluks actually aspire to something better, generally a higher military station. Some fortunate members of these races actually become generals and rulers of cities.

Those who wield any kind of magic also have a special sort of respect in Stor-gris, and Dark Folk priests, generally orcs and oluks, have a high social status in the domain. Because of their connection to the Dark Walker, the patron god of the entire kingdom and the direct commander of the White Lady, these clerics tend to be revered, enjoying luxuries unknown to all but the highest-ranking military leaders. In times of war, priests provide invaluable support to the dark armies. However, they are also expected to lay down their lives for the lord of the fortress-city.

Despite one's social status, though, all of the Dark Folk residents of Stor-gris have something in common: their lives tend to be "nasty, brutish, and short."

FACTIONS IN STOR-GRIS

Stor-gris has many factions, for scheming is a great pastime in the Dark Fortress. It seems like every minor officer has his gang of thugs that follow and support him in his petty schemes. Two factions, however, are significant indeed.

Karoxfang Loyalists: This faction is headed by the great general Karoxfang the Vile, the ruler of Stor-gris. Many powerful officers, including the mighty hobgoblin general Jorung, support the General out of fear and loyalty.

Followers of General Bozzurak: A powerful faction headed by the orc general Kahn Bozzurak opposes Karoxfang. On the surface, the faction simply goes against the Great General politically, but secretly it hopes to supplant him. General Bozzurak is clandestinely being manipulated by Bardanax, who has disguised himself as a human wizard. This secret is known to no one, not even Karoxfang. For more on this, see the story "Secrets of a Dark Fortress," later in this text.

THE WAR

Stor-gris is a civilization built around war. As of now, it can field an army of perhaps 60,000 or more Dark Folk. The army consists of kobold and goblin cannon fodder, as well as light orcish infantry, heavy hobgoblin and oluk orc infantry, orc and goblin warg riders who serve as cavalry, and special troops, including ogres, trolls, and wyvern riders. The army is supported by evil mages and clerics. One would expect the army to be undisciplined and ineffective, judging by the average soldier that makes it up, but the leadership of the fell officers more than makes up for the foot soldiers. The elves and dwarves underestimated the forces of Stor-gris long enough for the kingdom to grow to its current strength. This may prove to be a fatal mistake.

HISTORY OF STOR-GRIS

The history of Stor-gris is generally divided into three long eras: the early, the middle, and the late period. Each period is defined by the king who ruled in the fortress city. The ruler of the early period is Karoxfang the Vile, the half-orc/half-demon who founded Stor-gris. Karoxfang was the White Lady's trusted associate when she ruled Rothnog. When the dark armies of Rothnog were crushed in the Battle of Thunder Pass in 9330 E.R., Karoxfang was one of the few survivors of the massacre. He fled and soon gathered a force of wandering Dark Folk, refugees from East Rothnog who were fleeing the razing of the kingdom by the forces of the elves and dwarves. Recognizing the burgeoning strength of the non-humans, the wily orc-demon knew he had to retreat, fortify his position, and take his time to rebuild his strength. He realized he had to construct a mighty fortress, but he also knew he and his stupid Dark Folk slaves lacked the knowledge to do so. Karoxfang was lucky enough during his retreat, however, to waylay a party of dwarves from Wawmar and capture the dwarven king's best architect, the famous Agralin X, the ancestor of the designer of Wawmar itself. Enslaving this dwarf, the evil General brought him to the south lands and forced him to oversee the construction of one of the greatest castles history has ever seen. He called the citadel Stor-gris or "New-Start" in ancient Dark Speech. Agralin indeed designed the fortress to be nearly impenetrable, but the wise dwarf built a weakness into the design of the castle and hid the secret of that weakness in a poem that he addressed to his family. That poem would play a great role in Stor-gris' late period.

Karoxfang, nearly immortal because of his demonic heritage, took his time in strengthening his position. He fortified and refortified his citadel, aided by the discovery of a lucrative iron mine, and he then slowly and steadily attracted Dark Folk and monsters of all sorts to his new kingdom, overseeing the construction of teeming cities of goblinoids. Eventually the domain of Stor-gris grew to

encompass nearly the entirety of southern Siriand (later known as the continent of Farland). At first, the demi-humans did not see Stor-gris as a serious threat, and when they finally recognized their peril in 9690 E.R., a convenient plague came out of the East and decimated the dwarves and gnomes. The ability of the non-humans to hinder the development of Stor-gris was thus set back for many years, and by the time the elves and dwarves recovered their strength it was too late: Stor-gris had grown mighty. Its economy had been secretly fueled by profitable trade with the lands controlled by Gorgwath. The Dark Folk kingdom began in earnest its attempts to conquer Siriand. In 9700 E.R., Stor-gris started harrowing the Hinterlands, causing miles of desolation. At this time, Karoxfang unveiled his secret weapon: new, stronger orcs that he called oluks. Karoxfang inserted battalions of these exceptional orcs into the army, which marched north, laying waste to all in its path. The dwarves and elves both tried to engage the Dark Folk, but with little success. Thus began the War of Immortals, the current strife that occupies the lands.

KAROXFANG THE VILE

Karoxfang the Vile was a being born from a violent act between violent races: a union of evil. Karoxfang's mother was an orc woman of Rothnog, a slave and member of the harem of a once-powerful warlord. The fabled general's father was a hideous demon summoned by the priests of Vornoth. The orc mother was an offering of lust to the demon in return for dark secrets the warlord wanted.

The orc woman's pregnancy was yet another violent act, as Karoxfang burst forth from the female's body, splitting her fully in two. The child was the epitome of evil, even at a young age. Soon enough, even the mighty generals of Rothnog found him hard to control.

Though the half-fiend's rage was immense, he found a home of sorts among the evil forces of the orc-

nation devoted to Vornoth. The Dark Walker's will became Karoxfang's own, and the creature found a focus through which to harness his incredible anger. His physical strength grew faster than anyone else's did, and other, different powers began to develop as well.

With his powerful genetics, Karoxfang quickly worked his way through the ranks of the Dark Folk military. Though part of the half-fiend was potentially immortal, he still wasted no time in his endeavors, as he hungered for more power. Before many of his childhood competition had passed adolescence, Karoxfang was legendary. He became known as an undefeatable fighter and a cunning tactician. None dared cross him, for his rages were also legendary. The half-fiend became general of the armies of Eastern Rothnog just before Lechig IV rose up with a rebellion in the west.

Karoxfang chiseled his name in stone after putting down the rebellion in Rothnog. He masterminded the assault against the powerful Lechig and his force of Eastern Rothnogians, slaying the orc warlord in personal combat, but he had to flee into exile when the kingdom of Rothnog was destroyed and his army was crushed by the elves and dwarves at the Battle of Thunder Pass.

This was just the beginning for the half-fiend's fame, however, as Karoxfang went on to found the dark and mighty fortress of Stor-gris, and forces flocked to his banner. With his flaming falchion never far from his side, General Karoxfang the Vile reigned for centuries upon the throne of mighty Stor-gris, bringing forth dark times for the goodly folk of Siriand. He was truly a scourge on the land and made Stor-gris what it fully became.

He built Stor-gris fortress and city. He also personally oversaw the founding of the other cities that made up the domain of Stor-gris proper, even hand-picking the lords of the cities and personally training them. He was also far more canny than many supposed, implementing a vast spy network and having his friends and enemies alike surveilled. Little goes on without his knowledge.



PS

KAROXFANG

Medium fiend, neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 228 (24d8+120)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHR
18 (+4)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+5)

Saving Throws Str +10, Con +11, Wis +7, Cha +10

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Skills Athletics +10, Deception +10, History +8, Intimidation +10, Perception +7, Persuasion +10

Senses dark vision 60 ft, passive Perception 16

Languages Dark Speech, Common (Altarian)

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP)

Magic Resistance. Karoxfang has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. Karoxfang's weapon attacks are magical.

Dark Might of Stor-gris. Karoxfang exudes dark might. Any enemy that begins its turn within 30 feet of Karoxfang must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned until the end of its next turn. Once an enemy has made its saving throw or recovered from being stunned, it cannot be stunned by Dark Might of Stor-gris for 24 hours.

Innate Spellcasting: Karoxfang's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18). Karoxfang can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *shocking grasp*, *detect magic*, *prestidigitation*, *fire bolt*

3/day: *fire ball*, *hold monster*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Karoxfang makes four flaming falchion attacks.

Flaming Falchion. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage plus 14 (4d6) fire damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. Karoxfang adds 5 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Karoxfang can take three legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Karoxfang regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn. Karoxfang can't use the same legendary action two turns in a row.

Flaming Falchion Attack (costs 2 actions). Karoxfang makes a flaming falchion attack.

At will spell. Karoxfang uses an at-will spell.

Move. Karoxfang moves or flies up to his speed.

FUTURE OF STOR-GRIS

The year 9770 E.R. is the date in which The World of Farland: War of Immortals as laid out in this text is set. Karoxfang remains general of Stor-gris. The battle lines are drawn, and the front is the furthest north it has ever been: right on the borders of the elven kingdom. Stor-gris controls the entirety of the Hinterlands. Things look grim, but the elves and dwarves are hatching a daring plot...

The following history is Farland canon, and it gives you an idea of events that happen to the Kingdom of Stor-gris in the future. But you do not need to allow these events to influence your campaign if you don't wish to. If you don't want Karoxfang to be assassinated, or if your players

don't succeed in making it happen, then Karoxfang could remain ruler of Stor-gris. If your players aren't successful in helping the elves and dwarves repel the invasion, then perhaps the forces of Stor-gris end up triumphing and destroying the elven and dwarven kingdoms, thereby altering the history of Farland forever. That's up to you and your players!

In the year 9770, the forces of Stor-gris start their assault and capture the elven trading town of Lannael. Open war has begun in earnest. But in 9771 E.R., Karoxfang is betrayed to the enemy by a deceptive ally. For the tale of this ambush, see "Secrets of a Dark Fortress," later in this text.

BARDANAX THE VORACIOUS

The Dark Army pulls back, and a brief civil war looms for Stor-gris, but the rulership of the goblinoid kingdom is quickly usurped by the black dragon Bardanax the Voracious, Karoxfang's betrayer. Bardanax secretly manipulates the generals of the Dark Folk kingdom and is complicit in sending Karoxfang into an ambush. This event begins the middle period of Stor-gris' history.

Bardanax does not miss a beat in the War of Immortals, however. He masterfully picks up on Karoxfang's strategy to use the might of the new oluks, and he expands upon it. Boldly pushing further north, he besieges the gates of Wawmar itself. Because of a civil disagreement among the elves, they fail for some time to come to the aid of the dwarves, and thus Stor-gris nearly conquers Wawmar, even managing to breach the outer gates. After one terribly botched attempt at aiding Wawmar, the elves of Alustel eventually settle their differences, however, and attack Stor-gris. Helped by the dwarves, the elhil are finally able to thoroughly crush the besieging army of goblinoids, primarily because the dark army is unsupported and their supply lines are overextended and gravely disrupted by elven action. This military defeat sets Stor-gris back for many years.

For decades, Bardanax nurses his wounds. Instead of focusing on rebuilding the army of Stor-gris, he stewes in hatred. It is during this period that the dragon first gives himself over to his urges and appetites, using food and treasure to sooth his hurt ego. He misses great opportunities to hinder the elves and dwarves, who are working industriously to rebuild from their military losses.

The civil strife that has plagued the elves eventually results in their division, and a large group of elven separatists moves south and settles the Lutanium, the vast forest that borders the domain of Stor-gris to the east. This puts new pressure on Stor-gris, hampering its military and economic recovery. The White Lady does not care for Stor-gris' new

ruler, and she stops trading with Stor-gris, which further exacerbates the dark kingdom's problems. Meanwhile, Bardanax is quickly discovering the challenges of ruling the evil kingdom that had faced Karoxfang. He finds that he can trust very few of his generals, for scheming and plotting to overthrow the ruler of the fortress city seems to be a common pastime. It seems to be a stroke of luck for the black dragon, then, when he acquires someone he feels he can trust: the mysterious hag Dantha'Sule. This creature seems to see to Bardanax's every need, including his appetites. Under Dantha'Sule's ministries, the dragon king slowly grows fat and sick, although he still manages to rule for many centuries. Eventually, though, Bardanax the Voracious (and very obese) suspiciously dies; many claim that it is due to old age and ill health, while others whisper that he had fallen to fouler means. Dantha'Sule assumes control of the armies of Stor-gris and claims the late dragon's hoard for her own. This event begins the late period of Stor-gris' history.

The hag queen, understanding that Stor-gris' continued existence depends on the conquest of the non-humans, quickly reopens war with the dwarves of Wawmar. She manages to orchestrate the abduction of the king of Wawmar in 10,002 E.R., disheartening the dwarves. This event ushers in a period of moderate military success for the Dark Folk kingdom, as they defeat both the now-smaller forces of Alustel and the disheartened forces of Wawmar. During this period, the orcish general known as Gudang Moth gains fame for his ruthlessness and mastery of tactics. The goblinoids push the demi-humans back until the former again control much of the Hinterlands. The Ranarim, the Elven separatists who dwell in Lutanium, eventually decide to commit the entirety of their forces to the fray, but even this is not enough, and they too are defeated.

The timely entry of a wandering group of dwarves, the Clan of Kain, however, heralds the beginning of the end for Stor-gris. The dwarves bring to the Ranarim lore of the ancient poem "Ode to Great Stor-gris," by Agralin X (the dwarven engineer whom



BARDANAX THE VORACIOUS

Gargantuan dragon, chaotic evil

Hit Points 481 (26d20 + 208)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHR
29 (+9)	10 (+0)	27 (+8)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +15, Wis +10, Cha +12

Skills Perception +17, Stealth +7

Damage Immunities acid

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 27

Languages Common (Altarian), Dark Speech

Challenge 23 (50,000 XP)

Amphibious. Bardanax can breathe air and water.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Bardanax fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Bardanax can use his Frightful Presence. He then makes three attacks: one with his bite and two with his claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (2d10 + 9) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) lightning damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d6 + 9) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 20 ft., one

target. *Hit:* 18 (2d8 + 9) bludgeoning damage.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of Bardanax's choice that is within 120 feet of the him and aware of him must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to Bardanax's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Dragon Breath (Recharge 5–6). Bardanax exhales acid or fire (his choice) in a 120-foot line that is 10 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 23 Dexterity saving throw, taking 88 (16d10) acid or fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Bardanax can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Bardanax regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Detect. Bardanax makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Tail Attack. Bardanax makes a tail attack.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). Bardanax beats his wings. Each creature within 15 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 24 Dexterity saving throw or take 16 (2d6 + 9) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. Bardanax can then fly up to half its flying speed.

Karoxfang forced to build the fortress itself). Using the vast stores of knowledge possessed by the elven race, the Ranarim are able to unlock the poem's secrets. The verses reveal that Agralin had purposefully caused the fortress city of Stor-gris to be built on unsteady limestone foundations and that acid could be used in certain spots to dissolve the limestone and send the walls crashing down. The elves of Lutanium and the dwarves of the Clan of Kain join forces in order to carry out the instructions given by the fateful poem. Heartened by a potential end to the millennia-long conflict, the leagued forces of good are able to defeat the defending army of Stor-gris in the Battle of Mourning, although the former suffer heavy losses (which accounts for the name of the battle). Still, they push on and implement Agralin X's plans, bringing down the walls and sacking the citadel in the year 10,557 E.R. Stor-gris' seemingly interminable reign of terror has finally come to an end.

DANTHA'SULE

Dantha'sule was a particular type of Hag called a Black Agnes. It is said that the evil creature was born of the deep, misty bogs of the Great Wash, some time around 9500 E.R., although perhaps her origin actually lay in the fey plane of Tanis; the truth is not known. The great beast, initially called Danuras fel Sule, or "Mistress of the Bog," terrorized the Deep Marsh of the Great Wash for decades. Her hulking form was feared among those who dwelt near the Wash, and her name was whispered even beyond its vast borders.

Soon enough, Danuras fel Sule earned the notice of the being known as the White Lady, Vornoth's agent upon Núríon. This enigmatic being had long been the compelling force behind all the decisions made in the vast kingdom of Stor-gris, for the Lady all but owned its previous ruler Karoxfang. But when Stor-gris' next ruler, the voracious black dragon Bardanax, came to power, the White Lady found that

her control of Stor-gris was slipping away. Bardanax was very independent and willful, with vast ambitions of his own, ambitions that sometimes conflicted with the Wintervale's desires. Moreover, the dragon could not be intimidated. The White Lady knew that the use of force against Bardanax would likely be unsuccessful and would serve merely to weaken both Stor-gris and the Wintervale, possibly leading to the downfall of both domains. Therefore, Bardanax had to be stealthily manipulated and eventually overthrown. A creature such as Danuras fel Sule, which possessed both guile and physical power, would be ideal for the job.

The Dweller thus lured the Mistress of the Bog from her lair in the Great Wash and took her to the Wintervale. There, the strength of four huge trolls was required to hold the hag down as the Lady worked her magic on the creature. The powerful agent of Vornoth tore open the hag's chest as she screeched in agony. The Lady gathered a hair follicle, dead cells to imbue the hag with mastery over the domain of Death. Then the Lady added a piece of her very own skin to give the beast the physical and spiritual power of the Dark Walker. Finally, she spilled a drop of blood to dominate the hag with the will of Vornoth. Gathering the items, the White Lady thrust her hand into the hag's chest, and Danuras fel Sule writhed in agony. After moments of pain, the great hag rose. Immediately the ravenous creature devoured a dozen hardy orcs to restore her great strength.

The Lady called her newest general Dantha'Sule, or "Dark Mistress." With the newly acquired power of the Dark Walker, the hag was sent from the Wintervale. She traveled to Stor-gris and quickly insinuated herself into Bardanax's confidences until she became his closest advisor. Slowly she worked her will, knowing that any quick attempt to overthrow the dragon would end in disaster. She manipulated him little by little, carefully bringing his decisions in line with the desires of the Wintervale. She also preyed upon his voracious appetites, encouraging him to throw off restraint and gorge

DANTHA'SULE

Large fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 219 (23d10+92)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHR
21 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +9, Strength +10

Skills Deception +8, Perception +7, Persuasion +8

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Dark Speech, Elven, Old Speech

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Dantha'Sule's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16). She can innately cast the following spells:

At will: *chill touch*, *eldritch blast*

3/day each: *charm person*, *disguise self* (including the form of a Medium humanoid), *fog cloud*, *hold person*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*

1/day: *circle of death*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Dantha'Sule makes three attacks: one with her bite and two with her claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6+5) piercing damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6+5) slashing damage.

Destroying Embrace. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 47 (12d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15) if it is a Large or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, the target takes 47 (12d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of Dantha'Sule's turns. Dantha'Sule can't make attacks while grappling a creature in this way.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Dantha'Sule can take three legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Dantha'Sule regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn. Dantha'Sule can't use the same legendary action two turns in a row.

Destroying Embrace (costs 2 actions). Dantha'Sule makes a destroying embrace attack.

At will spell. Dantha'Sule uses an at-will spell.

Suggestion (costs 2 actions). Dantha'Sule casts the *suggestion* spell (save DC 16) with only verbal components. While maintaining concentration on this effect, Dantha'Sule can't use other legendary actions. If a target succeeds on the saving throw or if the effect ends for it, the target is immune to Dantha'Sule's suggestion for the next 24 hours, although such a creature can choose to be affected.

himself whenever he felt the urge and on whatever he desired. Finally, the dragon grew so fat and weak that Dantha'Sule was able to slay him and wrest power in the name of Vornoth and the White Lady. She ruled the vile fortress for centuries, directed by her master in the Wintervale, and was the cause of much death throughout the civilized lands of the non-humans.

The rule of the Hag was not characterized by as much open warfare as the eras of her predecessors. Instead, she worked subtly to cause as much pain and suffering to the dwarves and elves as she could. She sought to ruin economies, spread disease, sow distrust, and generally terrorize. In large measure,

she took the evil tricks of hags everywhere, and scaled them to a national and indeed continental level. She became hated by her subjects and her enemies alike, but she was also greatly feared.

Even after her final downfall, which coincided with the end of the Kingdom of Stor-gris in 10,557 E.R., her name echoed down the long corridors of history. Even thousands of years later, mothers would scare their children into behaving by saying, "Black Dantha'Sule will get you," though they had long since forgotten who the hag herself really was. The threat alone is enough to bring even the most unruly child into line.



THE WINTERVALE

The evil lands to the east of Ter-Dianiand are locked in the grip of perpetual winter. This realm is inhabited by orcs and other Dark Folk, as well as savage, primitive humans whom the orcs keep as slaves.

The capital of the Wintervale is the malevolent city of Gorgwath, a city of winter that teems with goblinoids and other creatures more monstrous. Gorgwath is a fortified city, but it is also an active economic center, milking all the goods and money it can from primitive vassal communities to its south and east.

From the heart of the city rises the Frostspire, a featureless tower of ice that juts hundreds of feet into the low-hanging snow clouds that perpetually cloak Gorgwath. In the Frostspire dwells the mysterious and terrible White Lady, the architect of so much suffering and destruction on the continent of Siriand.

From her icy tower, the Lady directs and manipulates General Karoxfang, making sure that the kingdom of Stor-gris and the forces of the Wintervale work toward a united purpose—the destruction or domination of all the forces of the light.

From captured elves, and perhaps from the knowledge of the White Lady, the orcs of Gorgwath have learned to build ships. Though they are not well-made nor capable of long ocean voyages, these ugly vessels are used by the Dark Folk to harass the elves of the Satellite Cities. They land strike forces on the shores of Aeltal to harass the elves of the Sattelite Cities. These ships are also used to skirt the elven territory and deposit evil caravans on dry land south of Aeltal, where they begin the long trek to trade goods and slaves with Stor-gris. Thus, the economies of the Wintervale and Stor-gris are intertwined.

For more on the Wintervale, see *The World of Farland Campaign Setting* publication.

The Wintervale has always preferred to let others do its fighting, manipulating, threatening, cajoling, and rewarding evil creatures across the continent to face the enemies of the White Lady. After all, why do it when you can get someone else to do it, am I right?

THE WAR

The Wintervale can field an army of perhaps 20,000 Dark Folk, made up almost entirely of orcs. Its army is not as diverse as that of Stor-gris. It is not likely to send forth its entire army, however, for it is nearly impossible to maintain supply lines over the long distances and harsh terrain that lie between it and its enemy. The Wintervale takes its name from the eternal glacier in which it lies, and this is harsh terrain indeed.

Instead, it sends strike forces and uses the threat of its armies to distract the dwarves and elves from Stor-gris. It makes good use of threats and terror in terms of warfare. The ever-present black boats in the gulf to its west keep the elves of the Satellite Cities from helping the Sarumvest as they otherwise would. It also manipulates wild orc tribes into harassing the human allies of Wawmar and the elves, and this too detracts from the military might of the forces of good.

And while the Wintervale may not at this stage in its history be able to effectively field large armies, it doesn't need to. It manipulates Stor-gris into doing so, and its geographical location makes it practically unassailable. It has little need for huge armies. Its might lies in its strategies and in its leader, the White Lady.



CHAPTER 6: GAME MASTER RESOURCES

GM MATERIALS

Many things make campaigns set during the War of Immortals different. Besides the detailed lore and history, the languages, flavor, spells, items, and more differ from both your standard 5e campaign and a normal World of Farland campaign. This chapter details those changes.

LANGUAGES

Eight primary languages are spoken on the continent of Siriand. These are not the only languages used, however; they are simply the most common ones. When choosing a language, you can pick from this list or make up a plausible language in consultation with your Game Master.

1. **Common** (Elven, called *Altarian* or High Speech). Elven is used by all non-evil humanoid races as a common tongue.
2. **Stor-gris Dark Speech** (*Rothug*). This language, a bastardization of Elven and Dwarven, with many new words, is the language of the orcs, goblins, hobgoblins, and kobolds of Stor-gris. It was passed down from ancient Rothnog.
3. **Wintervale Dark Speech** (*Lurzug*). This language, also descended from Rothnog, has changed a great deal over the centuries. It's spoken by the orcs and other goblinoids of the Wintervale. Speakers of Wintervale Dark Speech can understand Stor-gris Dark Speech with a DC 5 Intelligence check and vice versa; the check must be made upon encountering a new speaker or group.

This chapter covers the crunchy goodness Game Masters love (okay, players do too!). Looking for the nuts and bolts stuff, like languages, items, spells, and so forth? Want to know what a campaign set during the War of Immortals era might look like? This chapter is for you!

4. **Dwarven** (*Khazdun*). Unlike in later years, dwarves will reluctantly teach their language to non-dwarves, although they prefer not to.
5. **Gnomish** (*Tendenarrish*). Speakers of Gnomish can understand Dwarven with a DC 15 Intelligence check and vice versa; the check must be made upon encountering a new speaker or group.
6. **Halfling** (*Hositan*). This is the language of halflings, who can understand Hinterlander and vice versa with an Intelligence check DC 15, which must be made upon encountering a new speaker or group.
7. **Mannish**. Mannish isn't one language, but five, described below:
 - 7a. **Aelfrandish**. This is the language of the humans of Aelfrand. Speakers of Aelfrandish can understand Hinterlander with an Intelligence check DC 10 and vice versa; the check must be made upon encountering a new speaker or group.
 - 7b. **Hinterlander**. The humans of the Hinterlands speak this tongue.
 - 7c. **Marsh Speak**. The humans who live near the Deep Marshes speak this tongue. They can understand Hinterlander and vice versa with an

Intelligence check DC 15, which must be made upon encountering a new speaker or group.

7d. **Hathiander.** Humans of distant Hathiand speak this tongue. Their speech is so removed from other human tongues that they have no chance to understand them. It is also likely that Hathianders do not speak Common.

7e. **Cave-Dweller.** The primitive humans who live in the caves north of Aelfrand speak this tongue. These humans rarely speak Common.

8. **Wild Speech.** This is an ancient tongue, taught by the first elves to those creatures such as Treants that would speak to them. The language has evolved from its roots such that it is now nearly unrecognizable. It has spread to most creatures of the wilderness, good or evil. It is also known as Old Speech. Speakers of Wild Speech can pick one population (such as Treant) and must then make an Intelligence check DC 5 to understand others who speak Wild Speech that aren't of their chosen population; the check must be again made upon encountering a new speaker or group.

CURRENCIES

Similar to how the elven language has become the common tongue, elven coins produced in Alustel are the standard currency among the elves, dwarves, and gnomes. Elves mint platinum pieces, gold pieces, silver pieces, copper pieces, and tin pennies (a mix of copper and tin). The standard currency of everyday use is the silver piece. Elves very rarely mint platinum pieces. The dwarves of Wawmar, in order to facilitate trade with the elves, standardized the size and weight of their own currency to match the elves. The dwarves, though, also produce an electrum coin that the elves do not mint (but which they will accept). Gnomes produce their own coins to match dwarven coins, although they are stamped differently. Even Stor-gris and the Wintervale were influenced to such an extent by elven currency that they largely copied it. Humans and halflings do not

generally employ currency as a rule; instead, they use trade goods and a barter system, using objects and favors in place of currency.

The GM and players should convert the standard pricing of items, goods, and services to the silver standard. When the price in the SRD is given in gold, in Farland it should be read as silver. Similarly, silver should be read as copper, and copper should be read as tin pennies.

