

DragonLance

FIFTH AGE™ GAME
DRAMATIC SUPPLEMENT

HEROES OF STEEL



SAGA

TALENT SYSTEM



HEROES OF STEEL

BOOK
ONE





NIGHT AND DAY

Ansalon's Heroes of Steel



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Author's Foreword



Thirty years ago, Krynn shuddered as the hordes of Chaos sought to destroy it. The world survived the assault, though the gods had withdrawn and magic had seemingly faded. But the continent of Ansalon at least knew peace, and adventurous souls sought new sources of magic. It was an age of hope.

Then came the Great Dragons.

No longer fettered by the gods or opposed by mortal magic, these powerful wyrms ravaged the land, slaying and devouring almost at will. Without magic to protect them, the people looked to more mundane means of defense: stout walls, sturdy armor, and strong sword arms. While the sorcerers and mystics of Krynn scrambled to find and master what magic they could, Ansalon's warriors took up sword, shield, and lance and faced the perils of a new age alone.

Today, with sorcery and mysticism on the rise, the land's heroes of steel fight alone no longer. Often, however, the fate of races and nations still depends on their strength of arms.

In This Book

Night and Day describes the warriors of Ansalon in the Fifth Age, those who have taken up the legacy left by the Solamnic Knight Sturm Brightblade, Hero of the Lance Tanis Half-Elven, and even the legendary Dark Knight Ariakan. Players can use these expansions of the rules and background material from the DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE™ boxed set for any warrior hero—even one who chooses to fight with magic as much as with the sword.

Hero Roles. Not all warriors are alike. Chapter One provides information for creating specific types of fighting heroes, from dedicated adventurers like Caramon Majere to woodwise yeomen like Tanis Half-Elven.

Knightly Orders. Chivalry remains a major force in Ansalon today. Chapter Two reveals the history, ideals, inner workings, and current activities of three great Orders: the Knights of Solamnia, the Knights of Takhisis, and the new Legion of Steel.

Advanced Rules. Intelligent players always test the limits of their heroes' capabilities. Chapter Three offers beleaguered Narrators rules for overland movement, hazardous terrain, and expanded combat options.

New Weapons. Chapter Four presents game statistics for a host of new weapons, from the bolas of the plains barbarians to the odds and ends that heroes might pick up and use in a tavern brawl.

Mass Combat. Every one of Krynn's Great Ages has felt the clash of armies, and the Fifth Age is no exception. Chapter Five explains how to resolve large battles and determine what happens to both the victors and the vanquished.

John Williamson

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CHAPTER ONE



knight clad in armor that shone like silver in the moonlight stepped from the shadows of the grove. The armor was decorated with the rose, the crown, the kingfisher. It

was old-fashioned armor, dating back practically to the Cataclysm. The knight wore no sword; he had given his to his son.

The knight came to stand before Steel.

You have promised, on your honor, to enter this accursed place?" Sturm Brightblade asked.

"I so promised, Father," Steel replied, his voice steady. His hand on his sword was steady now, too.

Sturm's eyes—careworn, sad, loving, proud—seemed to take the measure of the living man. Sturm nodded once, solemnly, and said, "Est Sularus oth Mithas." . . .

"My honor is my life."

*—At the Shoikan Grove,
Dragons of Summer Flame*

There are many faces of a warrior. Some, like the Knights in the passage above, pledge their lives to observing honor in the pursuit of their goals. Other warrior types achieve their aims through personal philosophies as unique as the individuals that hold them dear.

This chapter expands on the hero creation rules in Chapter One of the *Book of the Fifth Age* from the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set by offering guidelines for roles—or character archetypes—a warrior might play.

Playing a Role

As described in Step Eight of hero creation, a hero's role indicates something of his background: his childhood influences, his cherished beliefs, and his personal interests. This background can offer players a chance to achieve greater depth in role-playing. In addition, players can gain new skills and limitations for their heroes through their choice of role, providing even more diversity to FIFTH AGE campaigns.

A hero can have only one role at a time. Because a role represents knowledge, skills, and habits a hero has acquired during youth, it cannot be readily discarded or changed (see page 25).

Because *Night and Day* is a handbook for playing the fighting men and women of Ansalon, this chapter offers role ideas for *warriors*. If a hero's ability scores and codes do not suggest an athletic, physical type (regardless of his other scores), the player should not choose a role from this book. Other FIFTH AGE supplements will present roles more suited to sorcerers, mystics, rogues, and other types of hero.

Of course, players can build their own roles as well, using the hints offered in the *Book of the Fifth Age* plus the roles in this chapter as a guide. These requirements are just recommendations—players whose heroes don't fit the roles may adjust them as they see fit to create other entirely new roles all their own.

Exactly what type of role a player chooses for his hero is up to him, though a Narrator might rule some roles unacceptable in his campaign or for the particular adventure he has in mind. (Mariners might be an illogical choice for an adventure in the Plains of Dust, for example.)

WARRIOR ROLES

Each role's name was chosen to help players quickly grasp the key concept behind it—it has no function in the game beyond player information. For example, not every mercenary in Ansalon uses the mercenary warrior role; the ranks of a mercenary army might include adventurous warriors, yeomen, riders, and archers as well.

A summary of each role's requirements and limitations is included in Appendix One for quick reference.

Role Descriptions

As a hero's role usually has shaped him from childhood on, most roles are available only to new heroes during hero creation. However, circumstances may let a hero switch to one of a select few roles during the course of his life.

Standard Role Format

Each role description begins with a brief paragraph explaining what kinds of heroes might play the role. More detailed information follows.

Role-Playing

The next paragraph in a role description explains how a hero with this role should act and how members of Krynn's various races might respond to him. When a race is not mentioned here, the role has no effect on the way individuals of that race feel about those with the role. Of course, the circumstances of a specific adventure can change the responses of both heroes and characters.

Requirements

Before he can acquire a role, a hero must have ability scores and codes within certain limits. In addition, some roles are logically restricted to certain races.

When a hero's ability scores or codes are higher than the maximums listed for the desired role, the player can lower them voluntarily to meet the require-

ments. If the hero later abandons the role or if the role allows for score improvement during play, the player must follow the normal procedure for improving the scores or codes, as explained in Chapter One of the *Book of the Fifth Age*. He cannot save the lost points from ability scores or reassign them elsewhere, as he could when he chose his hero's race.

Should a hero's ability scores or codes fall short of the role's requirements, the hero cannot play the role, even if the player has lowered some of the other scores to meet the role's maximums.

Of course, a player cannot violate his hero's racial ability score or code requirements to qualify him for a role.

A hero must maintain his role's necessary scores and codes for as long as he can. Should some misfortune lower one of his scores or codes, he can continue in the role but must attempt to raise it back to the minimum as soon as possible. (See the *Book of the Fifth Age*, Chapter One.)

No hero may attempt to improve ability scores or codes beyond his role's maximum without abandoning the role. In a few cases, a role requirement limits only the starting value of an ability score or code but allows it to increase during play.


Not all of Krynn's races can play each role. If this section does not list a certain race as permitted, heroes of that race should not play the role.

Any additional role requirements, such as wealth or personality parameters, are presented in this section as well.

Advantages

Every role bestows some special ability to a hero. For instance, many roles offer a hero a bonus to his action score for certain types of actions. This section includes any rules needed to use the special ability in play, along with any special tasks the hero must perform to receive the benefit. If the role allows the hero to eventually exceed his initial ability score, code, or other requirements, any special instructions for doing so (beyond the standard rules) are included here.





Where applicable, this section also tells players how their existing heroes can switch to this role during play.

Disadvantages

Every role also imposes special limitations on a hero, such as penalties to a hero's action score for certain types of action. These hindrances are not necessarily bad, though. Players will find that such restrictions—such as a mariner facing penalties to certain actions on land—can lead to some excellent role-playing opportunities.