Stor-gris and the Wintervale produce their own currency, but it is largely patterned after elven currency and is roughly the same size and weight.

THE RELATIVE VALUES OF THE STANDARDIZED COINS

100 SP = 1 PP

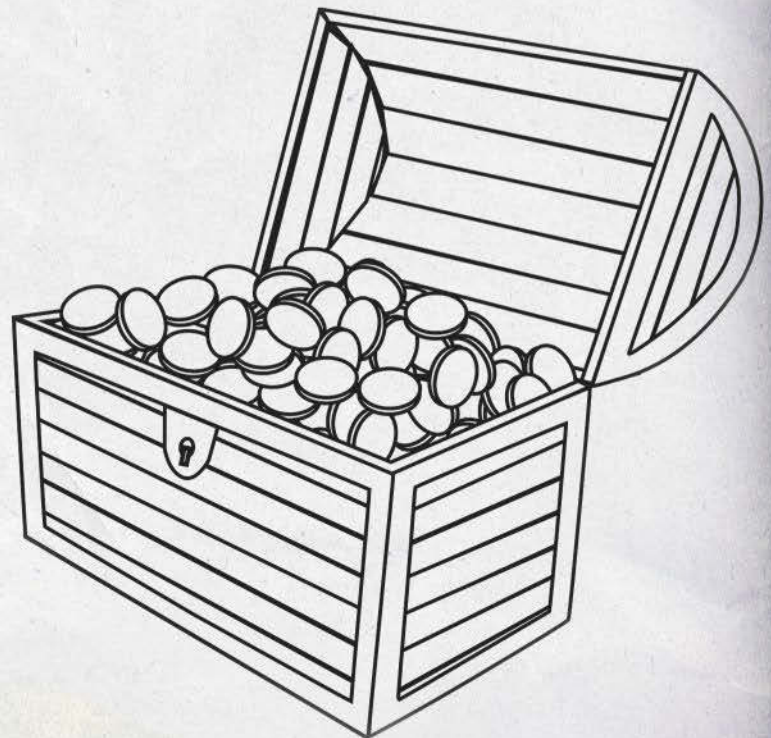
10 SP = 1 GP

1 SP = 1 CP

1 SP = 2 EP

1 SP = 10 CP

1 SP = 100 TP



THE NAMES OF EACH KINGDOM'S CURRENCY

ELVEN

Platinum: Alu ("God Coin")

Gold: Cora ("Honey Coin")

Silver: Alfán ("Swan Coin")

Copper: Nar ("Arrow Coin")

Tin: Arta ("Flower Coin")

DWARVEN

Platinum: Burg ("Mountain Piece")

Gold: Zogol ("Hammer Piece")

Silver: Aglaz ("Anvil Piece")

Electrum: Hilz ("Mushroom Piece")

Copper: Haraz ("Harp Piece")

Tin: Korz ("Pig Penny")

GNOMES

Platinum: Torenborg ("Hill Coin")

Gold: Zutengol ("Tool Coin")

Silver: Aglensoraz ("Anvil Coin")

Electrum: Hilorenz ("Meal Coin")

Copper: Tharazet ("Music Coin")

Tin: Kortenz ("Boar Piece")

STOR-GRIS

Platinum: Druz

Gold: Grishkaz

Silver: Skark

Electrum: Koraz

Copper: Zorg

Tin: Cro

THE WINTERVALE

Platinum: Dugskark

Gold: Ronk

Silver: Skark

Electrum: Korad

Copper: Glob

Tin: Uk

RULES CHANGES

While the War of Immortals campaign is compatible with the standard rules of the 5th edition of the world's most popular roleplaying game, you may want to alter several things to make the rules fit better with the setting. All of these changes are optional, of course, but they are encouraged, and play-testing has shown them to work well.

FLAVOR

The War of Immortals setting should feel both epic and dark, vast and gritty. Every accomplishment will be hard earned, and the actions of the player characters have a real potential to alter the course of the war and thus of history.

Vast amounts of the continent are wilderness, and large cities are few and far between. Stor-gris and the Wintervale are hostile territory. Thus, resupplying and healing when outside the Sarumvest and Wawmar may be difficult.

Long, arduous journeys should be a part of every campaign. In fact, sometimes the difficult journeys can be an adventure in themselves. Players need to take this into consideration.

HEALING

To simulate the gritty, dark aspect of the campaign world, you may wish to consider ruling that PCs do not recover all of their hit points after they complete a long rest. Instead, they regain hit dice as normal but need to spend them to heal.

In addition, consider employing the World of Farland lingering injuries by damage type rules as laid out in the *World of Farland Game Masters Handbook*. Having your players suffer lasting injuries will make combat feel more real, and perhaps discourage the "murder hobo" problem from which many campaigns seem to suffer.

Martial Weapon	Cost	Damage	Rune Axe	Properties
Rune Axe	30 sp	1d8 slashing	4 lbs.	Special, versatile (1d10)
Elven Greatsword	100 sp	2d6 slashing	4 lbs.	heavy, special, two handed

Shield	Armor Class (AC)	Strength	Weight	Cost
Gnomish Buckler	+1 vs one attack	--	2 lbs.	10 sp
Shield of Stor-gris	Additional +2 vs ranged attacks	STR 13	10 lbs.	175 sp

Item	Cost	Weight
Tennmadral Waybread (1/day)	1 sp	1 lb.
Ammunition	Cost	Weight
Leaf-head Arrows	125 sp	1 lb.

or higher is treated as having an Armor Class two lower for the purposes of damaging them with these arrows. Crafting these arrows takes subtle elven magic, though the arrows themselves are not

ITEMS

Spyglasses from the standard SRD item lists shouldn't be available, primarily because they haven't been invented yet or are exceedingly rare. Also, **longships** and **warships** have not yet been developed (well, technically, ships similar to longships did exist during the Twilight Voyage, but the ability to build them has been largely lost).

The elves have developed a **waybread** they call *Tennmadral* ("journey bread"). This flat, sugary cake keeps for twice as long as the standard ration before it goes bad and it weighs half as much (1 pound per day), but it also costs twice as much (1 silver piece per day). The recipe for *Tennmadral* the elves keep secret.

The elves have also developed potent armor-piercing arrows. These missiles, called **Leaf-head Arrows**, have heavy, sharp, highly worked, leaf-shaped tips. They can only be fired from longbows, and when they are, the bows' range becomes that of a shortbow for these arrows. A target that is wearing heavy armor or that has a natural Armor Class of 16

magical, so 20 Leaf-head arrows cost 125 silver pieces. They can be recovered according to the normal rules for recovering ammunition.

Several weapons have become famous during the War of Immortals. The elves and dwarves have developed unique and potent items to aid them in the conflict. All of these races are loath to sell or trade their items to members of other races.

The elves have also created a slightly curved, single edged greatsword for use by their heavy infantry. This **Elven Greatsword** always stays keen and never needs sharpened. It also weighs 4 pounds (less than a normal greatsword), is less likely to break under normal use, but costs 100 silver pieces.

The dwarves have made battle axes worked with intimidating, imposing runes that threaten death and fell curses to all Dark Folk. This **Rune Axe** has such a fearsome reputation among orcs and goblinoids that they hesitate to face it. The first strike you make in any combat (as long as it is against an orc, goblin, hobgoblin, kobold, or oluk orc) is made with advantage. A Rune Axe costs 30 silver pieces and can

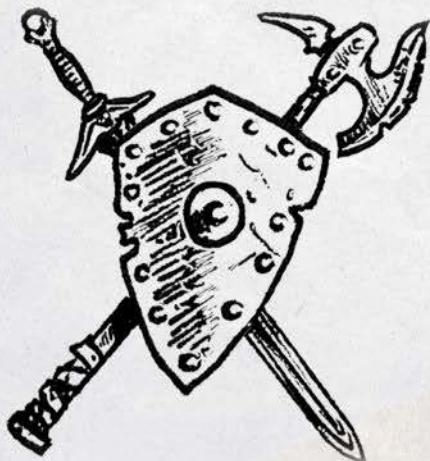
only be purchased from a dwarven community.

Advances in armor and shields have also become prevalent, among the races of the light as well as among the forces of evil.

Plate mail has only recently been developed by the dwarves, and they are still the primary producers of that armor. Only in the Kingdom of Wawmar can plate mail be purchased for the normal list price (1500 silver pieces, although dwarves are extremely reluctant to sell it to non-dwarves). Plate mail purchased from the elves costs 1600 silver pieces and weighs 68 pounds; plate mail is rare in the elven lands, both because most elven smiths have not mastered its production and because the elves do not favor such heavy armor. Plate mail purchased in Stor-gris costs 1800 silver pieces, weighs 70 pounds, and is generally of inferior quality, although the smiths of Stor-gris have been told to produce it in large quantities for the oluk orcs.

The gnomes, always defensive-minded, have developed special bucklers. These small shields strap to the forearm and are specially suited to gnomes. When a small-sized creature wears a **Gnomish Buckler**, he may as a reaction add a +1 to his Armor Class against one attack. He may use his off hand normally when employing a Gnomish Buckler. These bucklers weigh 2 pounds and cost 10 silver pieces. These bucklers are too small for medium or larger sized creatures to employ effectively.

The Dark Folk of Stor-gris, having suffered for long years under the arrows of the elves, have developed large, heavy shields that they can hide



behind. A user must have at least a Strength score of 13 to effectively employ this heavy shield. A **Shield of Stor-gris** grants an additional +2 to Armor Class against ranged attacks. It weighs 10 pounds and costs 175 silver pieces.

MAGIC

The War of Immortals setting is not exactly low magic, but magic should be rare and portentous. The fact that the War of Immortals takes place in the distant past means you as the GM have a handy explanation for why certain spells aren't available or are different: they haven't been discovered or developed yet. Consider limiting PC access to spells that allow quick overland travel, since journeys should be part of adventuring in this setting, even for high level PCs. You should also consider whether you want to allow your PCs to fly easily via magic. It is also recommended that you control access to spells that easily allow the destruction of fortifications and fortresses. And finally, consider limiting the ability for PCs to communicate with others over long distances..

You may want to disallow the following spells (and ones like them) and change *sending*:

move earth (except via the Mattock of the Dwarves)

teleport

teleportation circle

transport via plants

wind walk

Consider altering these spells (and ones like them) in the following ways:

fly: Duration (concentration up to 1 minute)

animal messenger: Components: V, S, M (a morsel of expensive food worth 20 silver pieces);



casting this spell using a higher level slot allows the addition of 5 words to the message per level; it does not increase the duration)

SENDING

3rd-level evocation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Unlimited

Components: V, S, M (a piece of fine silver wire worth 30 silver pieces, which is destroyed when you cast this spell)

Duration: 1 round

You send a short message of 25 words or less to a creature with which you are familiar. The creature hears the message in its mind, recognizes you as the sender if it knows you, and can answer in a like manner immediately. The spell enables creatures with Intelligence scores of at least 1 to understand the meaning of your message.

You can send the message to any distance of up to 50 miles without issue. For every additional 50 miles, there is a 20 percent chance that the spell fails. If the target is on a different plane than you, there is an 80 percent chance that the message doesn't arrive. Failure chance can never exceed 90 percent.

MONSTERS

The following monsters don't exist during this time period and perhaps ought not to be used without a compelling reason. Their origin lies in the future:

Bazok (from the *World of Farland Game Master's Handbook*)

Drow

Vampires

Vampire Spawn



CAMPAIGN OUTLINE

The following campaign outline gives you an overview of how you could structure a campaign for the War of Immortals setting. It uses plot events that correspond with the canonical Farland history of events that took place during this era.

Understand that this outline is merely a suggestion; you can follow it closely, follow it loosely, or ignore it completely. If you do follow it, feel free to throw in side treks and adventures as you see fit. Change NPCs if you see value in doing so. Allow your players to shape the game with the choices they make and the ways they develop their PCs. You should take the campaign setting and make it your own!

STARTING A CAMPAIGN

In the year 9770 E.R., characters are journeying as part of an elven trading caravan toward the elven city of Lannael. The caravan is attacked by Dark Folk, and since the elven guards are busy fighting at the front of the caravan, the PCs need to band together to defend the rear of the caravan. The attackers should include creatures that challenge 1st-level PCs.

If they are successful, the elves are impressed and offer them employment as agents of the Elven Intelligence Network. They are based in Lannael.

PHASE ONE

The elves tell the PCs that they are concocting a highly secret plot. Though they won't yet tell the PCs what it is (they are forging a message from the White Lady to Karoxfang that will lure him into a trap), they need the PCs to recover certain items that they need for the plot.

They ask the PCs to venture into an ancient ruin in Rothnog to recover a sample of the White Lady's handwriting. This is a good opportunity for the PCs to start learning about the White Lady.

They need the PCs to travel to a distant, dangerous location to get ingredients for enchanted ink.

They need the PCs to waylay a band of messengers from the Wintervale, eliminate them, and capture the documents they carry. Somewhere around this point, you may wish to have your PCs play the adventure "The Crypt of Memory," in the next chapter.

Finally, they ask the PCs to escort Venedal, a high-ranking elven spy, into a point in the Dark Folk kingdom of Stor-gris, where he will leave them (see "Secrets of a Dark Fortress" in Chapter 8; you may wish to have your players read the story at this point). On their way to Stor-gris, they spot a large army of orcs traveling north from the dark kingdom. It should be made obvious to the players that this army represents a grave threat to the elves, dwarves, gnomes, humans, and indeed every good creature in Siriland.



THE DESTRUCTION OF LANNAEL

When they leave Stor-gris, and head back north, they find that the elven trading town of Lannael has been attacked and is being overwhelmed. This is a good opportunity for them to rescue as many of the residents as possible and escort them west to the town of Loraglin. They can then aid the elven army in striking back at the occupiers of the town.

PHASE TWO

Reeling from the destruction of Lannael, the elves have no choice but to carry out their plan. Their spies report that the missive has been delivered and that Karoxfang seems to have taken the bait. The PCs are asked to join the ambush against Karoxfang. Several elven and dwarven heroes will lead the ambush, so the PCs won't be expected to face Karoxfang themselves. Instead, they should deal with his bodyguard.

With Karoxfang slain, the elves hope that Stor-gris will be thrown into civil war, and signs seem to indicate that this will happen. The PCs are invited to the city of Alustel to be honored by the elven lords. At this point, you may wish to have your PCs play the adventure "The Ruin of Honor and Glory" in the next chapter. Eventually, the elves send the PCs as emissaries to the dwarven lands.

Unfortunately, the civil war in Stor-gris is aborted as a new leader, the dangerous black dragon Bardanax, assumes control. He immediately resumes Karoxfang's strategy and renews the War.

A strange plague threatens to break out in the dwarven lands. The dwarves see similarities to what happened when Rothnog of old assaulted Liferock. The heroes are charged with investigating the plague and any potential assault by Stor-gris on the dwarven lands. Investigation will reveal that dark wizards and clerics are orchestrating the plague. The PCs must stop them and the plague, so that the fighting force of the dwarven lands are not decimated by disease.

Soon after the PCs stop the plague (or fail to stop

it), a huge army moves north from Stor-gris to reinforce the army already sitting on the border of the elven and dwarven lands. The elves and the dwarves are attacked on two fronts. The dark army is stalled at the borders of the Sarumvest, but it makes great gains in the dwarven lands, capturing and occupying the dwarven towns of Felek, Barax, and Zigil. Refugees flee north to Wawmar. Wawmar shuts its gates and is besieged by the army of Stor-gris.

PHASE THREE

The dark army, massively powerful and accompanied by a red dragon that calls itself Flame, is besieging Wawmar. The siege must be broken, or the dwarves will fall, and if the dwarven lands fall, the elves will be cut off without allies and assailable from the south and east. If this happens, it seems inevitable that the elves too will fall. The PCs, by now great heroes, must do all they can to end the siege of Wawmar and drive back the dark armies. The elves will need to ally with the dwarves, somehow coordinating an assault. The red dragon Flame will need to be destroyed. Perhaps a powerful artifact from the runes of Talas, the city founded by the Kinslayer Elves of House Al-Dustriel, can be recovered and employed against the dark army. However the PCs can manage it, the siege must be broken or all is lost.

PHASE FOUR

If the siege can be broken, will the PCs have the courage and the might to take the war to Stor-gris and assault Bardanax himself? At this point, the White Lady will also have taken notice of the PCs and will attempt to eliminate the threat they pose.

This should open up new possibilities for high level play. The White Lady is an opponent far more dangerous than any of the leaders of Stor-gris, for she has great magical power, but her real weapon is her intelligence and deviousness. She will threaten the PCs in ways they have never yet been challenged.

KEY TO NAMES AND TERMS

Aelfrand (ALE-frand): The lands north of Aeltal, where the most developed human civilization is located.

Aelfrander (ALE-frand-er): A human from the land of Aelfrand.

Aeltal (ALE-tall): The elven lands that lie to the east of the Grand Peaks.

Al-Dustriel (al-DOO-stree-ell): An ancient, powerful elven house that rebelled against the elven king and started the Kin Slayer Wars.

Alfain (AL-fane): Holy swan of the elves.

Altarian (al-TAR-ee-en): (“High Speech”) Elven, used as the Common Tongue.

Altarim (ALL-tar-im): (“High Folk” in elven). High elves descended from the officers of the Twilight Voyage.

Alustel (AL-oo-stell): The capital of the Elven kingdom.

Aranarim (a-RAN-a-rim): (“Folk of the Wood” in Elven). Common wood elves of the Sarumvest.

Bardanax (BAR-den-axe): Black dragon and second ruler of Stor-gris after Karoxfang.

Crown Gnome: A member of the ruling caste in gnomish society.

Dantha’sule (DAN-tha-sool): Black Agnes hag and third ruler of Stor-gris after Bardanax. She currently dwells in the Deep Marshes.

Dark Speech: The language of orcs, used as the Common Tongue in Stor-gris and the Wintervale; two dialects exist.

Deep Marsh Human: A human from the Deep Marsh swamp.

Elhil (ELL-hill): What the elves call themselves; singular Elhan (ELL-han).

Fairy Gnome: The strange, fey-like gnomes who live in the area outside of but near to Haltulontelim.

Galan (GAL-en): (“Glimmer Folk” in Elven). The lords of the Altarim.

Gorgwath (GORG-wath): The capital of the Wintervale and city where the White Lady dwells.

Haltulontelim (Hal-too-LAHN-te-leem): The warren-city of the gnomes.

Hathiander (HATH-ee-an-der): A human from the area called Hathiand.

Hills, The: A populated but primitive halfling community located near the gnomish warrens.

Hinterlander: A human from the Hinterlands of Siriand.

Hositan (HOZ-i-tan): What halflings call themselves.

Insiders: Halfling term for halflings who grew up among the dwarves.

Karoxfang (CARE-ox-fang): The orc-demon founder of Stor-gris.

Khazak (KAZ-ack): What the dwarves call themselves.

Khazdun (KAZ-doon): Dwarven word for their own language.

Khuldul Rockcarver (KULL-dool ROCK-carver): God of the dwarves.

Kibil-Gund (KIB-ul-GUND): Wawmar.

Kibil-Gunder (KIB-ul-GUND-er): Term for a dwarf who grew up in Wawmar.

Liferock: The ancestral home of the dwarves and the first dwarfhold.

Lurzug (LUR-zug): Orcish word for the dialect of their language (which the elves call Dark Speech) spoken in the Wintervale.

Northern Cave-Dweller: A human who comes from the caves north of Aelfrand.

Numasal (NOOM-a-sawl): (“Time of Weariness” in Elven). The phase of an elf’s life when he seeks to depart Núríon and return to the kingdom of Tal-Allustiel.

Núríon (NEW-ree-ahn, with a trilled “r”): The planet upon which the War of Immortals Campaign setting is located.

Old Speech: Wild Speech.

Oluk (OH-luck): A stronger, smarter breed of orc developed in Stor-gris.

Outsider: Halfling term for a halfling who did not grow up among the dwarves.

Rothug (ROTH-ug): Orcish word for the dialect of their language (which the elves call Dark Speech) spoken in Stor-gris.

Sarumvest (SAR-oom-vest): (“Beautiful Wood” in Elven). The elven forest kingdom.

Satellite Cities: The cities of Emerain and Palahan where dwell the Telarim elves of Aeltal.

Siriand (SEER-ee-and): (“Great Land” in Elven). The continent on which the War of Immortals Campaign setting is located.

Rothnog (ROTH-nawg): An ancient dark folk kingdom that fell to civil war.

Shieldfolk: Term for a dwarf who is a citizen of the Kingdom of Wawmar but who lives outside the fortress itself.

Stor-gris (STORE-grease): (“New start” in Dark Speech). The powerful dark folk kingdom founded by the orc-demon Karoxfang.

Tal-Allustiel (TAL-ah-LOO-stee-ell): (“Beloved God of Twilight” in elven). God of the elves.

Talas (TAL-us): The city founded by the Kinslayer elves of House Al-Dustriel.

Talundorim (tal-UND-or-im): (“Dusk-Doomed” in Elven). Those elves who stayed behind in Tanis during the Twilight Voyage.

Tanis (TAN-is): Elven name for the Feywild.

Telarim (TELL-er-im): (“People of the Cities” in Elven). Elves who dwell in the Satellite Cities in Aeltal.

Tendenarruk (ten-DENN-er-uk): What the gnomes call themselves.

Tinnurim (TIN-oo-rim): (“Those who love the twilight” in Elven). The original elves created by Tal-Allustiel and the ones who undertook the Twilight Voyage.

Thunder Pass: The primary pass through the Grand Peaks and sight of the final defeat of Rothnog.

Tunnel Gnome: Common gnomes who live inside their warren of Haltulontelim.

Twilight Voyage: The journey of the original elves from the realm of Tal-Allustiel to Núrion.

War of Immortals: The war, spearheaded by the elves, against the evil kingdom of Stor-gris.

Wawmar (WAW-mar): The volcano fortress of the dwarves. They call it Kibul-Gund.

Western Delvings: A populated but primitive halfling community located near the ruin of Liferock.

Wild Speech: Language spoken by many creatures in the wilderness. Also called Old Speech.

Wintervale: The land of perpetual ice and snow where the White Lady dwells.

White Lady: The mysterious evil entity, founder of Rothnog, whom Karoxfang serves; she dwells in the Wintervale.



CHAPTER 7: ADVENTURES IN THE WAR OF IMMORTALS

ADVENTURES

This chapter presents two adventures—“The Crypt of Memory” and “The Ruin of Honor and Glory”—that will help your players learn about the War of Immortals campaign setting and about the history of the mysterious and dreaded White Lady. Both adventures have memory as a theme that links them together.

If you are a player, don't read further in this chapter; skip to the next chapter so you don't spoil your fun when your Game Master runs you through these adventures.

THE CRYPT OF MEMORY

INTRODUCTION

This is an adventure for four to five 5th-level characters. Text that appears in white is player information that you can read aloud or paraphrase for the players at the proper times. The World of Farland is on the silver standard, and as such if you are playing in a different campaign world, you should read silver pieces as gold pieces, gold pieces as platinum pieces, and so forth (see the previous chapter).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Centuries ago, a group of elven separatists led by House Al-Dustriel and its matriarch Talkana Silumiel left the elven kingdom, allied with evil forces, and waged a civil war against their kin. House Al-Dustriel sought help from the dwarf kingdom of Liferock, which chose to remain neutral in the conflict. But the

In this chapter, you'll find two adventures that give you a solid taste of the War of Immortals epoch. These adventures are ready to go (with maps and everything), so as a GM, read them and run them! But if you're a player, skip this chapter-- no spoilers!

dwarven clan Ironflame, led by their Lord Lazaghan, defied the edict of their king and took up residence among the Kinslayer elves, forging weapons and armor for them during their civil war. Eventually the Kinslayers were defeated and the victorious elves returned Lazaghan and his clan to the dwarven king for justice. Lazaghan was sentenced to death and the rest of the clan was exiled. When Lazaghan was executed, the king gave his body to his clan, who interred him in a secret crypt.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The heroes, coming across a map to the crypt, will invade the crypt and solve its puzzles by walking in the footsteps of Lazaghan to gain the right to face the undead Lazaghan and recover his treasures.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Unlike most adventures, this one only has one hook:

The Assault. The PCs rescue an old dwarf from an assault by orcs. In return, he gives them a map and tells them of the crypt of Lazaghan.



PART 1: BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

THE ASSAULT

When the PCs are traveling near the dwarven lands, they hear a commotion and see some sort of a melee. An old dwarf (Balim Heavyhand), his withered gray beard reaching down to his chest, is being assaulted by several orcs. “Help me!” he cries, but no one is around, except the PCs. “Will no one help an old dwarf?” he cries as one of the assailants lands a critical blow. It is obvious that the dwarf won't last long without help.

If the PCs help the dwarf, they must face the orcs. The orcs have no stomach for a real fight to the death with armed folk; any orc reduced to half of his hit point total will flee. If only two orcs remain, both will flee. If any orc is captured, players will learn that the band is random marauders, deserters from the army of Stor-gris. They are only seeking to steal items and food so that they can scrounge a living. Randomly generate the treasure for each orc.

- 6 Orcs (use orc stats from 5e SRD)

No map is provided for this encounter; create one of your own that fits the terrain in which the PCs are traveling. Once the orcs are dispatched or driven off, the old dwarf will introduce himself as Balim Heavyhand. He is close to death, and if the PCs don't provide magical healing or succeed at a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check, he will die in 2 rounds. If they save him, he will give to them as a reward a treasure map and explain that it leads to the crypt of an ancient dwarven outcast. Rumor has it that the crypt is rich with treasure.

If the old dwarf dies, the PCs will discover the map if they search his body. From the map itself, the only thing the PCs will be able to tell is that it leads to an old crypt and indicates that a great treasure is in the crypt. This ought to be enough to entice them into investigating the mystery of the crypt.

FINDING THE CRYPT

The map gives fairly detailed and specific directions to the hidden crypt. Place the location of the crypt in the nearest mountain range, but place it at a distance such that the PCs need to engage in a week's overland travel if you can. Each day that they travel, they have a 1 in 8 chance of a random encounter. If you roll a 1 on a d8, roll for a random encounter on the following chart.

Roll	Encounter (Use stats from SRD)
1	5 orcs
2	2 griffins
3	2 ettins
4	1 wyvern
5	1 troll
6	1 chimera

Once the PCs are within a mile of the crypt, they will need to find its exact location with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check or DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. The PCs can search for the tomb once per day, because each search takes approximately 8 hours. Each day that the PCs do not find the tomb once they are in its vicinity, roll for a random encounter on the table above, except that the chance of an encounter become 3 in 8. Once they find the tomb, go to **Part 2**.

PART 2: THE CRYPT OF MEMORY

OUTSIDE THE CRYPT

The crypt is located in a remote mountainous area. Getting to the crypt requires a rigorous hike through the mountains, and then it requires passing through a narrow ravine that is approximately 100 yards long. The ravine is about 8 to 10 feet wide, with steep

natural walls on both sides; the walls rise to a height of 50 feet. At the end of the ravine is a natural cave, a small grotto that appears non-descript. The ceiling of the cave is 8 feet above the floor, and a colony of bats makes the cave their home. The bats present no danger to PCs, although their copious droppings make the cave rather noxious. In the rear of the cave is a 7-foot-tall stone door, carved with dwarven runes. It's a feature of dwarven architecture that things are always bigger than dwarves need. Anyone who speaks Dwarven can attempt to decipher the runes with a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The runes indicate that the crypt is a special vault concealing memories better left undisturbed.