The “Disadvantages” section may indicate that existing heroes cannot switch to this role after abandoning another one. For instance, Knights of Takhisis begin their training in their Order as youths. Therefore, an adult hero cannot acquire that role in midlife.

The Adventurous Warrior

Krynn abounds with resourceful individuals never content to sit at home and work a trade for long. The *adventurous warrior* role includes wanderers, thrill seekers, gamblers, and freedom fighters. Hero of the Lance Caramon Majere, an adventurous warrior, has always found it hard to resist the call of a quest, despite his love for his family and the Inn of the Last Home.

Role-Playing

The adventurous warrior rarely seems satisfied with things the way they are. He might be content to settle down for a while, but eventually finds himself struck by wanderlust, smitten with the desire for treasure, or faced with a sudden urge to get out of town. The adventurous warrior hero might have an insatiable curiosity, a thirst for action, a personal cause, or just a knack for getting into trouble. Though courageous, such a hero is sometimes foolhardy. As centaurs and kender often admire this hero's willingness to follow his heart, this role suits these races particularly well. Dwarves, on the other hand, likely consider the adventurous warrior something of a fool.

Requirements

An adventurous warrior depends on a finely tuned body to deal with the rigors of his errant life. Therefore, he must have an Endurance or Strength score of at least 5. In addition, either his Agility or Dexterity score must equal 5 as well. The remaining score in each pair of related abilities must be at least 4.

An adventurous warrior has spent many years honing his physical skills. He must have an ability code of “A” in either Agility, Dexterity, Endurance, or Strength. The codes for his remaining Physical abilities must be “C” or better.

As the adventurous warrior favors the physical over the mental and mystical, his Reason and Spirit codes can be no higher than “C.”

Members of any race can play this role. However, an adventurous warrior's wealth score can never exceed 7—the hero's exploits tend to be expensive.

Advantages

As an experienced traveler, the adventurous warrior has developed a knack for impressing the locals wherever he goes. Any card he plays to gain information or simple favors from a character of guildsman social status (wealth 5) or lower becomes trump automatically. This bonus does not apply if the adventurous warrior asks the character to do something dangerous or criminal. The hero also can try to pass as a local wherever he goes, so long as he physically resembles the locals—a human could not pass for a kender or minotaur! This feat requires a successful *average Presence (Perception)* action.

A hero can acquire the adventurous warrior role during play if he has abandoned another role; he need only select a cause or quirk, as noted below.

Disadvantages

Every adventurous warrior follows a personal cause or exhibits some behavioral pattern not related to status, power, or wealth. The hero often puts this cause ahead of other considerations. Acceptable causes and behaviors include:

- ❖ Safeguarding or caring for a particular person, item, or place.
- ❖ Defeating a particular villain.
- ❖ Preserving (or defeating) a certain type of creature.
- ❖ Locating a legendary place or item.
- ❖ Obsessive behavior (personal cleanliness, general neatness, correct language, etc.).
- ❖ Obscure interest (building a collection, studying a lost race or civilization, sampling foods or beverages, etc.).

The hero need not bend his every effort to promote his cause or follow his unique behavior, but he should not let an adventure pass without having it influence his actions in some way. If the Narrator feels the hero has ignored his cause or quirk too long, he can require the hero to make a *challenging Reason* action to avoid a personal dilemma. Should the action fail, the Narrator can require the hero to respond to a problem related to his cause or quirk, as appropriate to the situation.

The player and the Narrator must agree on the adventurous warrior's disadvantage before play begins. The Narrator should then create scenes that allow the quirk or cause to come into play.

Should the adventurer achieve his cause during play, or if it becomes moot (the hero actually retrieves an artifact he sought, the place he protects is destroyed, etc.), the player and the Narrator must agree on a new cause. The hero need not choose it immediately, but he cannot gain in reputation until he does so: Any quests he completes without a cause are not added to his total.