The door of the crypt is locked; the lock can be picked with a DC 12 Dexterity check. Once the lock has been picked, the door, closed for centuries, must still be pried open. This can be successfully accomplished with a DC 15 Strength check.

INSIDE THE CRYPT

Inside the crypt is a thick layer of dust, indicating that nothing has been disturbed therein for a long time. The ceilings inside the crypt are 10 feet from the floor unless otherwise noted. It is pitch black inside, so PCs will need darkvision or a light source. There are no wandering monsters in the crypt, so there is no need to check for random encounters; however, any PC who attempts to complete a long rest inside the crypt will find himself struggling with memories from his past. Because his mind will race the entire time, he will not be able to complete a long rest. Short rests are permissible. See the crypt map on the next page.

AREA 1

You traverse a short hallway and find yourself in a roughly square room with closed stone double doors in the back. Four sarcophagi are set against the walls, two on the left wall and two on the right. The most

notable feature of this room is the floor. It seems to be divided into large blocks. Half of the blocks are carved with dwarven runes and decorations. The other half are blank.

The doors at the other side of the room are not locked. The squares with the runes and decorations on the floor are trapped.

Psychic Floor Trap (Magic trap). This trap is activated when a creature steps on an enruned and decorated block, releasing a burst of psychic energy. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as *detect magic*, reveals an aura of enchantment magic on the floor. Each creature on the block when it activates must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) psychic damage on a failed save. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 14) cast on the floor destroys the trap.

When a PC enters the room, the denizens of the sarcophagi, undead dwarven warriors, throw the lids onto the floor and leap from their coffins to attack the PCs. The warriors bear the scraps of ancient





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dwarven weapons and armor. Anyone who knows dwarven culture will be able to tell that they were not constructed in Wawmar.

The dwarven warriors, having immunity to psychic damage, are unaffected by the trap. Although the undead warriors are not intelligent, they will take the shove action to attempt to push PCs onto trapped squares, for they were instructed to do so.

Once the warriors are dispatched, if PCs search the sarcophagi, they will find 54 CPs and 1 GP, all of ancient dwarven make.

- 4 undead dwarf warriors

UNDEAD DWARF WARRIOR

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 77 (8d10 + 32)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHR
16 (+3)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands Common and Dwarven but can't speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the dwarf warrior to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the dwarf warrior drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Dwarf Warrior makes two battleaxe attacks.

Battleaxe: Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

AREA 2

This large hall is shaped like an octagon. Its ceiling rises to a height of 15 feet. In the center of the hall is bronze statue, apparently an ancient dwarf warrior with a short spear. The floor of the room exhibits a giant mural, made up of abstract dwarven designs. Six stone doors are along the side wall. Each door has a scene carved into the stone, apparently depicting the sun at different points in the sky. The one immediately to your left has the sun barely topping the horizon. Also on this door is a dwarven rune. The one to your middle left has a sun higher in the sky, and the one to your upper left has the sun nearly to its zenith. The pattern repeats exactly on the right side of the room, although the rune on the door to the lower right is different.

On the wall immediately opposite you are two doors, intricately carved and covered in dwarven runes. Between the doors is an inscription carved on the wall.

This is obviously the main chamber to the tomb-structure. You can show your players the illustration on the next page. Any PC who speaks dwarven can attempt to decipher the single rune on each of the lower left and lower right doors with a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The rune on the lower left door (**Area 3**) means “Dawn,” and the rune on the lower right door (**Area 8**) means “Dusk.”

Any PC who speaks dwarven can attempt to decipher the runes on the back wall between the two doors with a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The runes state:

“This is the final resting place of Lazaghan, patriarch of clan Ironflame. If you wish to look upon the tomb of this honored ancestor, you must choose the door by which to enter. The left door is honor and the right door is love. Touch five runes on your chosen door in their proper order. But beware: choosing the wrong door or touching the runes in

Area 3



Area 6



Area 4



Area 7



Area 5



Area 8



the wrong order means death. If you do not know the order of the runes or which door to choose, follow in his footsteps to awaken his memories.”

The runes on both doors are the same: symbols for knowledge, wisdom, courage, strength, loyalty, wit, and camaraderie, respectively. The right door is the correct door, but it can only be entered safely if a PC touches the strength, knowledge, camaraderie, courage, and wit rune, in that order.

If a PC touches the runes in the wrong order, touches any rune on the left door, or attempts to open the left door (which will not open, regardless), he must succeed at a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or gain vulnerability to psychic damage until the end of his next turn. He then takes (50) 10d10 psychic damage, or half that much on a success (and he gains no vulnerability on a success).

The way to solve the puzzle is to enter the smaller side rooms in the proper order, reliving scenes from Lazaghan’s memories and solving the challenges therein. The order is **Area 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8**. The PCs should be able to figure this out, because the illustrations on the doors represent stages of Lazaghan’s life, with dawn representing his youth and dusk the final stages of his life.

Should the PCs attempt to enter a door in the wrong order, they will find the door locked. A wraith in the shape of a dwarf, with a wispy ghost-beard and burning eyes of flame will then walk through the door to attack the PCs, possibly surprising them (roll a Stealth check for the wraith and compare it to the PCs’ passive Perception).

Each wraith comes from one of the rooms and will emerge when its room is tried in the wrong order, so you should track which wraiths have been dispatched, as they will not appear again once killed. If the PCs enter the rooms in the correct order, the doors will be unlocked and no wraiths will emerge.

- Wraiths (Use stats from 5e SRD)

AREA 3

You open the door with the illustration of the sun barely cresting the horizon. A dwarven rune is engraved above the illustration. At first you behold a bare stone room with a single stone sarcophagus at the far end. Then your vision grows momentarily misty as the scene suddenly changes. You find yourself outside during daylight, a cooling breeze caressing your skin and stirring your short beard. Beard? Looking down, you find that your body is that of an unfamiliar dwarf. Flexing your limbs, you find them quick and supple with youth. Looking around, you see that your companions are also young dwarves.

Across from you are another group of dwarven youths, laughing and joking. A burly young lad steps forth, the hairs from his newly grown beard jutting out in all directions. “You Ironflame jerks are supposed to be tough and strong, they say. Well it’s my belief that the Underdelvers are stronger. I challenge you to a wrestling match!”

This is one of Lazaghan’s earliest memories, where he wrestled and pinned the strongest of the youths of the Underdelvers clan, proving his athletic prowess and growing the reputation of his clan. One of the PCs will need to wrestle the young dwarf. Although the PCs have the bodies of young dwarves, their statistics and abilities remain the same (in this and all future scenes). The young dwarf has a +4 Strength bonus.

The first contestant to subject the other to the grappled condition for three consecutive turns wins. If a PC wins, the scene ends and the PCs find themselves back in **Area 3**. The word “*strength*” echoes in their heads. They get an award of 1000 XPs (to be divided among the PCs) and will need to go on to the next door.

If the PC loses or refuses to compete, the scene ends and the PCs suddenly find themselves back in **Area 3**. A dwarf wraith will then emerge from the sarcophagus to attack the PCs, possibly surprising

them (roll a Stealth check for the wraith and compare it to the PCs' passive Perception). The wraith will fight to the death. If the PCs slay the wraith, it will whisper, "Your *strength* will fail" as it dies.

If the wraith was already killed because the PCs initially chose the wrong door in **Area 2**, the PCs won't receive the clue. There is no treasure in the sarcophagus of the wraith.

- Wraith (Use stats from 5e SRD)

AREA 4

You open the door with the illustration of the sun one quarter of the way above the horizon. You see a bare stone room with a single stone sarcophagus at the far end. Then the scene suddenly changes. You find yourself in a fire-lit hall. High above, apertures in the rock of the roof allow beams of sunlight to stream down, lighting the room. Again, you find yourself in the body of a dwarven youth, now somewhat older. Other dwarven youths sit on wooden benches near you, listening to a figure standing in front of what is obviously a class. Addressing the class, strangely, is an elven woman. A beam of light falls on her golden hair, hiding her face in shadow. She is dressed in a beautiful white gown, elegant in its simplicity. "Try again, students. Can no one master this simple expression?" she says in primitive Dwarven, though you understand her just fine. Her voice is amazing... glorious and melodious, lovelier than any music you have heard in your life. You take a moment to bask in the timber of her voice, but she redirects your focus. "Come now, I will ask again. We shan't end this lesson until I get a proper response. The first one to respond properly gets a commendation. *Sula! Arario huil lara hon? O vanar hosario nam?*"

This is a memory from Lazaghan's youth, when an elven diplomat first taught the dwarves Elven and expanded their language capabilities in general. This scene is also the time when Lazaghan began to

establish a reputation for intelligence and acumen. The elven diplomat is, moreover, quite a notable person.

The PCs must determine that the phrase means "Greetings! How do you fare? What is your name?" in ancient Elven before one of the other dwarf youths does so.

To win this contest, one PC must contest his Intelligence check against the Intelligence check of the smartest dwarven youth (who has a +4 Intelligence bonus). PCs can use the Investigation or History skill for this check. Only one PC can make a check at a time.

The first person to win three checks wins the contest. If a PC wins, the scene ends and the PCs find themselves back in **Area 4**. The word "*knowledge*" echoes in their heads. They get an award of 1000 XPs and will need to go on to the next door.

If the PCs lose or refuse to compete, the scene ends and the PCs suddenly find themselves back in **Area 4**. A dwarf wraith will then emerge from the sarcophagus to attack the PCs, possibly surprising them (roll a Stealth check for the wraith and compare it to the PCs' passive Perception). The wraith will fight to the death. If the PCs slay the wraith, it will whisper, "Your *knowledge* is worth nothing" as it dies. If the wraith was already killed because the PCs initially chose the wrong door in **Area 2**, the PCs won't receive the clue. There is no treasure in the sarcophagus of the wraith.

- Wraith (Use stats from 5e SRD)

AREA 5

Opening the door with the illustration of the sun almost to its zenith, you behold the now-familiar bare stone room with the single stone sarcophagus at the far end. Then your vision once again becomes misty and the scene suddenly changes. You find yourself inside a stone hall, which is filled with benches, tables, and carousing dwarves. Looking around, you and your companions are also dwarves,

your growing beards indicating that you are now older. The room in which you find yourself is apparently some subterranean inn or gathering hall. The smell of roasting meat and the clanking of goblets fills the air. Then a young dwarf stands up and points at you. “You of clan Ironflame have the reputation of being able to entertain a crowd. But I think that we of clan Silvervein can surpass ya! I’ve got my trusty harp on me. Let’s see if you can do better than me!”

This is a fond memory from the end of Lazaghan’s youth, where he outperformed one of the minstrels from clan Silvervein. This continued to prove to all of the dwarves of Liferock that Lazaghan was indeed an exceptional dwarf of many talents. As his fame reflected on his clan, Ironflame also continued to grow in fame.

To win this contest, one PC must contest his Charisma check against the Charisma check of the dwarven minstrel (who has a +4 Charisma bonus). PCs can use any applicable Charisma skill, such as Performance or Persuasion, that could conceivably entertain a crowd. Only one PC can make a check at a time. The first person to win three checks wins the contest. If a PC wins, the scene ends and the PCs find themselves back in **Area 5**. The word “*camaraderie*” echoes in their heads. They get an award of 1000 XPs and will need to go on to the next door.

If the PC loses or refuses to compete, the PCs suddenly find themselves back in **Area 5**. A dwarf wraith will then emerge from the sarcophagus to attack the PCs, possibly surprising them (roll a Stealth check for the wraith and compare it to the PCs’ passive Perception). The wraith will fight to the death. If the PCs slay the wraith, it will whisper, “No *camaraderie* will protect you in the end” as it dies. If the wraith was already killed because the PCs initially chose the wrong door in **Area 2**, the PCs won’t receive the clue. It has no treasure.

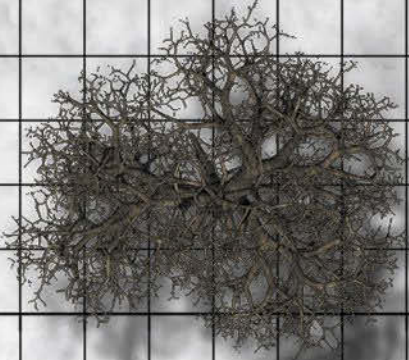
- Wraith (Use stats from 5e SRD)

AREA 6

You open the door with the illustration of the sun almost to its zenith, or just past its zenith, depending on how you look at it. In front of you is what you expect: You see a bare stone room with a single stone sarcophagus at the far end. Then your vision once again blurs and the scene shifts. You are now in an outdoor setting, a snowy field dotted with boulders and trees. Taking stock of your body, you are a full-grown dwarf in the prime of his life. Your dark beard, intricately braided, reaches down nearly to your navel. You are armed and ready for battle. Looking around, you see that your companions are also dwarves of similar age, all grim and warlike. Suddenly, out of the trees ahead of you, spraying snow as it leaps, comes a daunting sight: a large white drake, its wingspan more than 20 feet, its teeth and claws as sharp as razors. Behind it comes a smaller white drake, clearly following the larger one. “Steady now, lads!” you hear yourself shout. “Let’s put paid to these beasts once and for all!”

This is a recollection from Lazaghan’s prime, wherein he leads a dwarven war band in slaying a young white dragon and a white wyrmling. This memory was significant to Lazaghan, as the slaying of the dragon and its youngling brought much glory to him and to his clan. However, the dragon was a fearsome opponent, and Lazaghan did not emerge from the battle unscathed. In fact, some of his kinsmen died in the fight.

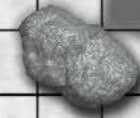
Now the PCs have to face the beasts. They have little choice but to fight, for both dragons are attacking them. See the map on the next page for this encounter. While the PCs have the bodies of dwarves, their statistics and abilities remain the same. If the PCs win the fight, the scene ends and the PCs find themselves back in **Area 6**. The word “*courage*” echoes in their heads. They get the experience points from slaying both foes, and when they return to **Area 6**, they regain half of their lost hit points and each PC recovers one spent spell slot of his choosing.



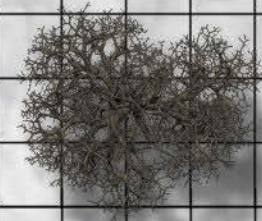
Wyrmling



White
Dragon



PCs Start in this
Vicinity



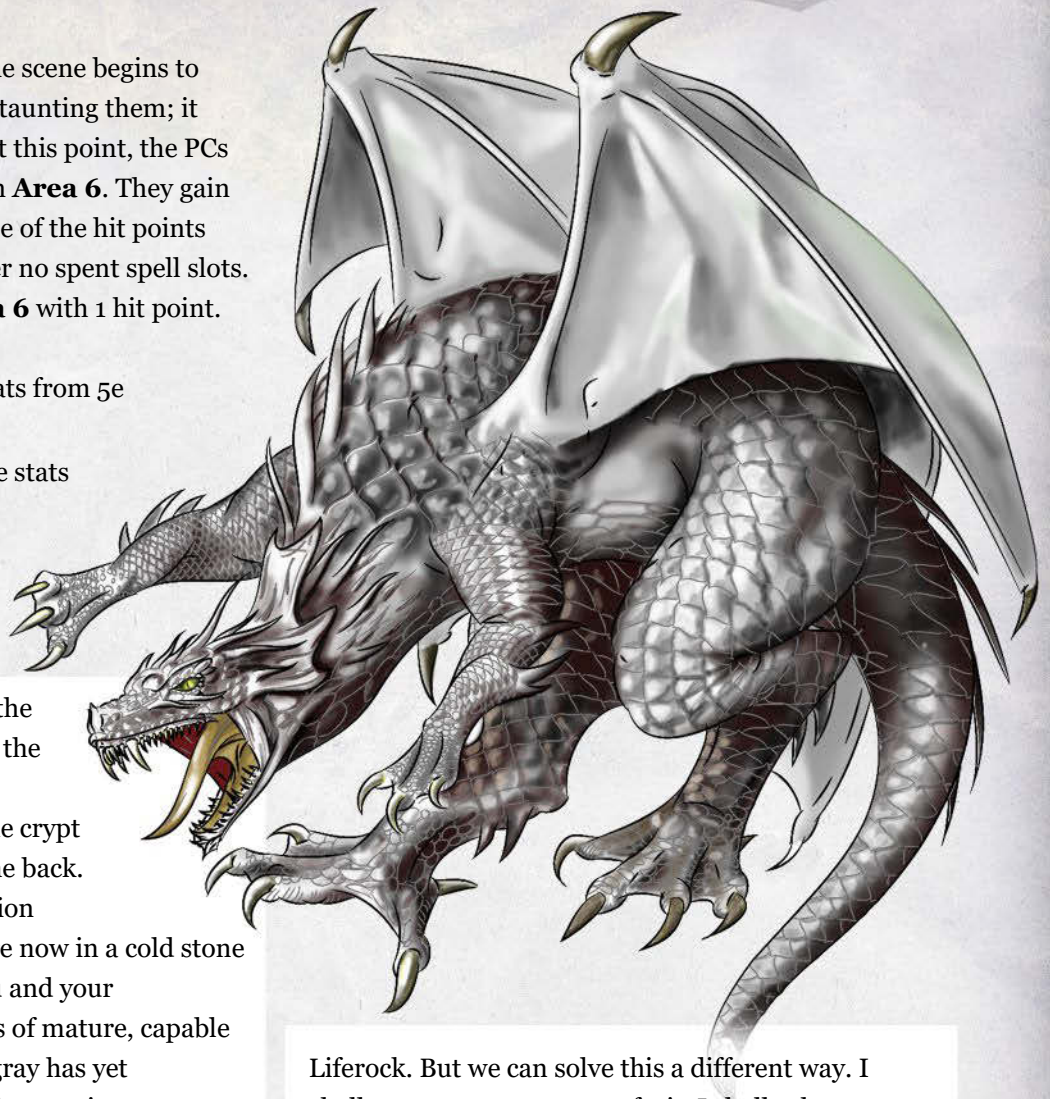
If the PCs lose or run away, the scene begins to fade. They hear a draconic voice taunting them; it says, “Your *courage* is paltry!” At this point, the PCs suddenly find themselves back in **Area 6**. They gain no experience points, regain none of the hit points lost during the scene, and recover no spent spell slots. Any PC who died is alive in **Area 6** with 1 hit point.

- Young white dragon (Use stats from 5e SRD)
- White dragon wyrmling (Use stats from 5e SRD)

AREA 7

After you open the door with the picture of the sun one quarter of the way above the horizon, you see before you the familiar bare stone crypt with the single sarcophagus at the back. The expected misting of your vision occurs and when it clears, you are now in a cold stone hall deep inside a mountain. You and your companions now have the bodies of mature, capable dwarves still in their prime. No gray has yet infiltrated your long beards. Facing you is a contingent of dwarves, their beards lovingly tended and just starting to show the faintest hints of gray.

One dwarf, obviously their leader, steps forward and addresses you: “Lazaghan, your fame and deeds are sung by all in Liferock, our home. It is known that you speak for mighty clan Ironflame. And your clan is respected. But we too of clan Underdelvers have earned acclaim. You have urged that the dwarves intercede in this mounting dispute between the elves, but our clan maintains that this is a grave mistake. Which of us will get an audience with the king? Our customs dictate that the leaders of our clans face off to determine who is to be afforded this honor. But it would be sacrilege to spill dwarven blood. The great Lord Khuldul would not look kindly on it if dwarves shed dwarven blood, especially not here in holy



Liferock. But we can solve this a different way. I challenge you to a contest of wit. I shall ask you a riddle. If you can answer it, you win the honor of addressing the king. If you cannot, withdraw your request and I shall address the king. Here is the riddle: ‘Seven times a week I fall but I never break. My brother breaks seven times a week but he never falls. What are we?’”

This is a recollection from Lazaghan’s adulthood. In this memory, he outwitted the patriarch of clan Underdelvers by answering his riddle and thus won the right to address the king. Little did Lazaghan know, he was taking steps down a dark path.

The PCs must answer the riddle; the answer is “*night and day*.” If the PCs answer the riddle, the dwarf who asked it says, “Your wit has triumphed.” The scene ends and the PCs find themselves back in

Area 7. The word “*wit*” echoes in their heads. They get an award of 1000 XPs and will need to go on to the next door.

If the PCs answer the riddle incorrectly or refuse to answer it, the scene ends and the PCs suddenly find themselves back in **Area 7**. A dwarf wraith will then emerge from the sarcophagus to attack the PCs (unless it was killed in **Area 2**), possibly surprising them (roll a Stealth check for the wraith and compare it to the PCs’ passive Perception). The wraith will fight to the death. If the PCs slay the wraith, it will whisper, “Your *wit* will avail you naught against the darkness,” as it dies. There is no treasure in the sarcophagus of the wraith.

- Wraith (Use stats from 5e SRD)

AREA 8

Opening the door with the illustration of the sun barely cresting the horizon (or sinking into it, depending on your perspective) and with the dwarven rune engraved above the illustration, you see the expected crypt with the single stone sarcophagus at the back. Then your vision momentarily grows misty, as you anticipated, and the scene switches. You are in a massive underground hall illuminated by shafts of light from the ceiling and supported by columns carved in intricate shapes. Your body is that of an aging dwarf; though your beard is beginning to be streaked with gray, you are still strong and fit. Your companions are dwarves of similar ages. The room is filled with dwarves, dressed in noble garb. All of you stand to the sides of the room. At the far end of the room is a throne, with a gray bearded, crowned dwarf sitting upon it. You know the dwarf to be your king. In front of the throne in the middle of the room are two groups of tall elves. The two parties of elves stand apart from each other, each group casting angry glances at the other.

The dwarf king looks at the first group of elves. “Honored emissary of the elven king in Alustel, speak.” A dark-haired elf steps forward and bows.

“Mighty King, these elves, though they come from the noble house Al-Dustriel, are traitors to our crown and our people. Though we recognize that house Al-Dustriel has helped your people in the past, we ask simply that you lend them no aid and do not interfere in our civil strife.”

The dwarf king strokes his beard in thought, then speaks. “Lady Talkana Silumiel, honored emissary of elven House Al-Dustriel, speak.” At this point an elven woman, tall and shapely, steps forward. There is a collective intake of breath from the gathered assembly, for this elf woman is literally more beautiful than any female you have ever seen. She is clad in an elegant white gown, and this makes you realize she was your teacher when you were young, though she has not aged a day. Her hair is spun gold, her lips wine, her eyes luminous stars, her voice a song, her face perfection. Your heart leaps in your chest, and inside you feel a familiar, deep ache. She speaks. “Great king of dwarves, my house and our allies seek but to leave the Sarumvest in pursuit of our independence. We do not offer war or violence to our kin. We want only our freedom. We ask that you merely trade with our house and its allies, aiding us peacefully as we seek to establish our own kingdom to the east.” Her words seem more than reasonable to you, and you anticipate that the king will immediately agree.

Instead, he merely continues to stroke his beard. “This is a matter I must ponder. I will consult with my council. Lord Lazaghan, please show the elves back to their guest quarters while they await my decision.” The king and his bodyguards quickly leave the hall, along with the rest of the dwarves. “Come,” you say to the two parties of elves, beckoning them to follow you.

The two bands leave, tensely glaring at each other. The Al-Dustriens murmur to themselves in a suspicious way, but Talkana Silumiel merely walks forward, haughty and proud. Her very presence seems to light up the dusky chambers, at least to your eyes.

But when you reach the antechamber, Talkana

turns to you. “Lord Lazaghan, I have had enough of this. These haughty elves seek to arrest me and return me to their King for so-called justice. Their King has no authority over me! Will you let them commit this atrocity? Or will you and your clan help me attain my freedom?”

The elves of Alustel look shocked. Although both groups were supposed to be unarmed, the Al-Dustrians suddenly produce short swords from inside their cloaks. The Lady Talkana looks to you. “Lord Lazaghan, if you ever bore me any love, help us now.”

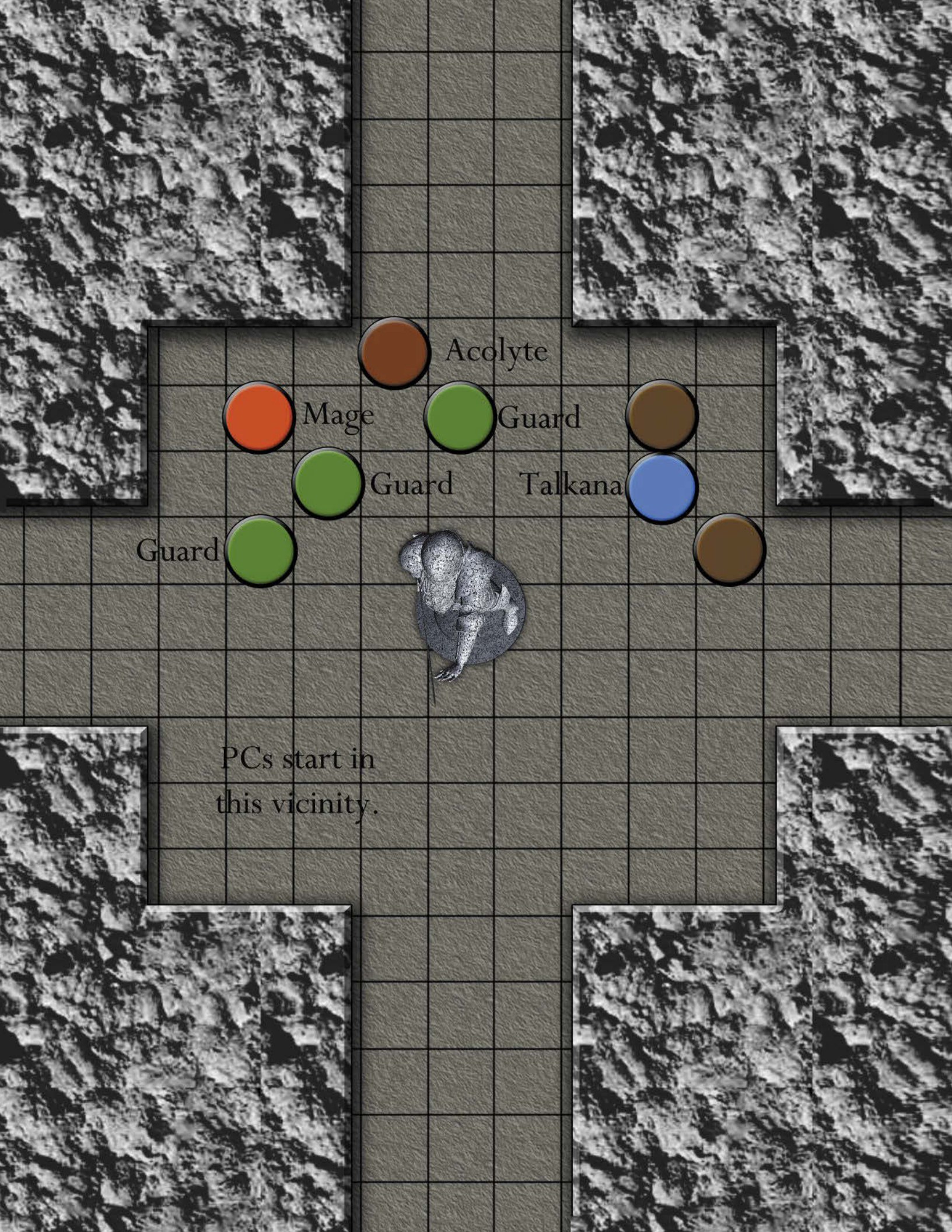
Seemingly with no other choice, the elves of Alustel also draw hidden weapons. You get the sense that they may have expected some kind of treachery.

You hear yourself respond, “What I do now, my lady, I do out of undying love for you. Moondaughter, you are the moon in my sky.” With a practiced movement, you draw your razor-sharp weapon...

An episode near the end of his life, this is the most important memory Lazaghan has. He cast the lot of his clan with the Kinslayer elves from Al-Dustriel out of love for the Lady Talkana Silumiel, who would ultimately become the White Lady, later called the Dweller in the Wintervale; his fate was thus forever sealed (see the *Lay of Talkana Silumiel*, at the end of this adventure). In this scene, the PCs must protect the elves of House Al-Dustriel from the elves of Alustel, who are responding to Talkana's assault. See the map on the next page for this encounter. If the PCs slay or drive off the elves of Alustel, they will be victorious. Before the scene ends, though, have Talkana Silumiel do something to betray her evil nature; for example, have her execute a helpless captive, perhaps with a powerful spell. Once all is done, the PCs find themselves back in **Area 8**. The words “*Lazaghan did what he did for love*” echo in their heads. They get the experience points from defeating each elven opponent and have the information they need to make their choice and enter **Area 9**. They also regain half of all hit points lost during the encounter.

- Elven mage (Use NPC mage stats from 5e SRD)
- Elven acolyte (Use NPC acolyte stats from 5e SRD)
- 3 elven guards (Use NPC guard stats from 5e SRD, but they have shortswords instead of spears)
- Talkana Silumiel (Use NPC archmagi stats from 5e SRD).





Acolyte



Mage



Guard



Guard

Talkana



Guard



PCs start in
this vicinity.

All of these elves have the Fey Ancestry trait, which means they have advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put them to sleep. Only the elves of Alustel are given above, who are the opponents. Two more elves of House Al-Dustriel are present also, and they have the stats of nobles from the 5e SRD, but they won't fight if the PCs will defend them.

If the PCs are defeated by the elves, flee, or refuse to help, the scene ends, the PCs regain no hit points lost during the encounter, and they suddenly find themselves back in **Area 8**. Any PC who died is alive in **Area 8** with 1 hit point. A dwarf wraith will then emerge from the sarcophagus (unless it was killed in **Area 2**) to attack the PCs, possibly surprising them (roll a Stealth check for the wraith and compare it to the PCs' passive Perception). The wraith will fight to the death. There is no treasure in the sarcophagus of the wraith.

- Wraith (Use stats from 5e SRD)

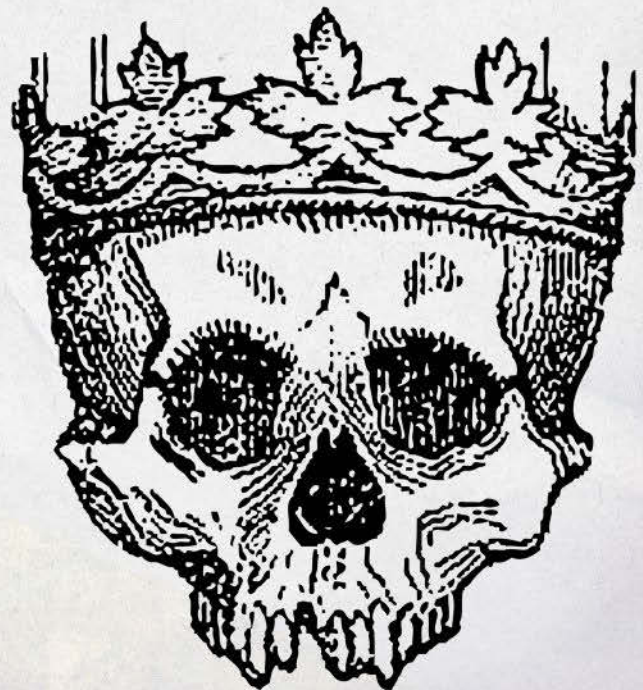
AREA 9

To enter this area, the PCs must come in through the right door, likely after having solved the puzzle.

You find yourself in a large, abnormally shaped room. A stone sarcophagus rests on a massive pedestal against the back wall, a noble dwarf carved into its lid. The sarcophagus is flanked by two statues, guardian dwarves hewn from marble. On each side of the sarcophagus is a large stone chest. But then you hear a deep, serious voice echo through the chamber—or is it just inside your head? “Who disturbs my endless memories, I who chose so poorly in life and now cannot rest? Leave my crypt or stay forever.” Out of the sarcophagus, passing right through the lid, rises a shadowy figure. The shade looks somewhat like a dwarf but its features are shrouded in mist... almost like some half-forgotten memory. It seemingly awaits your response.

This is what remains of the dwarf lord Lazaghan. He is now a Remnant, a memory wraith. Corrupted by the machinations of the treacherous Talkana Silumiel, he is now evil, though he regrets his mistakes in life. He is prone to attacking the PCs, although if the PCs attempt to speak to him and assuage his guilt, perhaps by explaining that love was a pure motive for his mistakes, he may leave them unmolested. If the PCs succeed at a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check, he will indicate that they may take his treasure, and he will then depart the world forever. This should be a rich roleplaying opportunity; play it as such. If they players are to succeed, they will need to incorporate what they have learned in Lazaghan's memories when they speak to him. If they do not speak to him or try to persuade him and fail, he will call out, “Guards, aid me!” A shadow will emerge from each pillar. All three undead dwarves will then attack the PCs. The two chests contain 600 tp, 5000 cp, 1400 sp, 110 gp, 3 golden yellow topaz worth 500 sp each, a potion of resistance (psychic), and a +1 battle axe, the Axe of Lazaghan.

- Lazaghan the Remnant
- 2 shadows (Use stats from 5e SRD)



LAZAGHAN THE REMNANT

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHR
06 (-2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception + 5, Perception +3,

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Elven, Dwarven

Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The Remnant can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the Remnant has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Remnant makes two psychic shock attacks.

Psychic Shock. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (3d6 + 3) psychic damage, and the target's Charisma score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces its Charisma to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest.

Memory Drain (recharge 5-6). One target the Remnant can see must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or take 20 (5d8) psychic damage and lose all memory of events within the last 24 hours (although it does not lose prepared spells). The target behaves as if under the effect of the *confusion* spell. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the *confusion* effect on itself on a success, although it does not regain lost memories.

REACTIONS

Impart Memory. When a creature the Remnant can see starts its turn within 30 feet of the Remnant, the Remnant can impart one of its own horrific memories to the creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or be frightened until the end of its turn.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: LAYING LAZAGHAN TO REST

If the PCs slay the memory wraith or otherwise lay him to rest, they will have done him a favor. The torment he suffered because of his own memories will end. The PCs should feel a sense of accomplishment, and they should also feel the weight of the importance of the historical events they have lived through. They have seen things that no other living creatures have seen. If this isn't immediately apparent to them, help them realize it. This way, they will get more out of the adventure.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

None of the villains in the adventure will seek to harm the PCs in the future if they are left alive. Instead, the PCs may wish to investigate some of the historical facts that they have learned. They may wish to look for the location of the dwarfhold Liferock, now a lost ruin. They may wish to seek out the ruin of Talas, the city that the Kinslayer elves of house Al-Dustrirel went on to found, or they may even seek to learn more about Talkana Silumiel, the dreaded White Lady. Seeking information about Talkana may eventually lead them to the next adventure.

THE LAY OF TALKANA SILUMIEL

*In Alustel there lived of old
Beneath the boughs awash with light
An Elven maid with hair of gold
Where stars shone day and night.*

*No beauty grander ever graced
The lissome form of elf or man.
The good reflected in her face
She spread throughout the land.*

*The daughter of Balanuil
Wise patron of Al-Dustriel
Elfhouses great and greater still
T'were none in Alustel.*

*Talkana they called her on sight,
The fairest Daughter of the Moon,
For in her eyes, both clear and bright
Grey magic sang in tune.*

*Capacity of priest and mage
And loving heart of elven maid
She traveled long in role of sage
From Sarumvest she strayed.*

*Of elves, the wordsmiths, great was she,
Of dweomer magic greater still
And wandering, light-limbed and free
She taught them both with skill.*

*To beast and tree and delving dwarf
With lithe, quick step and watchful eye
The elven learning she brought forth
All learned it that would try.*

*Because goodwill she always sought
To Liferock cold she learning bore
With tongue of gold full well she wrought
'Tween dwarf and elf rapport.*

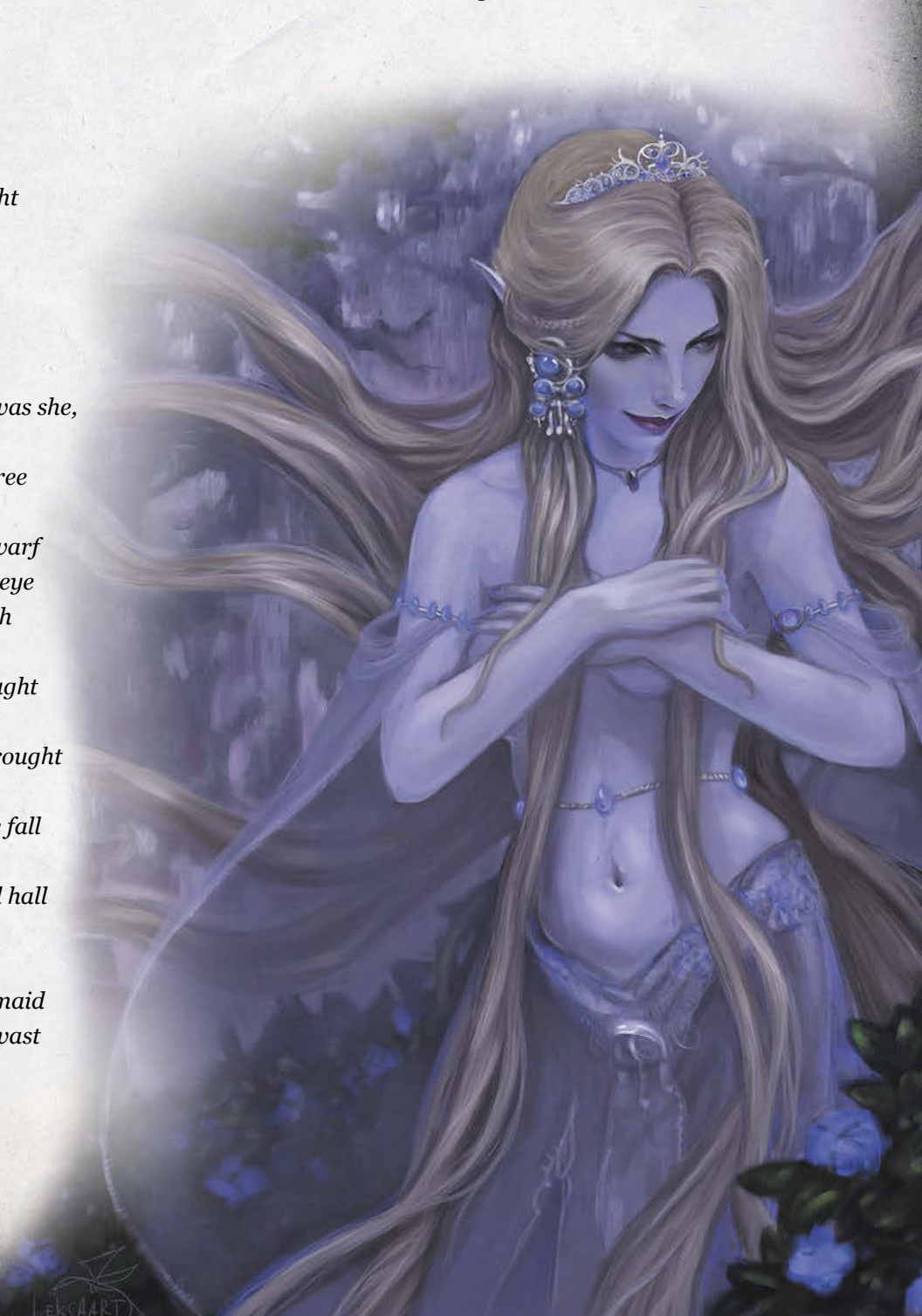
*But fades the summer, comes the fall
And elven lands will wear away
And cold will grow both hearth and hall
For nature's law's decay.*

*From elven ken Talkana passed
Though loved they fierce the elven maid
They searched lands both cold and vast
But then returned to glade.*

*Now light shines pale in Alustel
And sorrow marks the Sarumvest
Where Talkana's graceful feet once fell
But nevermore shall rest.*

*For fades the summer from glade and vale
And elven lands are brown and sere
As ever colder grows the trail
Of Moondaughter who disappeared.*

--by Galdin Palantar the bard, written in the year
9000 Elhil Reckoning



THE RUIN OF HONOR AND GLORY

INTRODUCTION

This is an adventure for four to five 9th-level characters. Text that appears in white is player information that you can read aloud or paraphrase for the players at the proper times. The World of Farland is on the silver standard, and as such if you are playing in a different campaign world, you should read silver pieces as gold pieces, gold pieces as platinum pieces, and so forth (see the previous chapter).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For centuries upon centuries, in the beautiful city of Alustel, capital of the elven kingdom of the Sarumvest, a cursed and benighted ruin has sat like a blemish on an otherwise lovely countenance. This blight was once the manor and gardens of the

powerful elven House Al-Dustriel (“Those who love Honor and Glory”), but when they began the Kin Slayer Wars and left Alustel, the buildings and grounds fell to ruins. However, the passage of time has not had the effect on the ruins that one would expect—after several thousand years, there should be little left of the place save for a few tumbled stones and many weeds. But no—the place, while clearly deserted and decrepit, is still standing, as if some dark and evil power or residue of a power has protected it from the ravages of the passing centuries.

The place is clearly evil, as is apparent to anyone with any acumen for magic who passes on the street. Passing the area, a shudder runs down the back of the person who can wield magic or who can petition the gods for favors. The ruins are cursed. The elves are well aware of this, but because of the history of the location and because of trepidation toward the evil that has remained there, they have left it standing, largely unmolested for hundreds of years. They have merely locked the rusted iron gates and posted a notice declaring that trespassing on the grounds is strictly forbidden by order of his majesty



the Elvenking, who rules all the Sarumvest and the Satellite Cities.

But now, with war brewing, new interest in the dreadful ruin has been rekindled. Explorers are being sought, and if those explorers come from outside Alustel, all the better, for perhaps the curse will not fall on the denizens of the City of the God. Meanwhile, something dark within the place is awakening....

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs will enter the Ruin of House Al-Dustriel, explore it, unlock its dark secrets, learn about the past of the World of Farland... and hopefully emerge alive. They will have to face undead of all varieties, devils, traps, abominations, and horrible memories. And if they aren't careful, they could unleash a fiend upon the City of the God.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

You can use the following hooks to get your PCs involved in this adventure:

The Dreams. One of the PCs is having recurring dreams wherein he or she sees the ruins and senses great evil... but great power and knowledge... within them. When this person arrives in Alustel and sees the ruins, he or she recognizes them from the dreams.

Hired by Elven Intelligence. Elven agents approach the PCs and try to hire them to explore the ruins. If they recover any powerful magic items, they are asked to give them to the elves for use in the war. The price for exploring the ruins is negotiable, but the danger is not.

The Crypt of Memory. If the PCs have explored the Crypt of Memory, the information they learned there may have led them to seek out more about Talkana Silumiel. As the ruins are the home in which she grew up, exploring them is a natural next step.

PART 1: BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

ALUSTEL

The adventure proper begins in the city of Alustel, the legendary capital of the elves. Just getting invited into the city is itself a feat for non-elves. If any of the PCs are not elves, they must have an express invite from an elven lord of the city before they will legally be permitted to set foot there. Securing such an invite will not be easy, but if the PCs have done any favors for the elven folk or have worked for elven causes in the war (including helping with the ambush of Karoxfang), they will likely have been offered such an invitation.

Many rich roleplaying opportunities exist in Alustel. See the detailed description of the city in Chapter 1; the heroes can explore the elven capital, meet important personages, attempt to purchase elven-made goods, or just enjoy the art and music for which Alustel is so famous.

If you like, you can roll a d12 on the random encounter chart on the next page to generate ideas for encounters in Alustel, or use ideas of your own.

At some point in their time in Alustel, they should walk past the ruin of House Al-Dustriel and feel its evil emanations. The elves of the city will be loath to speak of the place, but a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check will uncover information about the ruin and how it relates to the city.

GAINING PERMISSION TO EXPLORE THE RUINS

When the PCs decide to explore the ruin, they will have to get permission from the authorities to do so. The ruin is located in a prominent place on a major street in the city (see the map on page 26), so sneaking into it is a dodgy (though not impossible) proposition. Entering the ruin without permission is highly illegal and could land PCs in prison in the dungeon of the king for several years. The elves tend to give long prison sentences for crimes, since they don't have the same understanding of time as other races.

Roll	Encounter
1	An elf poet wants to recite poems.
2	An elf dandy is insulted and challenges a PC to a harmless duel.
3	An elf wizard asks to study a non-elf PC.
4	An elf warrior is insulted and challenges a PC to a nearly-lethal duel.
5	PCs stumble on a feud between elves of House Aradune and House Tifwing. They are asked to mediate.
6	An elf artist wants to paint one of the PCs... perhaps without clothes on.
7	A half-elf wants to confide in one of the PCs about his difficult childhood.
8	An elf maiden becomes infatuated with one of the PCs.
9	The PCs stumble upon an area of ambient magic. They are at risk for falling into an extended magical sleep.
10	An elven bigot insults the PCs and tells them they don't deserve to be in Alustel.
11	The PCs get a glimpse of a very important elf (perhaps the famous bard Galdin Palantar or maybe even the Elvenking) being escorted by guards and with an entourage of nobles.
12	An elven Doomseer makes a prophesy about one of the PCs.

Achieving permission to enter the ruins will be easy or difficult, depending on why the PCs want to do so. If they have been approached by elven Agents (perhaps Captain Venedal himself—see “Secrets of a Dark Fortress” in Chapter 8) or other authority figures and asked to explore the ruins and recover any magic, the agents will give the PCs signed paperwork authorizing an exploration, along with a key to the front gate. The paperwork indicates that they can legally explore the ruin but can only remain

within it for 48 hours and can only venture there once. The elven authorities will not forget to check up on this point, either. The elves are not as organized as the dwarves, but they handle their business.

If the PCs have not been asked to explore the ruins and want to do so for their own reasons, they will have two choices: they can either acquire permission to do so, or they can attempt to sneak into the ruin or otherwise enter it illegally.

Acquiring permission will be a tricky business that you as the Game Master will have to adjudicate. PCs will need to speak to someone important who can petition the Elvenking on their behalf for permission to explore the place. Whom this person will be will depend on multiple factors, including if they already know any elven lords, if they have met anyone important during their time in Alustel, and if they have any favors they can call in. This is another good roleplaying opportunity. Remember that while the important personages of Alustel are not evil, they tend to be rather political, and favors need to be repaid. You could use their quid pro quo requests as seeds for future adventures.

If the PCs try to sneak in, they will need to be stealthy. The grounds are surrounded by an 8-foot-high wall. The front and rear gate are locked with a good lock (DC 20 Dexterity check to pick). Guards patrol the street and would have the opportunity to spot anyone scaling the wall or entering through the gates. If they spot the PCs, they will attempt to apprehend them, but will only resort to violence as a last resort and would prefer not to kill the PCs. However, if any elven guard (or elven citizen) is assaulted by one of the PCs, it would be a grave mistake. Shedding elven blood in Alustel is a capital crime, and while the first line guards may not be powerful, there are many elves in Alustel who are powerful wizards, warriors, clerics, rangers, and druids, all of whom would join in apprehending anyone who attacked a citizen of Alustel. As the Game Master, you will have to adjudicate the PCs' chances of sneaking into the ruin of House Al-Dustriel.



PART 2: THE RUIN OF HOUSE AL-DUSTRIEL

OUTSIDE THE RUIN

The spacious grounds of House Al-Dustriel were once lush and opulent gardens dotted with sculptures, fountains, and statues. Now they are an overgrown, forbidding wreck. Trees and plants have reclaimed the grounds, and the remains of ancient paths and paved walkways are barely visible. Multiple houses and outbuildings have crumbled to total ruin and have been almost entirely buried under the accumulating earth and vegetation; their appearance is nearly as one would expect based on their age. But a large part of the main building, the manor itself, is still standing and in relatively good condition compared to its very venerable age. The white stone of the walls and even most of the slate roof remains. While the wings have crumbled into a pile of broken blocks, the center of the manor remains, as if time itself has been afraid to encroach too much on the cursed house.

There is only one working entrance into the house: the front door. All other entrances are choked with stone rubble. PCs could theoretically remove the stone somehow, but any major construction-type activities, even if accomplished by magic, would be frowned on by the authorities.

Any PCs that have the ability to cast spells (or have some similar ability that makes them sensitive to magic, the supernatural, or psychic vibrations) will immediately sense a strong feeling of evil emanating from the ruin. Such PCs must succeed at a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw against fear or be unable to approach closer than 20 feet to the ruin. This saving throw can be repeated at the end of each turn. Even after they save, they will feel trepidation at the prospect of entering the ruins.

INSIDE THE RUIN

The front doors of the house are thick wood banded with iron. They are wrought with intricate and delicate elven carvings and artwork, much of it depicting elves sailing out of a twilight mist in great swan ships. With how old these doors must be, they

have no business being in as good a shape as they are. The doors are unlocked but stuck; it takes a DC 15 Strength check to open them. The interior of the house is decrepit, and it has obviously been deserted for centuries. The dust is thick, and like the Crypt of Memory, the air is thick with phantoms of unpleasant recollections. The ceilings are 10 feet from the floor unless otherwise noted. There are no sources of light, although the two floors that are above ground are often dimly lit by ambient light from outside shining through holes in the roof or through the broken windows. There are no wandering monsters in the ruin, so there is no need to check for random encounters; however, any PC who attempts to complete a long rest inside the ruin or on the manor grounds in general will find himself struggling with dark memories that are not his own. Because his mind will race the entire time, he will not be able to complete a long rest. Short rests are permissible.

GROUND LEVEL

AREA 1

The front doors open onto a small foyer room that is thickly choked with the dust of many, many years. On the other side of the room, a hallway runs into the shadows. While this entrance chamber probably once held benches and cloak racks, they have long since crumbled to dust. A doorless opening gapes at the far end of the hallway. But then, for a moment, just a blink, it seems as if the foyer is restored and as it once was—benches and cloak racks, rich and polished, sit against the walls, tapestries of exquisite elvish workmanship adorn the entryway, and no dirt or dust is visible. But then it is gone, leaving you wondering if your mind is playing tricks on you.

Besides a strong feeling of evil and foreboding, there is nothing of note in this area. Any PCs who are sensitive to psychic activity or the supernatural begin to get a nagging headache.

AREA 2

The doorway opens into a large room, clearly the great hall of the house. The ceiling in this room rises more than 30 feet, because the chamber encompasses both floors of the house. A walkway and balcony circles the room some 15 feet above. Two statues of elven heroes, well preserved but covered in dust, stand toward the back of the room. An intricate chair sits against the far wall. Dark passages open to the east and west, and a smaller passage opens to the northwest, but it is collapsed and blocked by rubble. A marble staircase in the northeast corner rises up to the second level. Above your head, a balcony circles the room.

Suddenly, the room is restored, as overpowering visions of the past enter your mind. On the great chair sits a tall elven lord, blond and proud. Standing to his right hand is the most beautiful woman you have ever seen—a shapely elven maiden with hair like spun gold and a face as radiant as starlight. Elven emissaries, dark haired and dressed as nobles, have come seeking an audience: "Oh Lord Balanuil, wise patron of Al-Dustriel, we ask again that you set aside your pride and forgive any slight you may have perceived our king has offered you. We ask that you do not withdraw your liegemen from the support of the king and that you do not speak against him."

The elf lord looks to his right, at the elf maiden, his face questioning. She shakes her head slightly, almost imperceptibly, and his face hardens and grows grim.

"No," he intones. "Be gone from my house."

The woman standing near the chair is, of course, Talkana Silumiel, who will become the White Lady. Allow the PCs to make Intelligence (History) checks to see if they can figure out her identity. Don't make the check too hard; it is important to the rest of the adventure that they figure out who she is.

This is the *Challenge of Pride*, where Lord Balanuil, manipulated by his daughter Talkana, rejects the attempts by the Elvenking at

reconciliation. Witnessing this momentous scene is psychically challenging, and the overweening pride of the elf lord is contagious. The PCs each need to make a DC 14 Charisma saving throw. Those who fail must take any opportunity attack that presents itself in combat, even against an ally; this effect lasts until a long rest is completed. Those who roll a natural 1 on the check also take 16 (4d8) psychic damage. Those who succeed with a natural 20 gain resistance to psychic damage until a long rest is completed.

The room is bare, except that a secret compartment in the chair, discoverable with a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, holds an intricately carved brass key, which unlocks the chest in **Area 4**.

AREA 3

Leaving the main hall to the west, you come into an open room, perhaps once a sitting room. Several closets, their doors crumbled to dust, open off the room, and a main hallway leaves the room to the west but ends in rubble.

Then the scene shifts, and the room looks as it once was, thousands of years ago. Delicate couches line the room, and peerless paintings hang from the walls. In the center of the room is the beautiful elven woman, doubtless the famous Talkana Silumiel. She is speaking to the elven lord from the main hall. He says, "My daughter, perhaps we have made a mistake in considering breaking away from the Elvenking. We turn against our own people and consort with dwarves. Maybe we should reconsider."

Her anger flashes: "How dare you question me? Have I not promised that this path will lead us to power and knowledge undreamed of?" She delivers a ringing slap to the side of his face.

Three elven maids, female servants, accompany Talkana, but they seem afraid of her. She whirls on her heel and storms out. They follow, cowering.