The Archer

Archers favor missile combat over melee. This preference is often purely a matter of aesthetics—the hero considers loosing an arrow or hurling a javelin more graceful and satisfying than hacking something apart with a sword. Other archers simply prefer to avoid meeting their foes face-to-face.

This role includes military sharpshooters, carnival performers, and other types of missile specialists. Arajī, from

the *Heroes of a New Age* adventure in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set, is a good example of an archer.

Role-Playing

Archers tend to be cautious by nature. Just as a difficult shot requires a patient analysis of the target and prevailing conditions, any important decision merits prudent consideration.

Many knights and cavaliers consider archers a bit cowardly (though most are too polite to say so directly).

Requirements

Most archers have spent long hours developing steady hands and keen eyes. They must have Dexterity and Perception scores of at least 5.

Archers practice intensely with their favorite weapons, requiring Dexterity codes of “A.”

Because shields can get in the way, archers do not like to use them. These heroes favor standing fast and aiming carefully rather than dodging about in combat, so their Agility codes must be “C” or lower.

Finally, as archers put more faith in their weapons than in magic, their Reason and Spirit codes must be “C” or lower.

Only humans, centaurs, elves, and half-elves can acquire this role.

Advantages

An archer can choose one type of missile weapon (such as a great bow, crossbow, hurled dagger, etc.) as his specialty. Any card the archer plays when attacking with his speciality weapon automatically becomes trump.

Heroes can acquire the archer role during play.

Disadvantages

An archer suffers a -3 penalty to all Strength action scores while attacking at personal or melee range.



The Barbarian Warrior

The so-called *barbarians* of Ansalon are more accurately described as nomads. These people owe allegiance to their tribes rather than to nations. They often have homelands rather than hometowns, because their tribes stay on the move. Most tribes—such as the Qué-Shu—gather in villages or small towns at least during the winter months. Barbarian villages never grow into cities, as tribe members spend most of the year migrating with their herds and flocks.

As opposed to the racial description of barbarian humans in Chapter One of the *Book of the Fifth Age*, heroes don't have to be human to play the barbarian warrior role. (Likewise, warrior heroes of barbarian human stock do not have to play this role just because of their race.) This role divides barbarians into six categories, based on their native land: desert, forest, ice, mountains, plains, and sea. Each of these groups has its own special role abilities, explained below.

Riverwind the Plainsman, a Hero of the Lance, is an excellent example of a barbarian warrior.

Role-Playing

Barbarian warriors live on the fringes of civilization—literally and figuratively. They roam the land, hunting and gathering, sometimes settling for a while. They cherish a deep respect for nature and for the traditions of their tribes. They believe that every animal, object, place, and plant has a living spirit that deserves respect and honor, especially if the hero draws his livelihood from it. Like all barbarians, these warriors tend to view city dwellers with distrust at best and loathing at worst. To them, most “civilized” characters seem unfeeling and even destructive.

Barbarian warriors, however, value self-sufficiency and personal loyalty. They expect others to take care of themselves, yet they willingly lend a hand when misfortune strikes a com-

panion. As Tanis Half-Elven once demonstrated to Riverwind, anyone who displays these two traits, no matter what his background, can become the friend of a barbarian warrior.

Most humans (except other barbarians) regard these warriors as unpredictable outsiders with strange customs. Members of Krynn's other races usually find these heroes indistinguishable from other warriors of their race. To kender, for example, a human plains barbarian warrior seems a lot like any other human warrior—only with more interesting clothes (especially the feathers).

Requirements

As a barbarian warrior leads a rigorous life, all his Physical ability scores must be at least 5. His deeply rooted belief in the spiritual qualities within everything around him requires a Spirit score of at least 5. Because a barbarian warrior must master hunting and survival skills, he needs a Perception score of 5 at a minimum.

Barbarian parents teach their children to use missile weapons almost as soon as they can walk. Therefore, this warrior must have a minimum Dexterity code of “B.” In addition, a barbarian warrior's spiritual beliefs and outdoor skills demand considerable strength of character and sharp senses, requiring Spirit and Perception codes of at least “B,” as well.