This is the *Challenge of Anger*, where Talkana's flashing fury cowed her father and ladies-in-waiting. Talkana's fury is catching. The PCs each need to

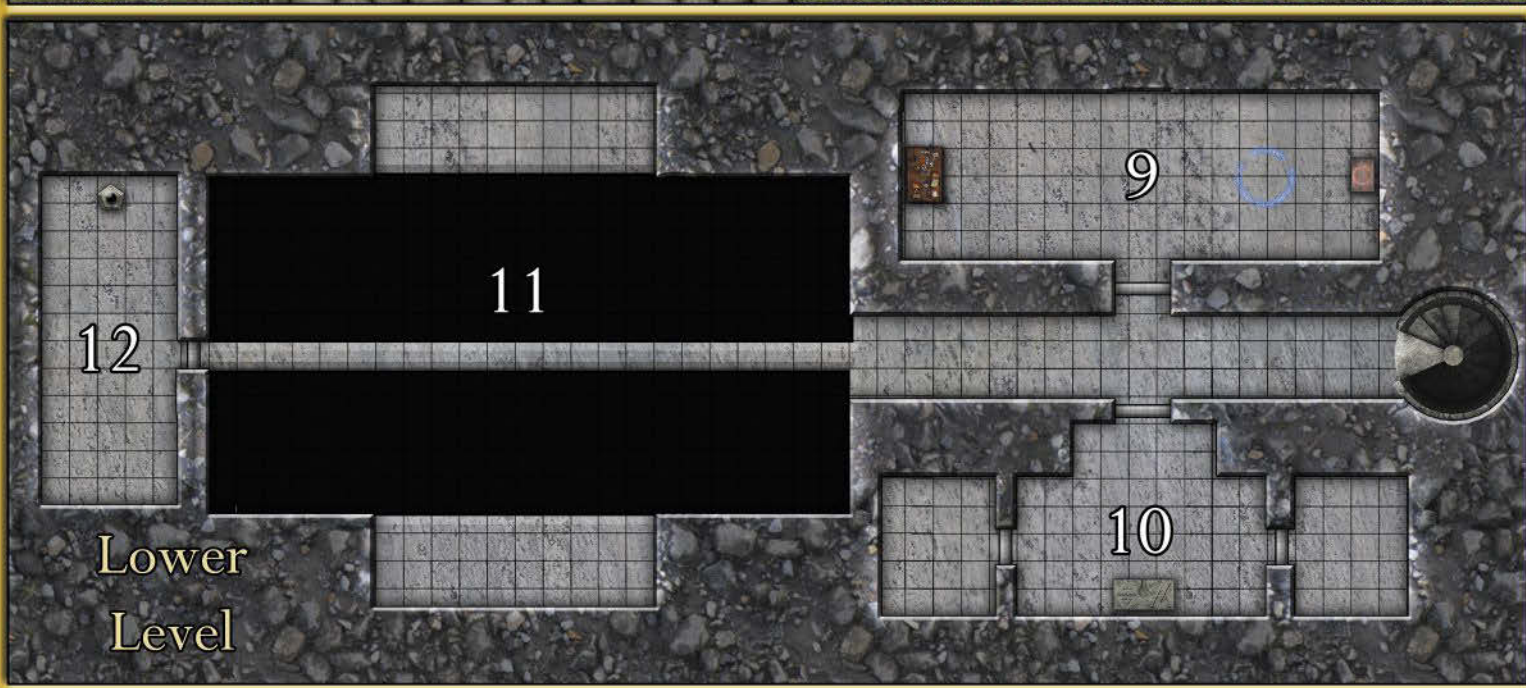
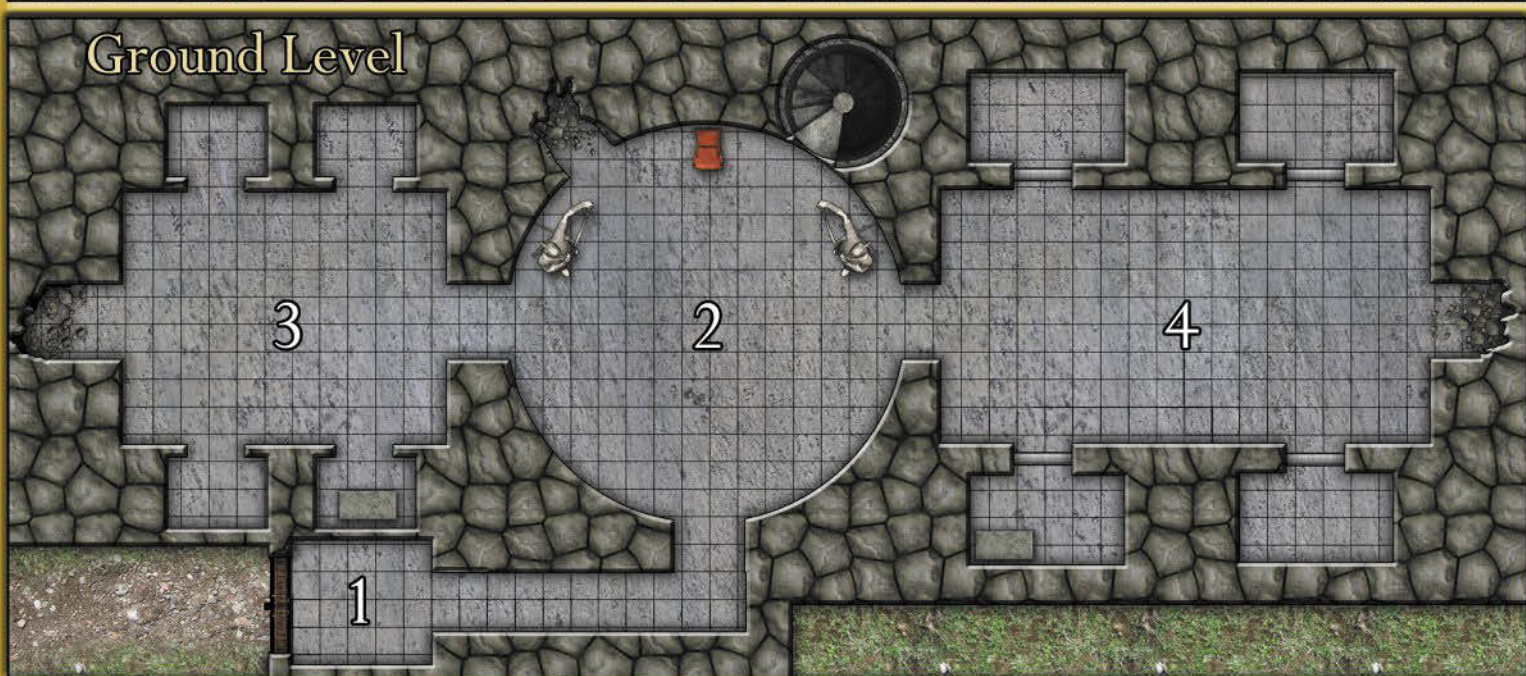
make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. Those who fail grow extremely angry at any slight and need to succeed at a Wisdom save DC 14 if insulted or become berserkly angry and immediately direct an attack against their closest ally. Also, anyone failing this initial saving throw must succeed at a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw whenever they are reduced to half their hit points or immediately direct an attack against their closest ally. These effects last until a long rest is completed. Those who roll a natural 1 on the check also take 16 (4d8) psychic damage. Those who succeed with a natural 20 gain advantage on all saving throws against charm and fear effects until a long rest is completed.

After resolving the Challenge of Anger, three wailing ghosts (the spirits of dead elf maidens that can kill when they scream) emerge, one from the wall to the north, one from the wall to the west, and one from the wall to the south, and attack the PCs, trying their best to kill them. The wailing ghosts are what remain of Talkana's ladies in waiting. They have been trapped in undeath for centuries upon centuries, and they are both sad and angry. Any living being will madden them, causing them to attack.

- 3 wailing ghosts (see 5e *Monster Manual*)

In the closet in the southeast corner of the room is an intricately carved, locked stone chest. The chest can be opened with the key found in **Area 4**; examining the carvings on the key and the chest and making an Intelligence (Investigation) check DC 17 will reveal that the carvings on the key from **Area 4** match this chest.

Lightning Blast Trap (Magic trap). This trap is activated when a creature opens or attempts to open the chest without inserting the proper key. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check detects the faint magical runes on the chest that indicate the presence of the trap. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as *detect magic*, also reveals an aura of evocation magic around it.



A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal a faint, scorched line in front of the chest. When the trap is triggered, a 15-foot line of lightning arcs out directly from the front of the chest. Each creature in the line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 20) cast on the chest destroys the trap. The chest is locked, but can be picked with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check, but this sets off the trap.

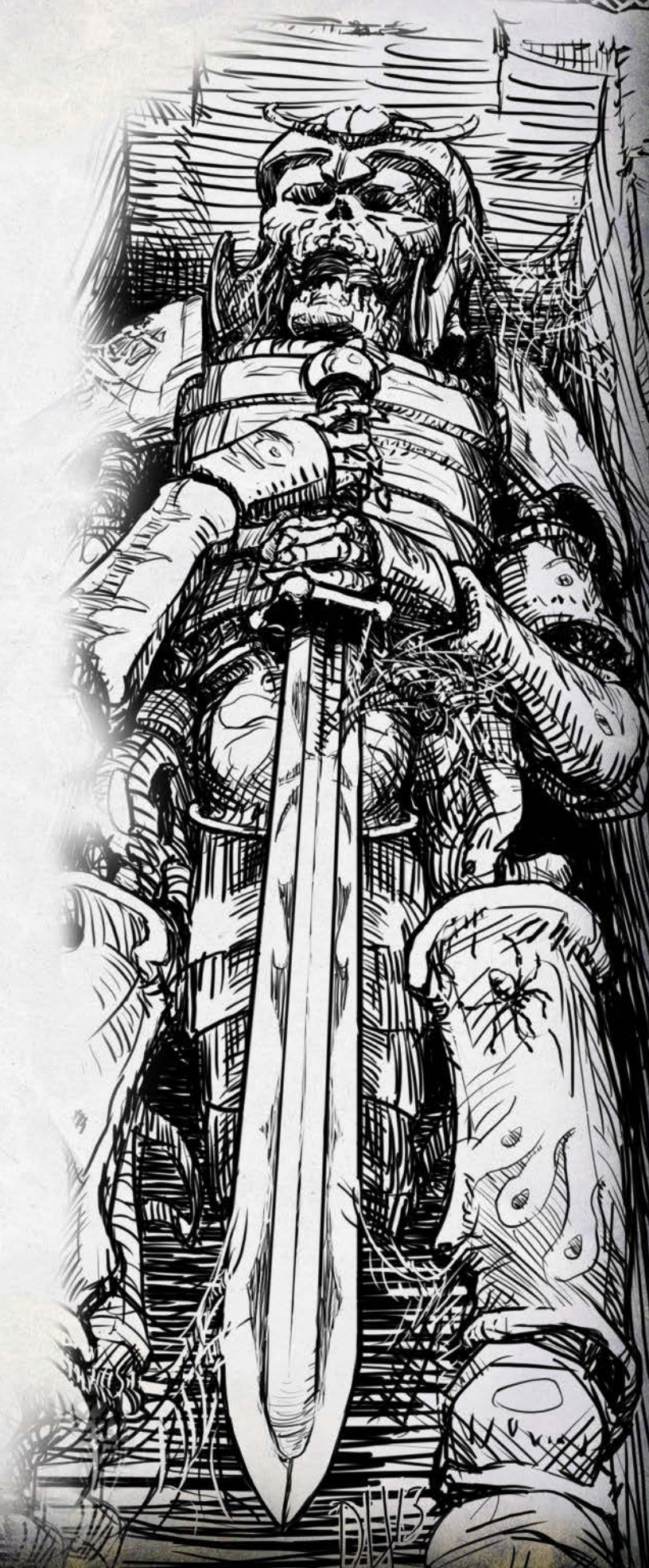
Inside the chest are 900 sp, 40 gp, and a potion of invisibility. The rest of this area is bare.

AREA 4

This large open area is filled with debris. Four doors open off of it, and a large pile of stoney debris blocks an entrance that leads east.

This was once the manor's dining room, although the table rotted away a long time ago. The blocked entrance leads to a stairway that goes up to **Area 8** or down to the lower level. Clearing it would be difficult and take some time. The area can be searched, and with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check, the PCs will discover an intricately carved key that opens the chest in **Area 3**. Any searching in this room will alert the cursed ghosts that lurk behind three of the four doors. Otherwise, the ghosts will get a Perception check DC 10 to hear the PCs in this room (unless they are being stealthy, in which case their Perception checks are opposed by the Stealth checks of the PCs). If the ghosts hear the PCs, they will burst forth from the doors and attack viciously. They fight to the death, being quite insane from their long stint in undeath. Give the PCs a DC 15 Perception check to hear the ghosts rustling before they burst forth; any PC failing this check is surprised.

- 3 Cursed Ghosts



CURSED GHAST

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 82 (15d8+15)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHR
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Altarian

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the cursed ghastr must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the cursed ghastr's Stench for 24 hours.

Turning Defiance. The cursed ghastr and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The cursed ghastr attacks once with its bite and once with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

In the fourth closet in the southwest corner of the room is an intricately carved, locked stone chest. The chest can be opened with the key found in **Area 2**; examining the carvings on the key and the chest and succeeding at an Intelligence (Investigation) check DC 17 will reveal that the carvings on the key from **Area 2** match this chest.

Fiery Blast Trap (Magic trap). This trap is activated when a creature opens or attempts to open the chest without inserting and turning the proper key. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check detects the faint magical runes on the chest that indicate the presence of the trap. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as *detect magic*, also reveals an aura of evocation magic around the chest. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal a faint, scorched area in the shape of a cone in front of the chest. When the trap is triggered, a 15-foot cone of fire erupts from the front of the chest. Each creature in the cone must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 20) cast on the chest destroys the trap. The chest is locked, but can be picked with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check, but this sets off the trap.

Inside the chest are 359 sp, 211 cp, 12 tp, 3 vials of holy water, and 4 peridots worth 500 sp each.

SECOND LEVEL

AREA 5

You enter what appears to be the remains of a lady's suite, judging by the rotting, overstuffed couches and fabric scraps on the floor. Several smaller chambers and a large closet open from the main room in this area. What can only be an altar has a prominent position in this area. Suddenly, you are ripped back through the centuries to the room's original appearance. The peerless elf maiden, golden-haired Talkana Silumiel, kneels before the altar. On the altar is a stylized holy symbol, something like a silver hawk-- wait, perhaps it is a bat. She is praying. You hear her whisper in her beautiful voice, "I accept your pact, oh Master. I will be your hand in this world. Let your power be felt in Núrion, the Shattered Jewel. Grant to me the knowledge and

power you have promised."

A dark pact! Of such obvious import is the scene that you momentarily stand stunned. You feel a crack open, a rift in the world. For the first time, things can come through. A dark presence can be felt...

This is the *Challenge of Forbidden Secrets*, where Talkana for the first time made a pact with the dark god Vornoth. The PCs each need to make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. Those who fail gain vulnerability to necrotic damage. This effect lasts until a long rest is completed. Those who roll a natural 1 on the check also take 16 (4d8) necrotic damage. Those who succeed with a natural 20 gain resistance to necrotic damage until a long rest is completed.

In the large closet that opens off the room is an intricately carved, locked stone chest. The chest, however, is actually an exceptionally dangerous mimic. When the mimic attacks, a wraith emerges from the north wall in the closet and attacks. The wraith was once one of Talkana's ladies in waiting.

- Dangerous Mimic
- Wraith (See 5e SRD)

AREA 6

This room was apparently once the personal chamber of some important lady. The ravages of time lie heavy upon it, for nothing remains of the furniture in this room—save the large reclining couch that dominates the chamber. This meditating couch is perfectly preserved, its lush cushions and luxurious blankets looking as new as the day they were made. The couch exudes a strange, cold feeling. Then, with the blink of an eye, you see that a figure is reclining on the couch—the beautiful elven maiden Talkana Silumiel, in her nightclothes. Her lids are heavy with fatigue, for she seems to be preparing to retire to her meditation for the evening. She regards you with glittering eyes. Though she makes no motion, an unspoken invitation hangs in the air.

DANGEROUS MIMIC

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHR
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +6

Damage Immunities acid

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Shapechanger. The dangerous mimic can use its action to polymorph into an object or back into its true, amorphous form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Adhesive (Object Form Only). The dangerous mimic adheres to anything that touches it. A Huge or smaller creature adhered to the dangerous mimic is also grappled by it (escape DC 15). Ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

False Appearance (Object Form Only). While the dangerous mimic remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary object.

Grappler. The dangerous mimic has advantage on attack rolls against any creature grappled by it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dangerous mimic makes a pseudopod attack and a bite attack, or two bite attacks.

Pseudopod. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (4d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the dangerous mimic is in object form, the target is subjected to its Adhesive trait.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (4d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) acid damage.

This is the *Challenge of Love*. Talkana exudes an attraction that is universal. It may be sexual, it may not be. It doesn't depend on gender or sexual orientation.

Any PC who looks at Talkana must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw DC 15 or go lie on the couch next to Talkana (this is a charm effect). Once one PC lies on the couch, Talkana will disappear and the couch will regain its real appearance—that of an old, rotting piece of furniture. The first person who lies on the couch will then begin, slowly and subtly, to have sympathy for the cause of Stor-gris and the White Lady. There is no mechanical game effect representing this sympathy, but it should be an interesting roleplaying opportunity for the player. This effect is not necessarily permanent, but the PC should have a valid in-game reason for shrugging off this lasting effect. Any other PCs who lay on the couch are unaffected; only the first PC is afflicted.

Under the couch, discoverable with a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, is an intricately carved key that opens the chest in **Area 8**.

AREA 7

A balcony walkway extends around this room. The ceiling is about 15 feet above the walkway. Some 15 feet below the walkway, the floor of the great hall is visible.

Any attempt to traverse the balcony walkway will summon the undead guardians who still watch over it—the ghost of an elven guard captain and six specters who were once his soldiers. They will materialize at random points on the walkway and attack the nearest PC. This area is otherwise empty.

- 1 Ghost (see 5e SRD)
- 6 Specters (see 5e SRD)

AREA 8

This sitting area has several doors opening off it. A staircase in the east wall descends into darkness. Suddenly, the scene shifts, and the room is restored to its former splendor. Rich tapestries and paintings decorate the walls, and thick carpets cover the floor. The striking Talkana stands in the center of the room, hands on her hips. In front of her is another elf, a handsome male, and the family resemblance is unmistakable. The young elf lord says, "My sister, it is one thing to manipulate foolish dwarf lords from Liferock to do your bidding and fight your battles for you, but I draw the line at spilling the blood of elhil. Sister, these are elves we are speaking of... our kin. I forbid it. I go now to the king to report your betrayal."

Her radiant face blazes with anger; her golden hair blows back in a non-existent wind. "No, my brother, it is you who commits the betrayal!" Even in wrath, her voice is more musical than the sound of elven harps. "I will not allow it; I will brook no disobedience."

"No, sister, don't do this!" her brother cries.

"This is what you have chosen!" With a slight twitch of her hand, her brother is engulfed in flame. He crumbles to the ground with a choked scream.

This is the *Challenge of Betrayal*, where Talkana murdered her own brother Muinor, burning him to death with her magic. The scene is shocking, and the magic lingers. The PCs each need to make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. Those who fail gain vulnerability to fire damage. This effect lasts until a long rest is completed. Those who roll a natural 1 on the check also take 16 (4d8) fire damage. Those who succeed with a natural 20 gain resistance to fire damage until a long rest is completed.

At this point, a fiery light emerges from the staircase (which descends to the **Lower Level**), and out of the shadows steps Muinor, now a terrible monstrosity called a Burned Dead. The abomination will attempt to slay the PCs and will fight until dead.



2017

BURNED DEAD

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 142 (19d8+57)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHR
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Str +7, Dex, +7, Con +7

Condition Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages understands Altarian but can't speak

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Sense Life. A Burned Dead can sense life within 60 feet of it, although 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks this sense.

Death Burst. When a Burned Dead is destroyed, it explodes in a burst of fire. Each creature within 10 feet of it must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (4d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Flammable objects that aren't being worn or carried in that area are ignited.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Burned Dead makes two melee or ranged attacks, or one melee and one ranged attack.

Burning Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 5 (1d10) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or begin burning. A burning target takes 16 (3d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the burning effect on a success. If the target spends an action to attempt to extinguish the burning, it gains advantage on its next saving throw to do so. If the target drops to 0 hit points, it stops burning.

Thrown Flame. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 3) fire damage plus 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

In one of the closets of the room is an intricately carved, locked stone chest. The chest can be opened with the key found in **Area 6**; examining the carvings on the key and the chest and succeeding at an Intelligence (Investigation) check DC 17 will reveal that the carvings on the key from **Area 6** match this chest.

Necrotic Blast Trap (Magic trap). This trap is activated when a creature opens or attempts to open the chest without inserting and turning the proper key. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check detects the faint magical runes on the chest that indicate the presence of the trap. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as *detect magic*, also reveals an aura of necromancy magic around the chest. When the trap is triggered, a 15-foot blast of necrotic energy emerges from the front of the chest. Each creature in the cone must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 20) cast on the chest destroys the trap. The chest is locked, but can be picked with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check, but this sets off the trap.

Inside the chest are 72 sp, 99 cp, and a wand of fireballs.

AREA 9

This room seems once to have been a laboratory, although most of the beakers and vials are long-since smashed, their contents lost. A large table still stands against one wall, and an enruned chest sits against another wall. An ancient magic circle, its enruned line broken, is prominent on the floor; in the center of the circle is a pentagram. Suddenly, you are wrenched back into the past, to a time long distant when the room was in full repair and being used —being used for terrible purpose. You see the white-robed Talkana standing in front of the table, which is brimming with the accoutrements of dark sorcery:

potions, vials, beakers, and heavy tomes. She raises her hand and gestures toward the pentagram inscribed on the floor, which is now whole and unbroken. Her musical voice breaks the silence: "Oh Dark One, with the knowledge you have granted me, I summon thy servants, denizens of the Lower Realms. May their tenebrous wings be heard as they fly for the first time through the night skies of Núríon, doing thy shadowy bidding, my Master." The room fills with a stench of brimstone as a rift to the evil netherworld is opened for the first time in the history of the world. A dark figure begins to coalesce inside the circle as a smile appears on Talkana's peerless lips....

This is the *Challenge of Dark Knowledge*, where Talkana used the knowledge granted to her by the evil god Vornoth to summon demons and devils to Núríon, the first time such creatures ever entered the world. The evil of the scene is sickening, burning like a poison in the hearts of those who see it. The PCs each need to make a DC 14 Intelligence saving throw. Those who fail gain disadvantage on saving throws versus poison. This effect lasts until a long rest is completed. Those who roll a natural 1 on the check also take 16 (4d8) poison damage. Those who succeed with a natural 20 gain advantage on saving throws until a long rest is completed.

Once the Challenge of Dark Knowledge is completed, the scene shifts back to the present. To their horror, the PCs will see the dark figure inside the (broken) circle has continued to coalesce, and before they can react, a Bone Devil stands inside the again-broken circle.

- 1 Bone Devil (See 5e SRD)

This bone devil, whose name is Marax, is the original devil that Talkana summoned to the world. He is spiteful and thoroughly evil, but he won't immediately attack the PCs. Instead, he will try to bargain with them, offering dark knowledge (he knows a great deal about the history of the world, the

plans of Talkana, and the origins of all monsters as well as the history of how Talkana bargained with Vornoth and made the first orcs). In exchange for such knowledge, he will ask the PCs for a favor, something that will cause great havoc in the world, such as the betrayal of an important person to the forces of Stor-gris, the assassination of a king, or something equally evil. What he won't say is that if they agree to the bargain, he will have a claim to their souls once they die.

If the PCs do not agree to his bargain, he will act as if he doesn't care, but when they are off their guard, he will attack them viciously. He does not personally wish to die, but after being trapped in this room for millenia, it would be a welcome change.

Against one wall of the room is an intricately carved, locked stone chest. The chest can be opened with the key found in **Area 10**; examining the carvings on the key and the chest and succeeding at an Intelligence (Investigation) check DC 17 will reveal that the carvings match the key from **Area 10**.

Poison Spray Trap (Magic trap). This trap is activated when a creature opens or attempts to open the chest without inserting and turning the proper key. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check detects the faint magical runes on the chest that indicate the presence of the trap. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as *detect magic*, also reveals an aura of conjuration magic around the chest. When the trap is triggered, a 15-foot spray of magical poison squirts from the front of the chest. Each creature in the cone must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 20) cast on the chest destroys the trap. The chest is locked, but can be picked with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check, but this sets off the trap.

Inside the chest are 312 tp, 299 cp, 172 sp, a diamond worth 100 sp, and a flask of oil of sharpness.

AREA 10

This oddly shaped area is dominated by a large stone slab, rectangular in shape. It is decorated with dark runes, and a runnel is carved into one side; dark stains betray its purpose. Two stone doors leave the room to the east and west. Then the room shifts, and a vision from the past restores the room to its former state. The remarkable Talkana is working, bent over the strange, enruned slab, which now appears almost but not quite like an altar. On the slab is chained a male elf, naked save for a scant loincloth. In one of her hands is a horrid poker, clearly designed for torture; in her other hand is a heavy tome. She seems to be torturing or otherwise tormenting the hapless elhan. Yet her beautiful face betrays no joy at the act - only a deep, intense curiosity and determination. She ignores the elf's screams.

This is the *Challenge of Disgust*, where Talkana tortured and experimented on captured elves in an attempt to corrupt them into a new, evil race. The disgusting scene pierces one to her very soul. The PCs each need to make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. Those who fail gain vulnerability to piercing damage. This effect lasts until a long rest is completed. Those who roll a natural 1 on the check also take 16 (4d8) piercing damage. Those who succeed with a natural 20 gain resistance to piercing damage until a long rest is completed.

Once the Challenge of Disgust is completed, the scene shifts back to the present. Their inevitable gasps and cries at witnessing the scene will alert the ghouls and ghosts who reside in the rooms to the east and west; they will throw open the doors and attack the PCs. Give each PC a Wisdom (Perception) check DC 12 to hear the creatures approaching the door; any PC that fails this check is surprised.

- 2 ghosts (see 5e SRD)
- 4 ghouls (see 5e SRD)

These ghouls and ghosts are even more twisted and distorted than usual ghouls and ghosts, for they are the elves that Talkana experimented upon. A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check while they are animated, or a DC 12 Intelligence (Medicine) check after they are dispatched, will reveal this horrid fact. The area is otherwise empty.

AREA 11

A narrow stone walkway spans a yawning pit. The long walkway ends at a door on the other side. Two dark alcoves on the distant walls on either side of the walkway seem to overlook the span. Debris and bones lie in the alcoves.

The bones in the alcoves are the remains of elven guards, tasked while alive with preventing anyone from approaching Talkana Silumiel at all cost. They got into the alcoves while alive by nimbly swinging on ropes that were attached to the ceiling, but the ropes have since rotted away. When anyone sets foot on the span, the skeletons spring to life and take up longbows; they fire arrows at anyone on the span.

- 6 skeletons (see 5e SRD, but the skeletons, as former elven archers, possess longbows and are particularly good with them. They have a +6 to hit with their longbows.)

The pit is 50 feet deep. Anyone who suffers a critical hit while on the span must succeed at a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall into the pit. There is nothing valuable or of interest in the bottom of the pit (despite the fact that players always seem to want to search pits).

AREA 12

A stone door blocks entrance into this chamber. When you open it, you get a strong sense of evil and foreboding, stronger than in any other area of the ruin. An oddly shaped pedestal sits against the wall,

and on the pedestal is a dark orb about the size of a fist. The orb is polished to a lustrous black sheen. With a wrenching shift, time falls away, and you see before you the familiar figure of Talkana, clad in her white dress, the dark orb in her hand. Yet now she looks... different. Her skin is growing mottled and grayish, shading toward green in some spots. Her once lovely hair is growing dark and dull. Her fingernails have become more like claws. In the hunch of her back there is something... orcish. She opens her mouth to speak, and her voice is as lovely as ever, but it is now jarring and out of place compared to her twisted visage. "If this is thy will, Great Walker-in-Darkness... but no, the price is too great. I cannot pay it..." She shakes her head, as if throwing off weakness. "No, what am I saying? The power and the knowledge you have granted me is like no other. I will do as you request... I shall create more like me... I shall be the first... but not the last...." A single tear drips from one of her once-lovely eyes.

This is the *Challenge of Dark Origins*, where Talkana accepted the Dark Walker's bargain to

become the first orc and to bring other orcs into the world. The horrid portent of the scene is enough to drive one mad. The PCs each need to make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. Those who fail are afflicted with long-term madness (roll on the table from the 5e SRD, but the madness lasts twice as long as normal). Those who roll a natural 1 on the check also take 16 (4d8) psychic damage. Those who succeed with a natural 20 gain advantage on the next two saving throws they make.

Once the Challenge of Dark Origins is completed, the scene shifts back to the present. A fell demon, the creature that came to accept Talkana's evil promise on behalf of her master Vornoth, appears in the room. The creature, an erinyes named Valaca, will offer the PCs a similar bargain: if they agree to submit to the Walker-in-Darkness, they will be granted great knowledge and power. She will do her best to really sell this bargain, making it seem very attractive, truly an offer one cannot refuse. Insightful PCs will detect that something is off about the bargain, though; allow PCs a Wisdom (Insight) check contested by Valaca's Deception check to discern possible consequences of the deal. If they agree, the



race of each PC becomes tielfling (as they become infused with the blood of fiends), they each gain a level, their alignment becomes evil, and they gain advantage on all future History and Arcana checks. In return, their souls become property of Vornoth the Dark Walker, and they should be encouraged to seek the destruction of elven and dwarven civilization. If they refuse the bargain, the erinyes will attempt to flee from them; her aim is to escape into the city to wreak as much death and destruction there as possible.

- 1 erinyes (see 5e SRD, except that her Hellish Weapons don't always deal poison damage; every time they hit, determine the type of additional damage they deal by rolling a d4 and consulting the following chart.)

Roll	Type of Damage
1	Necrotic
2	Fire
3	Poison
4	Piercing

The dark orb is still on the pedestal. It is the first Orb of Alustel. Talkana used the Orbs for her dark rituals. The first Orb is one of the most powerful of all of the Orbs, although each has its own uses in the right circumstances. Their power is magnified when all five are used together.



First Orb of Alustel

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement)

The Orbs of Alustel are evil artifacts. Their origins are unknown. Legend has it that there are five in existence, and each has different properties. Their main purpose is to act as the focus of dark rituals, and any ritual they are used in, if it is designed to have an evil outcome, is far more likely to succeed (the details of this use are up to the GM).

The Orbs are dark crystal globes about 6 inches in diameter. While attuned to an Orb, you can use an action to hold it in your hand and speak its command word. You must then make a DC 15 Charisma check. On a successful check, you control the Orb until you complete a long rest. On a failed check, you cannot summon the power from within you to use the Orb. If you fail this Charisma check three times, you become charmed by the Orb for as long as you remain attuned to it. While you are charmed by the Orb, you can't voluntarily end your attunement to it, and the Orb casts *suggestion* on you at will (save DC 18), urging you to work toward the evil ends it desires. The GM decides what goal an Orb seeks, and these goals are generally inscrutable and mysterious, but always evil. If you succeed at the saving throw against an Orb's *suggestion*, you are released from its charm, and you have to fail the Charisma check three more times before you are again charmed. When you control the First Orb of Alustel (the Orb found in this adventure), you gain an additional spell slot per each level of spell that you are able to cast (there are four other Orbs, and they don't have the ability to grant spell slots; they each have a different power).

Random Properties: An Orb of Alustel has the following random properties:

- 2 minor beneficial properties
- 1 minor detrimental property
- 1 major detrimental property

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: DARK KNOWLEDGE, POWERFUL ENEMIES

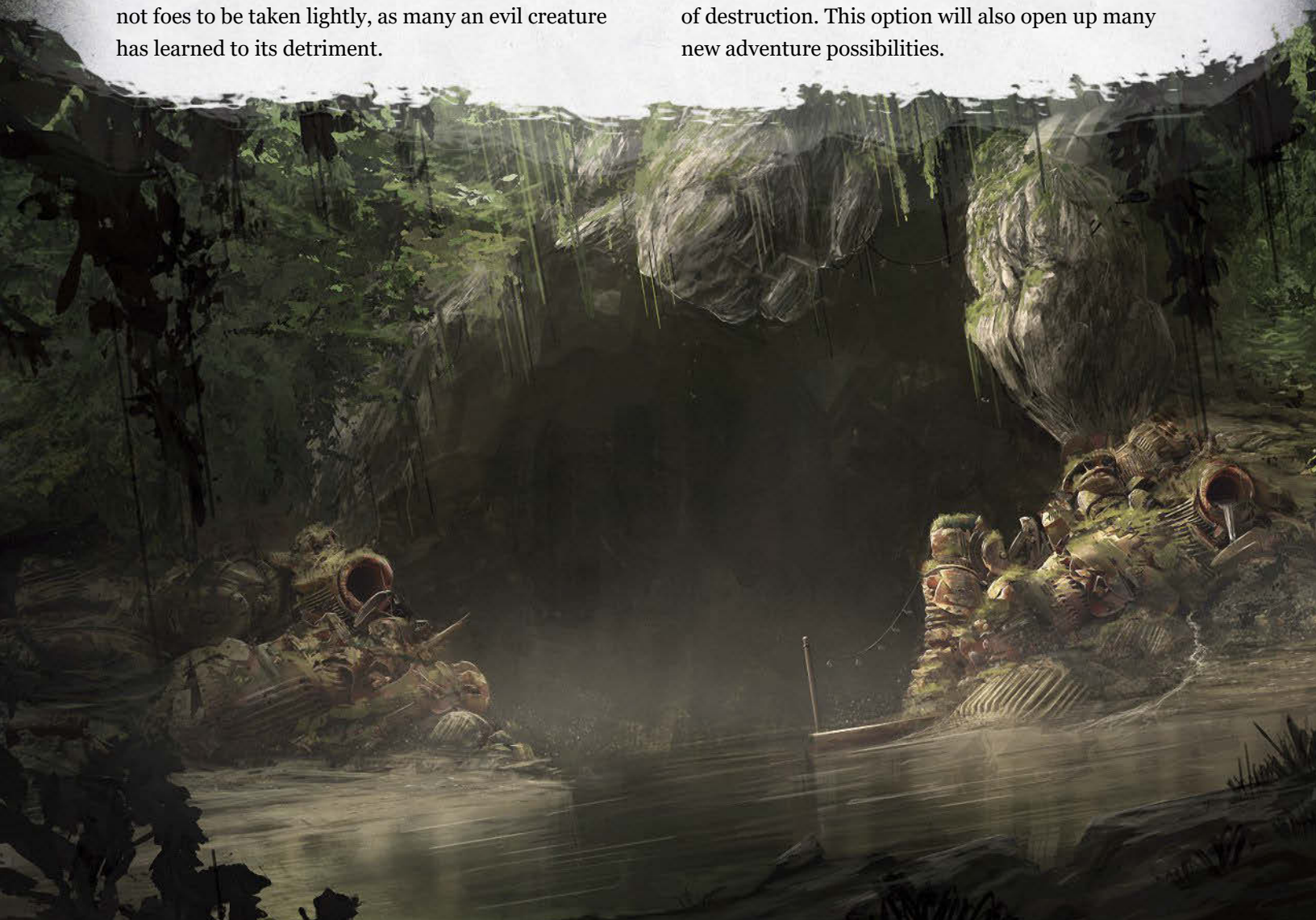
The knowledge that the PCs have gained in the ruin of House Al-Dustriel should both enlighten and haunt them. They have learned much about the world, but the secrets they uncovered are enough to drive a person mad. If they resisted taking Valaca's deal, the whole experience will give them a new understanding of the foes they face, as well as an idea of the power of the evil that stands against them. This knowledge should make plain how important the war is, and perhaps how difficult it will be. Talkana Silumiel is the White Lady, and she sacrificed her very humanity for power. To what ends will she be willing to go to defeat her enemies, which include the PCs?

If they took her deal, they will have fallen to darkness. The elven and dwarven powers will now be their enemies, and they will have powerful foes of light to face. Elven mages and dwarven warriors are not foes to be taken lightly, as many an evil creature has learned to its detriment.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

If Valaca the erinyes escaped from the ruins against the will of the PCs, they will want to take some sort of action to limit the damage she can do. At minimum, they should alert the elven authorities, but they may also wish to track her down and slay her. Valaca is cunning and deceptive, and she will try her best to cause as much damage and evil as possible, ranging from murder to blasphemy to the sowing of discord. For example, she will likely lie to the elven authorities and state that the PCs took her bargain (if they did not in fact take it). The elven authorities are likely to blame the PCs if the erinyes does wreak havoc in Alustel.

If the PCs took the erinyes' bargain, they will need to radically alter their goals. They may wish to travel to Stor-gris or the Wintervale and pledge themselves to the evil rulers of those domains, or they could become free agents who seek destruction for the sake of destruction. This option will also open up many new adventure possibilities.



CHAPTER 8: SECRETS OF A DARK FORTRESS

THE BETRAYAL OF KAROXFANG

PART 1: THE SPIES

Raug hefted the immense chamber pot of his master. He took a moment to steady the cumbersome receptacle so that he didn't tip it and spill the contents all over his robes. With his nose wrinkled in disgust, the aging half-orc turned his head to the side and carried the pot from the elaborate bedchamber of the great general, his master, Malekk Jorung.

For one of part orc heritage, Raug didn't display any of the physical strengths that characterized his ancestry. His arms were slim and straight, though his hands were calloused from years of hard work. His chest was hollow and his midsection gaunt, as he had never been able to put on enough weight to show otherwise. The lack of proper nourishment in his citadel home didn't help the situation, of course. The diet of the vast city-fortress of Stor-gris was basically raw meat, vermin, and grog. To top it all off, Raug was short for a half-orc, barely topping five and a half feet tall.

Raug's hair hung in strands to just beneath his chin and served to cover an average face by any race's standards. His jaw was thick and square, and his nose wide and bulbous. Both features were shadowed by a wide and protruding brow, a brow which cast shadows over his tanned face when the sun was high overhead. Being the "runt" in a physically-dominated fortress like Stor-gris would have spelled doom for most creatures, but Raug had proven early in his employment that he had other talents that more than made up for his lack of stature. Sometimes being the runt was even useful. In fact, Raug recalled a time

This story tells the tale of Raug, an unlikely spy who has managed to infiltrate the fortress of Stor-gris itself. Working on behalf of the elves, he has to conquer his fear to see if he can accomplish an even more unlikely event: the assassination of General Karoxfang himself...

when being the runt might have actually saved his life.

As was his habit, Raug thought back to those days of his youth as he carried his vile burden through the stone halls of the main tower.

It was nightmarish for anyone in the small community called Darmusk that day. Without any warning, dark-skinned orcs in heavy armor swept through the huts like an unstoppable tide. The Dark Folk pillaged, plundered, raped, and murdered as the tribesmen fled in fear. No reason was given for the attack, but such was the way of life under the heavy boot of Stor-gris. Unfortunately for many, reason didn't rule in the spreading empire of the powerful general Karoxfang. The orcs took what they wanted and burned most of the huts to the ground.

It was naught but luck that kept a young child from being discovered that night and for days thereafter. The child's mother, a middle-aged human woman, lay in one of the remaining huts, her final, terrified look frozen on her face. The woman's last coherent action had been to cover her sleeping child in straw. That was only moments before the orc had broken through the shabby front door and thrust a wickedly curved blade through her breast. After a quick glance around the hut, the orc saw nothing of



worth and left through the very same door. Only luck could explain the orc's failure to set fire to the ramshackle dwelling in which a young Raug hid.

The boy's horror while he hid in the hut tempered Raug's actions for years to come. In truth, the half-orc had never recovered from that terrible night and, to this day, Raug found himself constantly doubting and second-guessing his actions out of fear of failure.

The child, even with half-orc ancestry, knew his life was forfeit if the vile monsters found him. So he hid for several days, drinking what rainwater he could collect from the holes in the roof and eating the remainder of a stale loaf of bread that his mother had traded for on the day of the raid. Though used to living in poverty, the boy grew even sicker from the lack of nourishment. Out of a necessity to calm his aching, malnourished belly, the youth ventured forth from his hiding place and left the hut.

The young boy searched among the burned out ruins of the community, seeking any signs of life. He found it soon enough, though it was of a peculiar kind: elves. A wandering party of elhil from the Sarumvest spotted the boy and set to caring for him, as they thought that he was a human child. Had Raug not been so emaciated and small, the elves may have seen him for the half-breed spawn of a violent rape that he was and killed him outright.

Once they learned of Raug's true nature, however, their disgust swiftly turned to hope, and their plans began to take shape....

Clang! "Damn it!"

Raug cursed at his own absent-mindedness, as he walked into a doorjamb, and the contents of the chamber pot roiled about, sloshing out small droplets onto his worn, brown robe.

Turning his head in disgust once again, Raug chided himself for a fool. For decades he had learned to control his thoughts and emotions, practicing how to turn such thoughts into power. However, he still had the habit of letting his powerful mind wander.

Exiting through the worn, wooden door that marked the slaves' entrance to the inner keep of Stor-gris, Raug carefully maneuvered the pot. The warm

air hit him as he exited the keep, though the smell was not much better than that of the load he carried. The air of the huge, martial fortress of Stor-gris carried the fetid stench of death. The acrid smell of smoke mingled with aromas of rotting flesh and feces, to make a new pall that hung over the massive, military city, a pall that was all Stor-gris' own.

The Dark Folk inhabitants seemed to care little, or maybe they didn't even notice. Kobold and goblin slaves carried out the wishes of the orcs and hobgoblins, scurrying about the city with purpose.

In the fortress, where Raug spent nearly all of his days, the smaller Dark Folk were often killed for the mere enjoyment or sport of the larger races. Outside of the fortress's thick walls, however, kobolds and goblins outnumbered the larger races more than ten to one. Thus, the area outside of the great citadel afforded the smaller races protection in numbers, but this safety came with widespread poverty, as the bulk of food was kept inside the fortress walls.

The city remained segregated, as much for the desires of the orcs and hobgoblins as for the safety of the goblins and kobolds. While Karoxfang didn't necessarily care for the survival of the lesser species, he understood the value of their numbers in a battle.

To the dismay of those thousands of elves, dwarfs, and humans that had gone up against the war machine of Stor-gris, these little Dark Folk races had taken to a foot-soldier position in the vast armies. Typically used as fodder, they nonetheless were effective in wearing down an opponent's defenses so that the more powerful orcs, hobgoblins, and others could overwhelm their enemies. In the past, kobolds and goblins had even been used to slow an approaching cavalry so that archers could let loose one more volley, or pike men could set their stances.

Raug dumped the chamber pot into the deep cesspool that served as the fortress's toilet and looked to the sky. The sun was just dawning in the western sky, and its rays filtered through the dark pall of the city to shine on the half-orc's visage. Raug took a moment to close his eyes and enjoy the warmth of the life-giving orb on his face.

The half-breed had learned to enjoy and respect the sun while living with the elves of Alustel. Though stern and proud, the elves revered nature, and the sun was seen as a giver and sustainer of life. The elhil enjoyed many simple pleasures, like the warmth of the direct sun on one's face, or the way green grass pushed up between their toes. Such was the life of the elves when they weren't faced with war against the vast forces of the White Lady. It was a life that they'd taught to Raug, and one that he'd come to love.

Looking down to his own toes, shod in brown sandals, Raug merely sighed, for the bloodstained cobblestones of Stor-gris would never bring him the same feeling of joy.

The day progressed much like any other in the dark confines of the gray-stone fortress of Stor-gris. Raug, of course, spent a great deal of the morning listening to the bloviating and declarations of his master, General Malekk Jorung. He could barely contain his contempt for the general's arrogance. Though the hobgoblin was high in the power hierarchy of Stor-gris, Jorung hungered for more and thought that he was more than deserving of such. He plotted against nearly everyone in the fortress and, while that was actually common practice in Stor-gris, it could prove deadly should the wrong person find out.

"Damn it boy! Are you listenin'?"

A stale roll thumped off of Raug's chest, obviously thrown by the general to get his attention. By the glare in Jorung's eyes, Raug assumed that it wasn't the first time he'd asked.

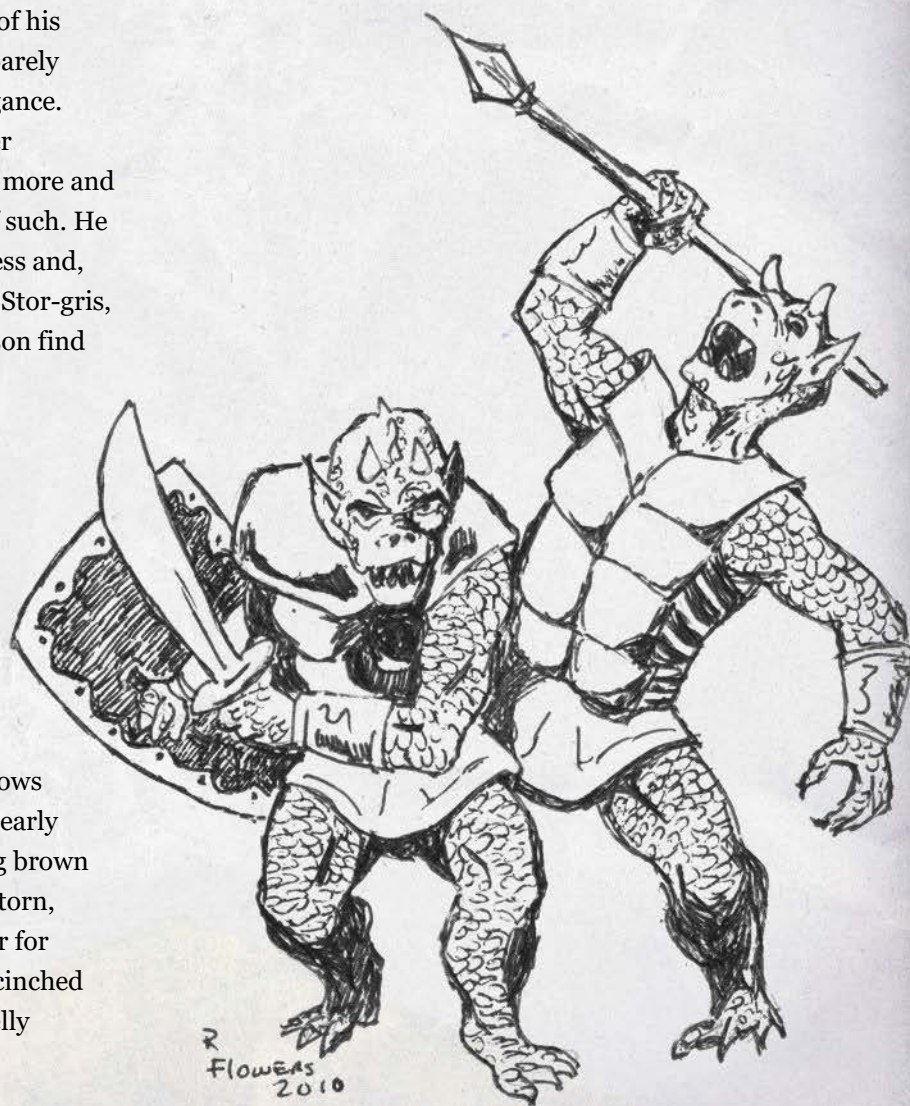
The general shifted in his chair, and the old wood groaned in protest. The great hobgoblin dwarfed both the chair that he sat in and the table on which his elbows rested. His arm and leg muscles bulged to nearly impossible proportions underneath the long brown tunic that he wore. The tunic was dirty and torn, having been worn under the general's armor for quite some time. The lengthy garment was cinched at the waist by a plain belt, and an ample belly

hung over it, showing that the hobgoblin had no lack of food to complain of. His visage was one that was used to showing anger, and it was no different now as he was enraged at being ignored. Jorung's bloodstained eyes nearly matched the magenta color of his skin as he glared at his servant.

"No... I mean, of course I was, great one. I was merely reflecting on your victories, great general. Your accomplishments are vast; it merely makes one such as I wonder how you are not in charge of this great fortress."

Raug's Dark Speech was perfect, even though it had been taught to him by an elf.

General Malekk Jorung grunted in response and scooped up another huge mouthful of whatever meat stew the kitchens had prepared today. After slurping down the contents, Jorung waggled the spoon at





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Raug much as a mother would have shaken her thumb at an insolent young boy.

"Yer lucky yer with me, smartsy-fartsy. You'd be killed by anyone else for such ignorance."

The general issued the claim matter-of-factly, as if only stating the obvious. In a way, he was. He scooped up the remainder of the meal into his wide maw and gulped down the contents of an earthenware mug, probably filled with blood grog.

As Raug stood, he held a scroll and a sharpened charcoal pencil, ready to write or sketch as his master ordered. Inter-fortress missives in Stor-gris were typically in charcoal, as ink was a commodity that none saw as necessity. Over his years in Stor-gris, Raug had discovered how to rub out and to perfectly rewrite such messages to say whatever he wanted. The half-orc said a silent thanks to the arrogance of General Karoxfang, for the half-fiend's confidence in his own power allowed the easily "adjusted" charcoal to be used. Even though that was the case, Raug still had seen more than one scroll that had come from outside the city walls that had been penned in a deep and dark ink. These, he guessed, were charges that came directly from the voice of Karoxfang's liege, the White Lady.

Malekk Jorung sat back, and his chair groaned again. Immediately, a goblin slave scurried off with the General's used dishes, without uttering a word. With a cunning grin, Jorung looked to Raug.

"Yer to come with me to the council this day, boy. We've got a new player here in the fortress, an' he's a stinkin' orc!"

The general nearly spit out the word as if it were venom. He seemed not to care in the least if he'd insulted his servant by speaking ill of his heritage, or at least half of it. The general slammed his meaty fist on the table in anger.

"General Kahn Bozzurak. The fool brings a man with him to every council-- a damned human! The affront, it's beyond imagination! Were I Karoxfang, I'd gut the spineless dog where he stood!"

There it was, Raug thought, the insult to the other side of his heritage. The half-orc maintained his

In Part 1 of the story, Raug the half-orc mage tries to deal with his hobgoblin master as the hobgoblin does the bidding of Karoxfang. Meanwhile, Raug struggles to help his elven allies, but he has to put himself in grave danger to do so....

composure, having practiced for just such occurrences.

Though unflappable in the face of Jorung, Raug wasn't always so calm with the other generals and those of power in Stor-gris. The half-fiend Karoxfang still managed to freeze the blood in Raug's veins with his piercing gaze. The training of the elves, though extensive, had not taught him how to respond when confronted with a creature of such power.

In this case, Raug's heart skipped slightly at the mention of the council. He involuntarily gulped back his nerves as he thought of the intense scrutiny that he would bear from Jorung's peers.

With a grunt and another shake of his bestial head, Jorung stood and stalked away from the small wooden table, presumably to don the ceremonial (though dented and worn) armor that he wore throughout the day.

As the general strode away, Raug's thoughts guided him in a different direction. Possibilities raced through his head in a jumble. "Could this be what we were waiting for?" "Are we on the path to bringing down this vile empire?"

Though he tried to be optimistic, Raug couldn't help but think of every little detail. "Or.... is this a trap?"

Shaking his head to banish the thoughts, Raug proceeded to write the short messages that needed to be sent out. even when the great general didn't remember. Quite often that was the case.

As General Jorung dressed himself for the day's agenda, one thought still lingered in his servant's head. The thought served to twist Raug's insides as he considered the implications. "What if they've found out?"

Raug's worries seemed to be unfounded, though, for if they wished to ambush and kill an elven spy (which Raug was), they probably wouldn't have forced him to sit through what was perhaps the most dull and boring meeting he'd ever witnessed.

He had only been introduced upon his entrance to the great, wide hall of council as "Great General Jorung...and assistant." Some had noticed his appearance, however, and they were enough to cause Raug to try and keep his back to an available exit. His place behind General Jorung was ideal, as the exit from the chamber was located directly at his back. Though Raug doubted that he could possibly escape such powerful figures as those that sat in the council, having his back to the opening did serve to ease the knots in his belly.

General Jorung was seated in front of Raug, his back to his servant. Beside the general, several other decorated and accomplished generals sat in attendance, forming a rough semi-circle about a center seat. Some were of orc heritage, and some of hobgoblin, but all were dwarfed by the girth of Jorung.

Raug could tell even during such routine discussions as obtaining food and training secondary troops that Jorung was held in high regard among the gathered Dark Folk. The huge hobgoblin was consulted nearly as much as the great figure that sat upon the throne in the center of the semi-circle.

Atop that stone seat was Karoxfang the Vile, once the mighty General of the forces of Rothnog in direct service to the White Lady, now ruler of the entire realm of Stor-gris. The creature was part orc and part fiend, his orc mother having been ravaged by a demon of some power. It was an odd combination, Raug thought: the stocky musculature of an orc, combined with the elongated limbs of a fiend. Instead of the thick, stony fingers of his lesser race,

Karoxfang's long fingers ended in hardened claws, claws that had been known to tear the skin off more than one opponent.

The general's bronze, chain armor hung over a thickly muscled frame of mottled green skin. The polished armor shined as it reflected the light of various ensconced torches about the chamber. Karoxfang's fabled falchion rested in its scabbard against the foot of his throne. Though the half-fiend had considerable natural weapons of which to boast, the sword still never strayed far from his side.

The pale, slanted eyes of Karoxfang pierced through whomever had the unfortunate task of speaking at that particular point in time. It was sometimes whispered that the half-fiend's eyes could indeed read the thoughts and feelings of those meeting his gaze.

Raug gulped and idly fingered the narrow, wooden band that he wore on one of his fingers. His elhil teachers had instructed him in its use and assured him that it would shield his thoughts, but still Raug felt like the entirety of his mind was laid bare before the power that emanated from Karoxfang.

Thankfully, the general's attention and that of the rest of the assembly wasn't directed at Raug but at a tall orc that now stood to address his peers. Raug nodded slightly at his master's gesture as Jorung turned and motioned to the orc, identifying him to Raug as Jorung's new competition, General Kahn Bozzurak.

Raug listened briefly to the orc's speech, a simple accounting of his force's movements through the Hinterlands. The creature had the annoying habit of listing every little detail as if it were some grand accomplishment, and he was somewhat long-winded. It really couldn't be more boring.

Keeping his ears tuned in to the orc's voice, Raug's gaze was drawn to the dark visage of the human that sat behind general Bozzurak. It was very odd that the hobgoblin would have a human for an advisor, as that race had just begun its long crawl out of barbarity. Raug started slightly, as he found that the orc general's human advisor was staring directly back

at him, amusement in his eyes!

The human wore his jet-black hair pulled back from his face, tied with a leather thong. The man's eyes were dark to match, and they shone like obsidian. He wore a simple, if voluminous, black robe, its deep hood drawn down and hanging from his back.

Catching Raug's gaze, the man gave a slight smirk and turned back to listen to General Bozzurak. Raug noted the man's brief look of loathing as he gazed upon the general. He chuckled to himself, for he knew that such a look could get one killed if the wrong people were to see it.

After the generals had all issued their reports and had been given further assignments, the attendants rose to leave. One by one, the generals and their respective assistants filed out, as Karoxfang rose to his feet.

Just as Raug turned to follow General Jorung from the chamber, a voice boomed from behind him.

"General Jorung, a word."

Raug froze in his tracks as the nightmarish voice called out to his master. When in the chamber with so many others, the voice hadn't intimidated him so much. Now, as it was turned in his direction, Raug visibly trembled at the deep and raspy call.

General Jorung, on the other hand, grinned to himself as he stopped in his tracks. Raug nearly stumbled into the massive hobgoblin but was quick enough to step to the side as his master turned. The general's grin was aimed at General Bozzurak, who was directly behind them. The orc general offered a sneer as he stepped quickly past the hobgoblin general, followed closely by his human assistant.

With a final glance at the pair, Raug once again locked eyes with the human and started as the man again smiled insolently. Shaking his head, Raug followed the two outside and set his back to the stone wall to await his master.

A few moments passed, with Raug's nerves on edge. A tumult of emotions passed through his mind as he waited, considering whether Karoxfang had seen his thoughts and was ordering his death, or if

perhaps something even more nefarious was being plotted to deal with the spy.

Raug considered, as he often had, why the powerful elves of the Sarumvest had chosen him to act as their spy. He was just a lowly and fearful half-breed. The training they had given him, along with their love and friendship, were painfully clear in Raug's memory as he continued to doubt himself. He feared not only for himself but also for those loved ones that he had left behind, for should the elves' plan fail, nothing would stop the great armies of Storgis from raining destruction on the kingdoms of the light. He simply could not let that happen. He would not let it happen.

Finding out whether or not his fears were founded would have to wait until later, as Jorung stalked out



of the chamber and motioned for Raug to follow. The general strode past quickly, a knowing smile on his face.

The hobgoblin general paced across the expansive common room of his bedchamber, his moving bulk making it suddenly seem...not quite so expansive. Raug watched in interest, thinking of how this newest revelation could affect his work here in the great fortress.

Karoxfang the Vile, it seemed, had heard of Raug's aptitude for the arcane and had taken interest. It looked as if the half-fiend had an important project that he wanted General Jorung and his assistant to work on.

"Karoxfang believes that this'll lead to the conquest of all the Hinterlands, and eventually of the cursed elf and dwarf kingdoms!"

The general clenched his fist and shook it in front of his face, as if he were squeezing the life out of the continent himself.

"Our new troops'll dig the damned dwarf-rats outta' their homes and burn the paleskin fairies in their forests! There'll be no stoppin' our army, and General Jorung will be responsible for its development!"

The general continued to pace, obviously filled with excitement. He stopped and pointed to Raug.

"You just be ready, cuz we start tomorrow. Let the kobolds know what you'll need, and they'll have it here in the morning."

His last command issued, the general stalked off from the room, undoubtedly to join his fellows in the common area for grog and a whore, or even a torture show. Raug's grimace showed his distaste for what passed for entertainment in the orc fortress; it had taken him several months to find excuses to beg off from evenings in which he was supposed to attend General Jorung at such shows. Now, thankfully, the general didn't even ask, perhaps forgetting that Raug had once been forced to join him.

As the echo from the massive hobgoblin's footfalls died away, Raug sighed and glanced about the room. He would have to scrawl a list of components that

would be needed for the next day and have one of the servants rush about to obtain the items. Raug was to assist in showing these new "troops" the effects of magic and how best to fight against it. At much the same time, General Jorung would be instructing them in the more mundane parts of warfare.

The half-orc was at a loss for how to proceed. He, of course, didn't want to teach the troops too well, as they could be fighting against those very people that Raug was trying to protect. On the other hand, if he could teach them to the General's and, more importantly, Karoxfang's liking, then he could work himself into a position of more influence.

Raug weighed his next action as he left the bedchamber and started down the corridor. The half-orc's soft boots padded lightly on the stone floor as he followed the winding corridor around to the exit from the Generals' Hall.

Though only a few hours had been spent in the council meeting, the sun had already descended from the sky. The Dark Folk inhabitants of Stor-gris came to life late in the day and scurried about well into the night. Those who slept during the light of day squirmed from their dwellings and set to their tasks, tasks that were always present and necessary to run the military might of the dark stronghold.

Raug had never found it easy to adjust to the change in routine; the elves of the Sarumvest never slept, they only rested, and they enjoyed all phases of the sky, both day and night. They especially enjoyed dusk. He hadn't their strange and magical abilities, and thus had learned to sleep during the night and be active during the day. Now that Raug had to stay up well into the night, he found himself sleeping less and less and spending half of the dark night stifling a seemingly ever-present yawn.

Raug nodded silently to an orc guard as he passed through the huge archway that marked the transition from the Generals' Hall to the Common Barracks. The heavy wooden doors gaped open as they had for most of the time that Raug had lived in the fortress. The doors' closing would be seen as a sign of fear among the soldiers of the keep. The fact that they

kept them open served to show that the generals held no fear of the vast numbers of common soldiers in the barracks. This was another of the rules that Karoxfang had made sure to keep, and throughout many generations of orc soldiers, none had ever passed through the archway unbidden.

Padding silently through, Raug pulled his cowl up high, and his face was wreathed in shadow. Huddling low in his robes, the half-orc passed through the wide main hall in silence. The stench of smoke and the smell of stale grog assailed his nostrils as he continued past the vast halls and chambers that housed the main army of Stor-gris.

The roar of the main barracks more than covered Raug's footsteps. The orcs and hobgoblins of the great fortress had just begun their typical night's drinking, gambling, and eventually, fighting. Such disputes were known to erupt over practically anything and, though the captains and guards were usually fast to intervene, it wasn't uncommon for a few murders to be committed before the night was through.

Ignoring the stares and curses of the common soldiers, Raug walked out of the main corridor of the fortress and exited through the succession of main gates that separated the defensible baileys from the open areas. Murder holes for archers and crossbowmen, should they ever need to defend the fortress, extended far to each side in the open areas. The gates beyond were thick iron and would be only the first layer of defense for the massive citadel.

Indeed, Raug thought as he passed through the main gates, he didn't envy whomever had the task of laying siege to the fortress of Stor-gris.

The cover of darkness had just fallen upon the dark city, and the lights of a thousand torches and fires had sprung up about the city proper.

The mighty towers that dominated the skyline of the area about Stor-gris were oriented near the middle of the city-stronghold. On either side of the towers were homes and hovels, in which kobolds, goblins, and orcs lived. Though they were mostly segregated by choice, the different species of Dark



Folk seemed to incessantly bicker and quibble, and fights in the common areas were a nightly occurrence.

To the south of the towers, beyond the common district and even the strong walls themselves, a sheer cliff dropped hundreds of feet down to the waters of Goblin Bay. To the north of the towers, beyond more homes and the main walls of the fortress, stretched an open plain. The plain was the main means of travel into and out of the city, as the wide, packed earth road could attest to.

Raug slipped out of the main tower and turned towards the bay and the sea beyond. He stalked across the open expanse of ground between the towers and the common district with purpose in his stride, hoping that none would question a high-level servant apparently out on duty for his master.

Passing through a dark alley between poorly made



wooden structures, Raug stepped out into a main thoroughfare and crossed to the next alley. Even given his employ by General Jorung, Raug still risked much being in such an area unescorted at the onset of night.

The half-orc had a talent for moving without making a stir, however, and very few, if any, made note of his passing. Raug kept to the shadows when able and walked with his cowl low to hide his tanned but light skin.

Deftly, the half-orc moved through Stor-gris city, avoiding trouble with all the skill of a long-time resident. It wasn't always easy to avoid danger in the city of Dark Folk, but Raug had long ago perfected that ability.

At least he hoped he had.

Noting familiar terrain, Raug dashed off into a side alleyway and came to a set of wooden stairs set back into a cubby. The stoop led to a planked wooden door, upon which Raug knocked as he hopped up the stairs.

The door was poorly fit in the opening, and light shone around its reveal. Raug could see shadows flickering through the light as someone moved behind the door. Suddenly the hair on the half-orc's body tingled slightly, as he felt an arcane spell being

used, probably a scrying spell to identify him. He chose not to resist it.

After only a few seconds, a slide was pulled and a pair of light, green eyes stared out from the other side of the door. A muffled voice followed.

"You've a missive for us?"

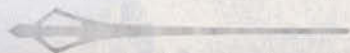
Raug nodded in reply and uttered the string of words, the code that would get him through the door.

"The General has a task, and he desires full anonymity."

With a thunk the slide closed and the bolt in the door was thrown back. A turn of the knob gave Raug entry, and he glided inside, closing and locking the door behind him. Blinking his eyes to adjust to the light of the room, Raug turned and grinned at the elven figure in the dimly-lit room.

"Venedal, by the mist of the glades, it's good to see you!"

The two clasped hands and Venedal grinned in return. The male elf was tall and lithe, as were most of his people. His body was toned and fit, mostly because of a life of battle and training. Venedal's copper hair was close-cropped, a fact that served to set him apart from many of the longhaired elves of the Sarumvest. His green eyes served to disorient any who looked into their depths, a fact that he seemed to



use to his advantage against any prey, be it an enemy on the field of battle or a maiden in a moonlit glade.

Venedal was armed and armored simply, with a thin sword, almost thin enough to be a dueling foil, and a longbow with arrows. His robes bulged slightly at the shoulders, knees, and chest, probably with armor of some sort. The elf's dirty black robes no doubt had served him well to get into the city, as they resembled the simple garments that the servants were given to wear.

Raug looked at the rag-tag robes and smiled.

"Had you any trouble getting into the city?"

Venedal grinned in reply, and his green eyes sparkled with mischief.

"None at all; one simple cantrip and these buffoons think me to be the fellow that they were drinking with just last night. It seems as if they have no aptitude for our arts, or perhaps they're merely stupid."

Raug nodded to accept the point, then shook his head.

"You're right on that, but still be wary. The commoners in Stor-gris are indeed fools. The dark ones that inhabit the towers, well, I'm afraid they're much more intelligent than we expected."

Raug stepped further into the tiny room and looked about. A small bedroll was unfurled in one corner, and a simple desk with a lantern was the only other piece of furniture that adorned the room. Raug smile wryly.

"I see that you've taken only the best accommodations, as usual."

Venedal shrugged and grinned at the man's obvious sarcasm.

"My stay is only for this night, my friend. I'm to bring you this, and then to return to our people."

Raug beamed at the mention of "our" people, his breath taken away yet again at the kindness and acceptance that had been offered to him by the elves. He watched as Venedal reached into his voluminous robes and extracted a scroll in a glass tube. The elf handed it over with a nod, and Raug tucked it away in his own robe, barely giving it a second glance.

Venedal motioned at the hidden scroll.

"I'm sure that you can guess at how many of our people suffered to make this document. We've spent a human lifetime of espionage and scrying to learn the many intricacies of the missives penned by the White Lady. Now, at long last, we've made a forgery of their enigmatic leader's documents."

"This document, a message for Karoxfang, was penned by our very finest sages, elves who have devoted almost a century to learning the Lady's hand. The sages have testified to its veracity, and it has passed trial deliveries through several Dark Folk outposts."

"This forgery will spur Karoxfang into motion and lead him to where we need him to be. You are to plant this where it will reach the general by accepted means, in a fortnight's time."

The elf's eyes sparkled slightly as if he felt the excitement of their plans coming to fruition.

"We will be ready."

Raug's amazement was evident on his face. That the elves had planned such a thing to happen during his lifetime was incredible, indeed. The scroll weighed heavily on his person, perhaps due to its importance more than its actual weight. With it, Raug's doubt returned in full force, and he thought about the immense amount of trust that the elves had placed in him.

Grimly, Raug nodded his understanding, and the two brothers in purpose clasped wrists.

"It will be done, brother. Until I see you again, may Tal-Allustiel guide your steps."

Venedal repeated the saying and turned to guide Raug out of the door. Without another word, the half-ore pulled his cowl up and over once again and stepped out into the dark alleyway of the common district of Stor-gris. With a quick look in both directions, he started off, heading back towards the main tower of the massive fortress. He stifled a yawn as he considered what he still must do that night, for he had no idea what the "conventional" means were to get a missive from the most feared agent of Vornoth to her second in command.



PART 2: THE OLUK ORCS

The mission that mighty Karoxfang had given Raug and his master had taken them into the depths of the Undercity, to the large, inner sanctum of the great general himself.

They had received the summons only a day and a half after Jorung's discussion with the half-fiend and had left in a hurry. Raug now followed behind his massive hobgoblin master, as the latter's heavy boots pounded a rhythm through the stone halls. Raug soon found himself marching with the cadence, his steps falling in tune with his master's. The half-orc shook his head as he caught himself and purposefully changed his steps to differ from the hobgoblin's.

Reaching a thick stone door low in the depths of the Undercity, Raug leaned over to look past General Jorung. A guide, himself a hobgoblin sergeant, unlocked a series of bolts and pushed the door in. A grating sound soon followed as the portal swung in on its pivots. Gritting his teeth at the noise, Raug followed the two hobgoblins inside and into a dark corridor.

The sergeant pushed past to shut and lock the door behind the trio. Raug's stomach tightened even further as the door scraped shut and any hopes of escape were dashed. The bolt slammed into place, thrown by the powerful hobgoblin, and the sound made Raug start slightly. Thankfully, neither the general nor the sergeant noticed.

The hobgoblin snorted as he stepped into the lead. He motioned for the general and servant to follow and stalked away without waiting.

The trio continued down the corridor, with little light save torch sconces set several dozen feet apart. The hall was quite possibly kept dim on purpose to hide the inhabitants of the small cells that lined either side.

Raug, his curiosity overruling his good judgment, wandered closer to a cell, peering into its depths. A shadowy figure stirred in the darkness, but Raug simply couldn't make out its features.

With two thudding steps and a loud bang, the creature closed the distance across its cell and reached through the bars with a massive arm. The open-handed swipe missed Raug by scant inches, and the half-orc stumbled backwards in shock. As he backpedaled, his feet interfered with each other, and he plopped down on his backside. Raug stared up in open-mouthed surprise at the beast that reached out from within the cell. The creature's head was distended and misshapen, with bones and skin sticking out at odd angles. Two smaller heads hung lifelessly from boneless necks on either shoulder of the beast, which looked to have once been an orc. The creature had one massive and thickly muscled arm, which he had used to swipe at Raug; its other arm was gaunt and skeletal. The thing moaned in pain,

anger, or even hunger, and its oozing sores left a viscous trail as it backed away from the bars and fell deep into the shadows of the cell.

Jorung chuckled at his servant's misfortune.

"Muahaha!! Ol' shoulder-ead almost got a hol' of ya', ya' runt! Best not to be pokin' round in what's not yer own business, 'specially in this place. Now, git off yer ass!"

Raug shot the general a look that could stone an ogre, but Jorung had already turned away. Thankfully, Raug thought to himself, as he considered the greater good that he represented.

A knowing grin creased the hobgoblin sergeant's face as he motioned further down the corridor with a slight tilt of his head.

"If yer done playin', then."

Raug cast one baleful look back at the cell of "shoulder-ead" and moved swiftly to follow his two companions.

The trio encountered many more of the horrors as they continued down the corridor, but Raug's fear and common sense forced back any urge to investigate their cells more closely. He did, nonetheless, stare in wonder as he considered just what he had gotten himself into. Sometimes when the rare torches cast pools of light on the cells, he could see into them clearly: lumbering giants, the size of ogres, stooped low with misshapen bodies and extra limbs; orcs burdened by the bulk of extra heads or useless, twig-like limbs. Even a few formerly human creatures were locked away in the cells, now creatures with massive sores that seemed to incessantly ooze vile, clear pus.

As Raug began to seriously consider that he might be being led to his doom, the hobgoblin brought them to another massive, stone door. The guide unlocked it and Raug followed the two large hobgoblins inside.

If the corridor outside had disgusted Raug, then the sight inside of the chamber into which he had entered thoroughly chilled him to the bone. For, on the other side of thick, iron bars, dozens, perhaps hundreds of hulking orcish creatures stood about

In Part 2 of the story, Raug learns about the terrible creatures that the evil overlords of Stor-gris have created to use in the war against the elves. He is tasked to train them, but can he do so without giving himself away?

bunks set up closely together. The creatures stared at their visitors with intelligent eyes, many even taking a few steps towards the thick bars.

Raug took an involuntary step back at the sight. Not only did the orcs appear to be intelligent, they moved with a deadly grace, and they were larger even than the general Jorung, who happened to be the largest hobgoblin that Raug had ever seen. Raug's eyes widened as he thought about poor Venedal, and his other elven brothers and sisters and what these massive creatures would do to them.

General Jorung, mistaking Raug's fear for wonder, grinned at his servant. He looked back at the orcs as he spoke.

"Behold General Karoxfang's newest creation: the Oluk. Mighty orcs that have none of the weaknesses of lesser orcs." Raug's jaw dropped open in shock and despair.

The next few days and nights proved to be particularly trying to the half-orc, for Raug allowed himself little or no sleep. During the morning hours, he stalked the halls of the outer towers of the fortress, finding and following the path of missives that were brought to the ruler of Stor-gris. During the day and early night hours, Raug was in the Undercity, training the Oluk orcs in knowledge of magic and its effects.

The half-orc was torn as he showed the beasts the power of the simple cantrip, the strength of an arcane shield, and even the shock of a grip charged with



arcane power. And still the oluk orcs stood firm, remained confident, and--worst of all--they learned. Karoxfang's newest warriors grew stronger and more intelligent with each passing day, and Raug was sorely tempted to refuse to train them. But to lose his cover at such a crucial time... it would be unacceptable to the elves. They would see the greater good behind delivering the missive, and Raug knew they were right.

So the half-orc servant continued to train the creatures in knowledge of magic, as Jorung trained them in battle and war. The oluks took to their teachings as if they were bred to be warriors, as they obviously were. It was rumored that they were a combination of human, orc, and ogre, bred through years of experiments, experiments whose dark side effects Raug had no desire to see again.

As he instructed the dark race, Raug reflected on his own teachings, on how Sage Finnial of House Nustra had begun with simple stories at Raug's young age.

The great Sage was ancient even when Raug was a youth, and would probably outlast the half-orc by a century or more before he went over the sea, but he took the child in as if he were his own. Raug always found it disconcerting that Finnial looked as young as he did, although the weary look in his eyes betrayed his real age.

The golden-haired sage's stories were always different but often featured some hero from long ago. Having done a great deed or won a great victory, the hero would issue a shout of victory or exultation. It took Raug months to realize that the heroes only used a few select phrases that never seemed to differ. Soon enough, the young half-orc realized that he'd been memorizing spells and didn't even know it.

Great Sage Finnial had a vast array of tricks for learning and remembering spells, concentrating on a single point or task, and even using ancient devices that stored arcane energy. The elder elf taught Raug all of these things, and he loved the bastard half-orc like a son.

Raug had to do little but envision what the vicious

oluks would do to his mentor to know what had to be done.

So during those several days that turned into a week, then more, Raug continued to teach the oluks. However, he managed to turn the lessons more to his liking, using only his least powerful incantations. He explained to the oluks that this was the extent of a mage's power, which brought about derisive sneers at the lack of capabilities. Raug kept the oluks from learning the true power and secrets of the arcane in hopes that they would be ill prepared for the elves. Luckily, none of the fortress' lesser leaders had inquired enough about his teachings to notice his deception, and Karoxfang hadn't deemed it necessary to check up on it...yet.

After days and nights of teaching in the vast halls of the Undercity, the day he had been preparing for had finally come. Raug, dressed in his typical robes and with his cowl pulled low, stood in a long line of messengers bearing documents from the troops in the Hinterlands, and as far as the Wintervale in the east. Near the head of the line, a hobgoblin sergeant collected the documents from the messengers and sent them on their way.

Raug uttered a foul curse that he had heard from Jorung as he stared at the hobgoblin-- the same sergeant that had guided him through the Undercity many days ago. With five people in line before him, Raug chewed his lip as his mind churned through a dozen different scenarios in his mind. None seemed to end with his survival.

Spotting a small goblin set away from the main line, not twenty feet away, Raug slipped out of line. He stopped and cursed himself, however, as he heard the hobgoblin's voice.

"Ey, where ya' goin'? Got sumptin' to report, er not?"

Raug grimaced at the attention and kept his back to the hobgoblin. He turned slightly to speak over his shoulder.

"Seems like I've gotten into the wrong line, master. I was looking for the infantry headquarters."

The hobgoblin snorted and chuckled at Raug's

statement. The half-orc could feel the sergeant's beady eyes boring into his back.

"You ain't fer infantry, son...less you put some meat on ya! Maybe you should look for the tailors or cooks headquarters...that'd be more your speed."

The hobgoblin chuckled again, even as Raug's mind raced, searching for a way out of the predicament. His salvation, it seemed, came from the high-pitched voice of a tiny kobold at the front of the line.

"Missa', I needs ta' 'git back."

The kobold held up a rolled bunch of papers in his scaly, brown hand, and he waved it in the face of the hobgoblin sergeant in an effort to get his attention. The sergeant snarled as he looked down at the kobold, and his meaty hand whipped across to snatch away the papers.

"Damn, dirty snog! Fine then, you've delivered your papers, now stand aside!"

Just like that, Raug was quickly forgotten as the hobgoblin turned back to cycling through the line of

documents that came in for the fortress. Silently thanking Tal-Allustiel for his fortune, Raug swiftly left the line and motioned for the goblin, who stood leaning against a far wall. Raug flipped a silver coin in the air as he passed, and the goblin's eyes widened with greed as he turned to follow.

Coming to a small alley, Raug turned, and the goblin approached. As the little creature got closer, Raug whispered a few practiced words in the language of the arcane. The goblin opened his mouth to speak but closed it as the spell took effect. His eyes glazed over, and he smiled at Raug as if he had found a long lost brother.

Raug, wasting no time, handed the important missive over to the goblin.

"Friend, I ask a great task of you; would you undertake such a thing for me?"

At the little goblin's eager nod, Raug continued.

"This document is vital to the success of Stor-gris, your very home. It is a message direct from the White Lady, and it must not fall into the wrong hands.



Please, will you wait in the far line and deliver this to the imperious hobgoblin at its head? I'd not ask this of anyone else--I trust you implicitly."

The goblin nodded again, and his skinny chest swelled with pride.

"Tell the hobgoblin that you discovered this on a messenger's body outside of the city, and you deemed it important. I knew that I could trust you, friend."

Raug smiled widely as the goblin gave a pathetic salute and turned to hurry off in the direction of the line.

The half-orc followed at a distance and stopped when he had a clear view of the line. His grin widened, though it was mostly hidden in the shadows of his cowl, as he watched the goblin carry out his instructions to perfection.

Once the deed was done, the goblin walked back proudly, in search of his friend. In time the little creature had forgotten whom it was he searched for and what, exactly, he had done for him.

Raug could only guess at how word of the Lady's missive traveled through the stone halls of Stor-gris so quickly. Within no more than an hour, Karoxfang the Vile called a meeting and all generals were ordered to attend.

Raug was admitted as Jorung's manservant, as was Bozzurak's man, the brooding human. The room was tense, and Karoxfang's abrupt arrival and the sense of urgency with which he moved did little to assuage concerns.

The great form of the half-fiend dwarfed all in his presence, save General Jorung. Even though the hobgoblin general almost rivaled Karoxfang in stature, Jorung wisely lowered his head in deference to his ruler.

Karoxfang chose not to sit as he entered the center of the semi-circle, instead glaring at the assembled military leaders as he paced ever so slightly back and forth. His voice, though raspy, could still be heard clearly among all of the gathered attendants.

"Gathered generals, our forces are on the move. To the north, a resistance stirs, and it is apparently one that our great leader would not have us take lightly.



The White Lady herself has decreed that this force must be destroyed and, to do so, I must personally lead a block of our strongest troops against our vile paleskin foes. I leave today, no later, and the maintenance of this city will rest in the hands of your council until my return."

Karoxfang's decree was news to all...save one. Raug's eyes were wide at the prospect; their plan had worked! The first step had been taken in dismantling the great machine of Stor-gris.

The half-orc's excitement turned to his usual worry as he gazed upon the mighty figure of Karoxfang. Who could stand against such a foe? Raug feared for his elven brethren, knowing full well that many would lose their lives in the coming ambush.

Karoxfang answered a few quick and to the point questions and then turned to leave the chamber.

PART 3: THE DRAGON



Life in the fortress of Stor-gris continued in Karoxfang's absence much as it had when the half-fiend had been present. General Jorung, being one of the highest-ranking officials in the city, was handling more of the mundane tasks, and they served to bore the hobgoblin warrior nearly to death. He was up well into the morning hours tending to correspondence after correspondence and assailing Raug with a seemingly endless string of curses directed at the levels of bureaucracy that had seemed to take over the city-fortress.

Thus, the massive general and Raug were awake when there came a pounding on the bedchamber door two mornings after Karoxfang's departure. Jorung looked up from his table as Raug crossed the room to pull open the door. An orc messenger, slight of body for his race, peeked his head around the door.

"General Bozzurak has requested your presence at a meeting of vital importance, great General."

The orc's voice was high-pitched and nasal, and Raug's teeth were set on edge merely hearing him speak a single sentence. He hoped that the messenger had nothing else to say. Luckily, the orc obliged by taking his leave, obviously figuring that his message was delivered and thus his work was done.

Jorung's bloodshot eyes narrowed at the orc's retreating figure, however, as he stood up from the table and began to don his ceremonial armor. He nodded to Raug, and the half-orc fell into line behind his master as both turned to follow the already departing orc messenger.

The heavy boots of Jorung rang louder than those of either of his companions as the trio made their way through the vast stone chambers. Many slept through the daylight hours, having just crept back

Raug's eyes followed his form, only to be caught up by another. His eyes locked with those of the mysterious human servant, who was staring at him... again!

The human grinned wickedly as Raug's eyes met his. Raug turned away swiftly and looked to General Jorung for direction. The hobgoblin was the last to file out of the council chamber, but Raug made certain not to lock eyes with the enigmatic human again.

into their rooms from a night of debauchery, torture shows, or fighting; thus, the halls were mostly empty.

Raug's nervousness increased with every step that the group took, and it tripled when they stepped into the council chamber to see General Kahn Bozzurak, standing in his plain, battle-tested armor.

No less than half a dozen of Kahn's guards lined the inside of the chamber, each glaring intently at the newest arrivals.

Worse yet, the orc general's human servant was in the room as well, leaning somewhat nonchalantly against a far wall. The man still wore an arrogant grin, and he fidgeted idly with a clasp at his belt.

General Jorung stopped after entering the room, and his gaze fell down to Bozzurak's armor and the heavy sword at his side. The general looked ready for war, not a simple meeting. General Jorung's eyebrows furrowed in confusion.

"What's this?"

The massive hobgoblin's hand went swiftly to his side, where his ceremonial sword rested in its bronze

scabbard, always at the ready.

"What are you about, orc?"

Kahn appeared to be calm, even in the presence of Jorung's intimidating figure. He smiled as he stalked closer, and yellowed tusks protruded from the corners of his mouth.

"I should ask you the same, General Jorung. For, it seems like you and your half-breed have been busy."

Raug's heart sank as his fears rang true: he was discovered. The fear that had threatened to overwhelm him for years built up behind his flimsy wall of control. As Raug's heart pounded faster and beads of sweat glistened on his forehead, Raug realized that he was on the brink of being consumed by those fears. He looked to Jorung, but the general was busy glaring at Kahn, staring him down. Raug's eyes, instead, strayed to the human servant, who was grinning even wider now as he seemed to enjoy Raug's discomfort.

Raug turned back to the two generals as Jorung



In Part 3 of the story, Raug's secret is discovered. He finds himself fighting for his life back-to-back with an unlikely ally... his hobgoblin master. Will he be able to escape alive? And what is to become of the dread Karoxfang?

drew himself up to his full stature, which would be imposing to nearly anyone.

"Busy perhaps, but in the name of our great ruler! You should remember your place, orc. There are some plans of the mighty Karoxfang that you're not privy to."

Kahn merely smiled, and he turned to look at Raug. The half-orc squirmed under the general's gaze, much to Kahn's delight. He chuckled to himself.

"It seems as if even you have been duped, General Jorung. Perhaps your servant is more resourceful than I had thought. The half-breed has you fooled."

Kahn stepped even closer to Raug as he spoke, and General Jorung looked from one orc-kin to the other as Kahn closed the distance. The latter continued to speak as he stalked forward.

His guards, meanwhile, moved to flank Jorung, obviously viewing the immense hobgoblin as the most immediate threat.

"Karoxfang left Stor-gris, indeed. But he walks into an ambush, an ambush that your man here helped to set up. This one is on the wrong side, General Jorung. By the use of a forged document, this fellow has sent our great leader to his doom."

Jorung's gaze snapped up to meet Raug's as Kahn's accusation was finally laid bare. The massive hobgoblin stared intently into Raug's eyes, searching for the truth.

Raug's mouth went dry under the scrutiny, and he licked his lips in nervousness. His hands grew

clammy, and he put them behind his back so as not to show their trembling.

Suddenly, something strange happened within the half-orc. Thoughts of his failure disappeared from his mind and were replaced with visions of his happiness when he was with the elves of the Sarumvest. During his training in their home, Raug had been tested and worked, without a doubt. But he also considered it to be the most joyous time of his life. He thought of those he would never see again if they fell to Karoxfang's and Stor-gris' might. He thought of his sage mentor and of Venedal. He thought of the pale light of the moon when it shimmered over the clear, cool waters of the Lake of the Swan. More than anything, he thought of how all that he loved would be stamped out like the ashes of a dying fire when the forces of Stor-gris came through. It had to end!

A dangerous calm came over Raug's features as his training took over and pushed any wisp of fear from his mind. His course became as clear as the waters of the Lake, and his jaw set in resolve. With his hands still behind his back, Raug reached into a concealed pouch and pulled out a small pinch of a dry substance. Rubbing the dried serpent tongue between his fingers, Raug activated the substance's properties with the natural oils of his skin, and the potential power of the spell component tingled in his hand. Suddenly, he sprang forward, pointing at General Bozzurak, though his eyes were always on Jorung.

"My Lord, can't you see? He plots against Karoxfang and has brought you here to usurp your rule! With you and Karoxfang removed, he plans to rule Stor-gris!"

Raug's words were enforced by the power of his spell, an implanted suggestion, and the seed of doubt immediately began to grow in Jorung's mind. Needing no more than that little doubt to believe Raug over his hated rival, Jorung turned to Kahn, his face frozen in rage.

The orc, seeing the change, drew his sword with a hiss and took a wide stance to meet the potential attack of the mighty hobgoblin general. The guards of

Kahn's retinue acted just as quickly, darting towards the sides of Jorung to restrain or perhaps kill the mighty hobgoblin. Their swords caught and reflected the flickering light of the numerous torch sconces about the chamber as they burst into action.

Raug, seeing the guards in motion, took a small crystal rod from his pouch and rubbed it quickly on the sleeve of his robe. Feeling the tingle of static forming on the rod, the half-orc whispered a few words in the language of the arcane and lifted his hand to point two fingers, each at a different guard. A bolt of white-hot lightning burst from each of Raug's two extended fingers and slammed into the guards with a deafening boom. Light from the twin bolts of electricity outlined the room, and all within saw spots from the bright force of the spell. The guards were flung away from Jorung by the power of the blow and slammed into the far wall, where they fell to the floor, smoking and lifeless.

Raug relished the sensation as arcane power coursed through his body. His eyes grew wide as he stood tall and straight, a figure of pure confidence. He was no longer the frightened half-breed child of old. Instead, he was the elven-trained wizard who had been chosen for a task of great importance.

Roaring in rage, Jorung crossed the distance between himself and Kahn in two bounds. He batted the orc's sword away with a calloused hand and lifted Kahn up by his throat. Jorung continued his charge through the orc and drove his opponent against the far stone wall of the council chamber. A sharp expulsion of air followed as the wind was blown from his lungs. At least one crack was audible in the room as Kahn's ribs broke under the pressure.

The four remaining guards, left standing dumbfounded at the speed of Jorung, moved to attack the hobgoblin's flank. Raug's magic, however, intercepted the orcs. He pointed at one and uttered a quick trigger word. Instantly, five darts of green energy flew from his fingertips to pound into the orc's side. The force of the blasts sent the creature stumbling into his nearest companion and both hit the floor in a tangle.

Immediately after the darts left Raug's hands, he was in motion again, pointing at the next standing orc. At the half-orc's whispered command, his enemy's body contorted and changed before the astonished eyes of his companions. In mere seconds, a small rat was all that was left of the former guard.

Raug charged forward towards the remaining orc and stomped on the rat in the process, spreading its guts all over the stone floor. Raug's eyes never wavered from his next enemy, and the remaining orc backed away, his sword held up in defense. The orc's eyes showed his very real fear as he was confronted by the mage wielding powerful elven magic.

Raug stopped just out of range of the orc, and the guard swung his sword haphazardly, to try and keep the mage at bay. Raug, however, proved too quick, and he grasped the trailing hand of the orc before he could retract it. With a few quick words, the air about the mage tingled with energy, and the hair on his body stood on end. With a sharp crackling sound, his hand glowed bright blue as energy transferred from him to the orc. The orc arched his back and dropped his sword as he screamed out in pain, every inch of his body being shocked by the intense power of Raug's spell. The orc jerked with spasms strong enough to crack his bones and then finally fell to the ground, dead.





Eddie

Raug turned from the defeated guards and looked to Kahn's human servant, prepared to stop him from helping his master. To his surprise, the human merely grinned and watched with excitement as the mighty Jorung crushed the life from his master.

Once the orc's thrashing ceased, Jorung dropped his now-lifeless body and turned to face the two servants. As the three stared at one another, silence reigned throughout the massive chamber. After several seconds, the silence was broken... by clapping.

Raug looked at the human in astonishment as the man slowly but steadily applauded Jorung's victory. The human's voice cut through the silence as he calmly walked towards the hobgoblin general.

"Well done, great General. I knew that a pawn such as Bozzurak wouldn't stand up to your might. You and your servant have both done a great service in bringing about a new reign. Alas, no remnants of the old can remain. I'm sure that you understand."

Jorung looked to Raug, confusion evident on his face. Finding no answers on the half-orc's shocked visage, Jorung turned back to the human just in time to see the man's hand darting towards him. The human moved with blinding speed, plunging his rigid fingertips through Jorung's throat. With a strong jerk of his arm, Kahn's former servant pulled back and ripped away skin and arteries from the hobgoblin's neck. Blood gushed from Jorung's throat as he gurgled his final, dying words. Alas, the words were unintelligible, as the hobgoblin's windpipe was torn apart.

The human turned his attention from the dying general before his body even hit the floor, and Raug backpedaled as the dark man advanced upon him. Raug's training, extensive tutelage from the sages of Alustel, was again lost to his terror-addled mind. His confidence, which was absolute mere moments ago, wavered and broke in the face of the approaching figure. Raug cursed to himself as he backed away, wondering what sort of creature could kill the great general so quickly.

As he looked at the approaching form, the

human's appearance wavered and began to change. His clothes began to turn into black shiny scales, his arms extended, and ended in sharp talons, and his eyes, formerly the dark eyes of a brooding human, began to look like the eyes of a deadly serpent.

The words to a spell died on Raug's lips as the creature plunged razor sharp talons through his chest. Blood erupted from the half-orc's back in a fountain, and his vision wavered as his body grew cold. Raug's last, dying vision was the deadly calm of the serpent-eyes of a terrible black dragon. As that vision blurred, Raug felt much like the lonely, little half-breed of years before, hiding in the corner of the empty stable.

The carnage in the council chamber that day was soon forgotten, as even darker news assailed the city-fortress of Stor-gris: Raug's secret was kept, and Karoxfang's army walked blindly into an ambush in the far north.

Elven historians kept a vivid record of what happened in the deep canyon in which Karoxfang had fallen. Their descriptions of the battle stand to this day, a testament to the victory that their cunning had wrought.

According to such histories, the elves of the Sarumvest, adept in the ways of the arcane, duped the forces of Karoxfang into a trap. The falsified missive had detailed a meeting of leaders of the elves, and those leaders, or what appeared to be the leaders, were found right where Karoxfang was told that they would be.

Had Karoxfang not been so proud and arrogant, he might have seen through the illusion before it was too late. However, he didn't, and the small force from Stor-gris chased what they had thought to be a handful of elven leaders into a deep valley, rimmed on both sides by high stone cliffs.

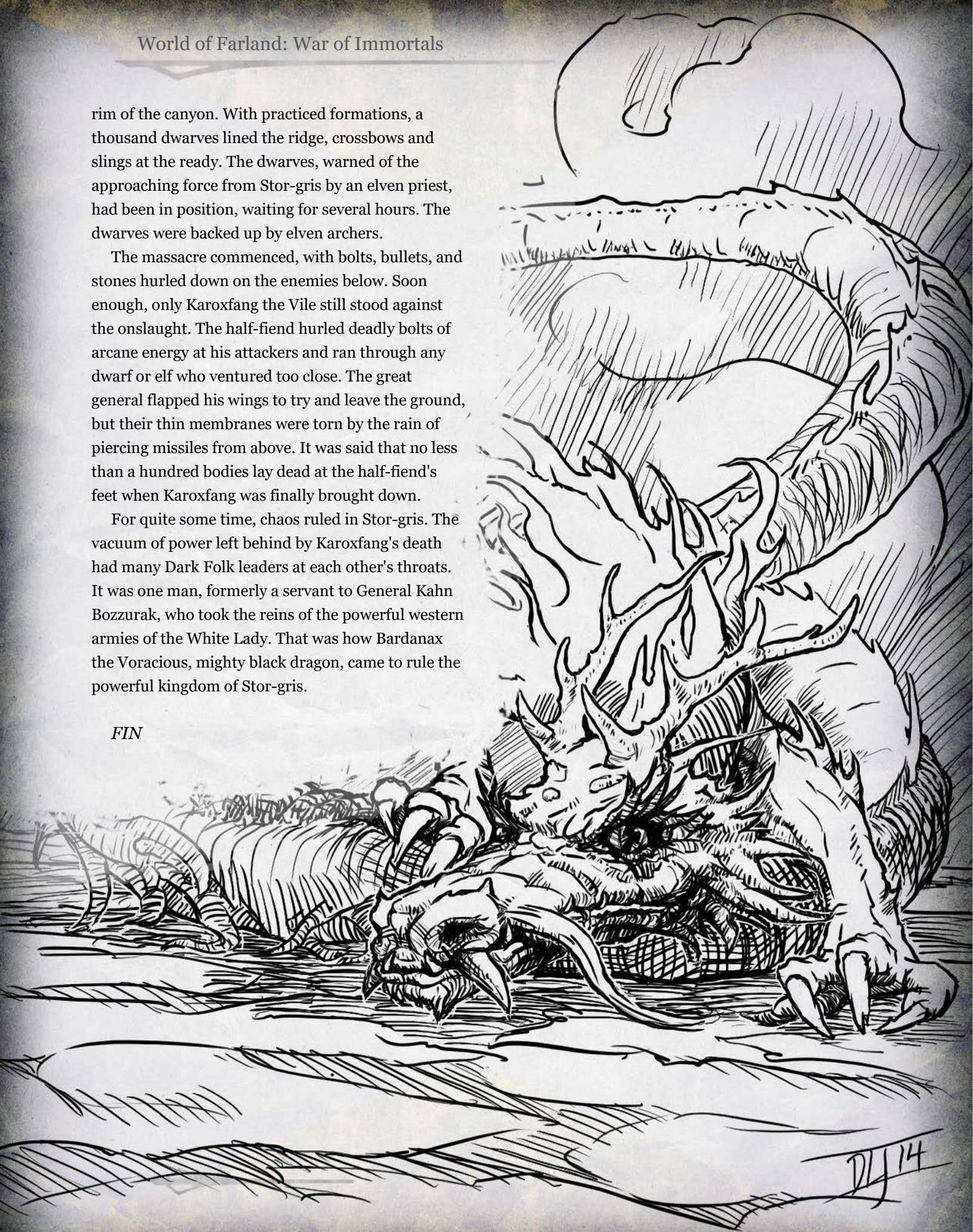
After entering the canyon, Karoxfang realized his error only too late. The image of the retreating elves shimmered and took on the form of orcs, gagged and bound, running from their own kin. The retreating orcs must have been duped as well, for they glanced about in confusion as the first drums beat around the

rim of the canyon. With practiced formations, a thousand dwarves lined the ridge, crossbows and slings at the ready. The dwarves, warned of the approaching force from Stor-gris by an elven priest, had been in position, waiting for several hours. The dwarves were backed up by elven archers.

The massacre commenced, with bolts, bullets, and stones hurled down on the enemies below. Soon enough, only Karoxfang the Vile still stood against the onslaught. The half-fiend hurled deadly bolts of arcane energy at his attackers and ran through any dwarf or elf who ventured too close. The great general flapped his wings to try and leave the ground, but their thin membranes were torn by the rain of piercing missiles from above. It was said that no less than a hundred bodies lay dead at the half-fiend's feet when Karoxfang was finally brought down.

For quite some time, chaos ruled in Stor-gris. The vacuum of power left behind by Karoxfang's death had many Dark Folk leaders at each other's throats. It was one man, formerly a servant to General Kahn Bozzurak, who took the reins of the powerful western armies of the White Lady. That was how Bardanax the Voracious, mighty black dragon, came to rule the powerful kingdom of Stor-gris.

FIN





APPENDIX: NOTABLE PERSONAGES

ELVES

Elvenking Dalos of House Glorale, king in Alustel: The silver-haired King Dalos is a wise, farsighted ruler. The reality of the looming war sits heavily on his shoulders, occupying his time and driving him to distraction. As such, he has little time for much else, especially for what he views as the petty politics of Alustel. Those who are lucky enough to catch his ear while he is distracted often gain temporary political favors through absent-minded royal decrees.

Cúon, called the Strongbow, elven hero: This lithe archer has black hair and dark eyes. Cúon's appearance is unassuming, for he is neither muscular nor thin. His skill with a bow is unrivaled, and he is nearly as good with the elven greatsword he carries. Many orcs have learned these facts the hard way—and it's the last thing they ever learned.

Lord Halin, Captain of Elven Intelligence: Sandy-haired Lord Halin of House Valleron is the head spymaster of the Sarumvest. He has a very average face for an elf, and one that others tend to forget. He uses this to his advantage. He has no taste for combat but is not above ordering others to do ruthless deeds. He has no political allegiance save to the elven throne.

Captain Venedal, elven ranger and spy: Captain Venedal of House Rolomin is a good-looking elf who wears his copper hair in an unusual style—cropped short. A master agent and spy, Venedal is intelligent, brave, and capable. Rumor has it that he has ventured into the very fortress of Stor-gris itself. He is close friends with Lord Halin.

Lord Dalanuil of House Aradune, elven general responsible for war in the Hinterlands: This blond elf favors fine clothes, but he usually fights and rides with his men, so his clothes are invariably dusty and stained. He is personally a good fighter as well as being a strategic general. His loyalties, however, ultimately lie with House Aradune, although he would die before he lost the war to the Dark Folk for political reasons.

Lord Yeltinir of House Haran, high captain responsible for defense of the Sarumvest: This thin, chestnut-haired elf is a surprisingly capable warrior. He reports directly to the Elvenking, but his political loyalties lie with the Interventionists and House Tifwing.

Captain Olas of House Tifwing, undercaptain serving under Yeltinir: Captain Olas is a thickly muscled elf with dark hair. He is the right-hand man of Lord Yeltinir and is known for his unwavering loyalty, first to the elven species, then to Lord Yeltinir, and last to House Tifwing.

Lord Cirock of House Aradune: Lord Cirock is a tall, handsome elf with shining blond hair. He has a striking bearing, but his face is stubborn and hard as flint. Perhaps the most politically important elf in Alustel (besides king Dalos), the amoral Lord Cirock is the head of the Isolationist faction.

Lord Curuval of House Tifwing: A regal, proud elf, the noble Lord Curuval is, as the head of House Tifwing, nearly as politically powerful as Lord Cirock. He has a beneficent personality and heads the Interventionist faction in Alustel.

Lord Galdin Palantar of House Mithaleil, famous bard: Lord Galdin Palantar (which means "Famed One") has raven hair. He generally bears no weapons, though he is a capable warrior, but he is never found without his silver harp. His gaze bears the weight of centuries or millenia.

Cirith of House Glorale, Lord of Loraglin: The ashen-haired Lord Cirith seems on the surface to be a dandy. He is a bit effete and wears fancy clothes and perfume. But this is an act. Since his city lies near the border of the Sarumvest, he spends much of his time on security and works closely with Lord Halin and Captain Venedal. His outward appearance disarms his political opponents and causes them to underestimate him.

Dalanuil of House Glorale, Lord of Calador: The effete Lord Dalanuil rules Calador, which his house has ruled for more than two millenia. His primary concern is seeing that his city continues to make the best wine possible. He has few concerns beyond this.

Lady Yana of House Tifwing, Lady of Lannael: The comely and canny Lady Yana rules Lannael, the only elven community that is truly multicultural. Lady Yana reflects something of the traits of her town—she can be elegant, efficient, economically proficient, or ruthless, as the case demands. As the leader of a trading post, Yana appreciates and respects other races and cultures in a way that few other elves do.

Nariena of House Neldiril, Lady of Emerain: Lady Nariena took over the rule of Emerain after her husband, a hero of the Battle of Thunder Pass, sailed west. She has proved to be an even more capable ruler than her husband. She often rides forth from her city, her mahogany hair flowing behind her as she leads orc hunts.

Singul of House Rolomin, Lord of Palahan: A paragon of high elvenhood, Lord Singul is soft-spoken, wise, and brave. He distinguished himself at the battle of Thunder Pass, where he lost part of his arm. Yet he was among the first to volunteer to found the Satellite Cities. He keeps an unceasing watch on the Wintervale, but, though he will admit it to no one, he is feeling the coming of the Numasal.

DWARVES

Walin IV, King in Wawmar: This hunchbacked dwarven king is known for being a linguist. He is quite an intelligent dwarf, and though he was never a warrior, he has proven to be a more-than-able ruler, for he has a talent for surrounding himself with capable advisors. He is also extremely hard to dupe. He possesses the fabled sword *Undamar*, "Law Keeper," yet has never used it in battle.

Uzaghan Heavyhammer, dwarven hero: This heavily muscled dwarf bears the magical hammer *Radagrim*, "Answerer." He is the king's body guard, and serves him loyally, though he often begs King Walin to be allowed to march with the army. The King is loath to let him go but has difficulty denying his close friend.

Morin Strongshield, dwarven general responsible for war in the Hinterlands: This bald dwarf is an expert juggler, and indeed he is usually juggling nearby objects. One of the Shieldfolk, he is at home without walls of stone closing him in. He has an uncanny sense for troop movements and can often predict the tactics of the enemy down to the placement of the individual soldier.

Norin the Sanctified, High Priest of Khuldul in Wawmar: This exceptionally ugly dwarf is called the Sanctified for a reason. Besides being the High Priest of the great church, he truly seems to be blessed by the gods. He has never lost a bet, is constantly finding money and lost possessions, and many times has avoided injury by happenstance. His habit of taking a very long time to make decisions has given him a reputation for wisdom, deserved or not.

Lord Tordrun Firebeard, head of Clan Blacksilver: Lord Firebeard, ironically, has a long black beard. He is a proud, amoral dwarf who heads clan Blacksilver, a politically powerful but corrupt

clan. The clan has connections to organized crime as well as dark secrets in the person of Nár the White. Interestingly, Lord Tordrun Firebeard is a talented sculptor.

Kurin Strongheart, Lord of Zigil: This old dwarf never puts on airs, and in fact often works in the mines alongside the common dwarves. This accounts for the fact that his clothes, hair, and beard are usually covered in rock dust. He is friendly but gruff. He is among the least politically connected of dwarf lords, but the dwarf King respects him for his honesty and straightforward mannerisms, and this has stood him in good stead so far.

Balan Swiftshot, Lord of Felek: This thin, tall (for a dwarf) lord is exceptionally proud of his beard, and wears it waxed, coifed, and perfumed. He is quite superstitious, but he doesn't let his superstitions affect his rule of his community.

Runin Deepminer, Lord of Baraz: Lord Runin lost his left eye in a fight with orcs while he was a young dwarf. He is friendly to all races and seems to have an especial affinity for gnomes and halflings. As the ruler of the southernmost community in the kingdom of Wawmar, he watches the borders and works closely with the *Kunindaz*, the dwarven border rangers.

GNOMES

King Gorant-Bol, ruler of Haltulontelim: This Crown Gnome has wild white hair that juts in all directions. He has a habit of speaking quickly and constantly, even speaking while others speak. This gives the impression of peculiarity, even senility, but nothing could be further from the truth. Strangely, he never misses or forgets anything anyone says, and in fact has quite a shrewd mind.

Gistor-Bol, gnomish general responsible for war in the Hinterlands: The brother of Gorant, Gistor is a more typical Crown gnome. He looks almost like a smaller dwarf. As the gnomish general, his primary strategy is often to hide, although he makes good use of sabotage and subterfuge.

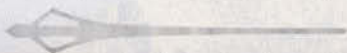
Dorfa-Sag: This small gnome, mother of the famed inventor Zenko-Sag, serves as the unofficial leader of the Fairy gnome community that lives outside of Haltulontelim. She is brave and straightforward, even on occasion going so far as to tell King Gorant to be quiet. Rumor has it that she has a cat's tail, but if so, she wears it inside her clothes.

HALFLINGS

Chief Tella Buggle, chief of the Hills: Chief Tella is known for having an extremely loud voice and exceptionally hairy feet. That being said, there is nothing funny or frivolous about him. He is all business, especially when it comes to keeping his community safe. No living halfling can remember him telling a joke or laughing at one.

Carl Ted Galabas, halfling hero and strongman: Carl Ted is a halfling that is as muscular as the average dwarf. Among halflings, he is a true oddity. He is known for being quick to anger—once breaking the neck of a marauding orc who stole his pig—as well as quick to tears. His wife often teases him for crying at weddings and birthday parties. Still, though he is emotional, he will come at a moment's notice to fight any threat that the Hills faces, and do it with a stoic demeanor (until he gets back home).

Hildo Mari Merriman: Hildo is a lithe, quick-eyed halfling matron who rules the hidden shire of the Western Delvings. Her policy is to keep her people out of site. She likes gnomes and doesn't mind elves, but she bears a grudge against dwarves.



HUMANS

Antinus, a human warlord and chief of the tribe of Aelfarus: This grizzled old human wears his gray hair in a braid that extends to his waist, indicating that he is undefeated in personal combat. He isn't a direct descendent of the founder of his tribe. His father seized leadership of the tribe by main strength, and Antinus was able to hold on to it.

Alexie, chief of the tribe of Alexandros: Alexie walks with a limp, the result of a broken leg that never healed properly. He is known for his philandering and his skill with a javelin. He is not a great melee fighter, but usually he can manage to drop foes with his javelin before they get close enough to engage him.

Ilda Wise-One, Deep Marsh human leader: This matriarch of the largest community of Deep Marsh humans is so wrinkled and tanned, it is impossible to determine her age. As a person, she has a calm demeanor and an even temper. It is said she knows every herb and animal in the great swamp.

Quinn Ulot, Hinterlander leader: This relatively young human rules by sheer charisma. While he can fight if he needs to, he has a reputation for friendliness, fairness, and justice. His followers are happy to follow him.

DARK FOLK

General Karoxfang, ruler of Stor-gris: This half-orc/half-demon brute was the White Lady's second-in-command in Rothnog. He is now the undisputed ruler of Stor-gris. His physical might is only rivaled by his mental acuity. He's lived for centuries without aging a day. Yet the elves think they have a plot to destroy him.

General Malekk Jorung: An obese hobgoblin, his outward appearance disguises his political and physical might. He long ago distinguished himself on the battlefield, for few in Stor-gris can take on a leadership position without doing so. He is intensely loyal to Karoxfang, and hates every other important Dark Folk being in the Kingdom of Stor-gris. He is surprisingly canny, with a natural understanding of schemes and machinations.

General Kahn Bozzurak: A tall orc who distinguished himself in the wars in the Hinterlands, he has recently been promoted to general. Those who meet him don't discern anything special about him, but he always seems to make canny political and military decisions. Those who know him would swear that someone else does his thinking for him, but if that's true, whom it could be is unknown.

Nez-Todarg, hobgoblin steward of the fortress of Stor-gris: A thin, ape-like hobgoblin, who wears spectacles, Nez-Todarg is responsible for the administrative decisions of the fortress. He keeps it running. Where his true loyalties lie is unknown, but it is known that those who oppose him tend to die by poison or in their sleep.

General Kalbaz Eye-Gouger, orcish field general: General Kalbaz is a massive, hulking orc named for his favored method of execution. He spends his time in the field, taking orders directly from General Jorung or Karoxfang himself. He is not politically savvy, but militarily, he is quite canny.

Ugluk the Fat, Lord of Agh: A fat orc with tiny ears, Ugluk rules Agh purely for personal gain. He has milked his city nearly dry, but somehow his political connections inside the dark fortress itself keep him in power and alive. He has powerful enemies, but he befriended Karoxfang in his youth, and the great General himself protects him.

Vrolg, Lord of Baku: Vrolg is a Dark Folk creature of indeterminate race. Just like his culturally ambiguous name, those who meet him can't tell whether he's an orc, a hobgoblin, or even a bugbear. He rules the hovel-city of Baku, but he does so in a strangely humane way. He only taxes his subjects enough to appease the dark fortress, and he provides quick and almost painless executions to those who cross him.

Azock Gut-Render, Lord of Uglod: The bandy-legged orc Azock gained his second name based on his favored entertainment—watching prisoners being tortured in gruesome ways while he takes his meals. He rules the city of Uglod in brutal, militaristic fashion. He levies a fair tax and maintains security, but he brooks no disobedience, punishing even the smallest transgressions of his laws with death.

Garuck the Fang, High Mage of the Stor-gris army: Garuck is a small, pale-skinned goblin with cracked yellow fangs. Still, his power as a mage is well known, and it is almost comical to watch the much larger orcs, oluks, and hobgoblins leap from his path as he struts about the military camps, his chest thrust out and his short legs pumping. He reports directly to General Kalbaz, but regards him as an imbecile.

Durg the Terror, hero of the Stor-gris army: Durg is a massive oluk orc, standing nearly 7 feet tall. He is not intelligent, but his understanding of combat is flawless. He is somehow resistant to magic, and his massive muscles give him the force to drive his great axe through nearly any material. Just the mere mention of his name causes the soldiers of the elves and dwarves in the Hinterlands to grow pale with fright. The Stor-gris generals use his reputation to great effect.





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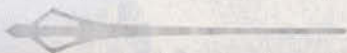
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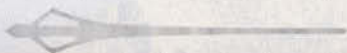
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Palahan

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Yorklad

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Marshes

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