Barbarian warriors, normally superstitious and distrustful of sorcery, must have Reason codes of “D” at maximum. As they favor light armor, their Endurance codes are no higher than “C.”

Members of a number of different races consider themselves barbarian warriors. They include:

- 🔥 **Desert:** Barbarian human.
- 🌲 **Forest:** Kagonesti elf.
- ❄️ **Ice:** Barbarian human.
- 🏞️ **Plains:** Barbarian human, centaur.
- ⛰️ **Mountain:** Barbarian human, Neidar and Klar dwarf.
- 🌊 **Sea:** Barbarian human.

Regardless of where he lives, the barbarian warrior's wealth score can never rise above 6, due to his rugged and minimalist lifestyle.

Advantages

Any card played for a barbarian warrior in combat is considered trump when he attacks with a tribal weapon. Each of the barbarian groups mentioned on the previous page has its own tribal weapons:

- ♣ **Desert:** Death's tooth kala *, garrote *, scimitar, throwing blades *, weighted sash *.
- ♣ **Forest:** Long bow, mallet *, sling, war club.
- ♣ **Ice:** Frostreave *, ice crossbow *, ice flask *, ice grenade*, throwing stone *. Plains: Bolas *, lasso *, teeth chain *, throwing stick *.
- ♣ **Mountains:** Bear claws *, crook blade *, pellet bow *, war pipe *.
- ♣ **Sea:** Belaying pin *, fang*, hookshaft *, sabre *.

* Indicates a weapon described in Chapter Four.

In addition, a barbarian warrior's rugged upbringing serves him well. A card this hero plays for an action in his home terrain involving survival, shelter, hunting, navigating, moving, or avoiding natural hazards becomes automatic trump.

Disadvantages

Unaccustomed to civilization, barbarians never enjoy a trump bonus to attempt Perception or Presence actions within a city. They receive a -3 penalty to all other actions within cities. The Narrator should decide what constitutes a city—generally any settlement with a population of five thousand or more. However, sea barbarians can ignore this disadvantage in Sea Reach, their own settlement on the Blood Sea island of Saifhum.

A hero can play the role of a barbarian warrior only if born to (or raised by) a tribe. No hero can acquire this role during play.





The Cavalier

Armored knights, mounted or on foot, form the backbone of a military unit. Although members of Orders such as the Knights of Solamnia or Takhisis remain the best known examples, most rulers and wealthy families sponsor knights of their own, known collectively as *cavaliers*.

The cavalier role includes royal bodyguards, military officers, and independent knights. The Silvanesti elf Samar of House Protector, bodyguard to Alhana Starbreeze, is a cavalier, as are Jendaron and his green-hooded companions from the adventure *Heroes of a New Age*.

Role-Playing

Chivalrous, dignified, and loyal, a cavalier tends to speak the truth and prefers to say nothing rather than knowingly utter a falsehood. He behaves with courtesy and tact and never knowingly gives offense. His honor and bravery stand without question—he is the first to fight and the last to retreat. This hero will die before betraying his companions or his liege lord.

Cavaliers usually can count on respect from members of their own race. Minotaur warriors who observe cavaliers in combat often reluctantly acknowledge them as worthy fighters.

Requirements

Cavaliers excel at melee combat; they must have a minimum Strength score of 6 and Endurance score of 5. In addition, only their considerable strength of will allows them to remain dedicated to the ideals of chivalry. Therefore, this role requires a Spirit score of at least 5. To maintain their dignity even in the most extreme situations, cavaliers also must have Presence scores of at least 6.

A cavalier's prowess with heavy melee weapons calls for a Strength code of "A." As his armor is a cavalier's badge of honor, human, half-elf, and dwarf cavaliers need Endurance codes of "A," as well. Because elves prefer lighter armor, an elf cavalier must have an Endurance code of "B"—no higher due to his race, but no lower to account for the role.

The cavalier's emphasis on physical combat skills limits his Reason and Spirit codes to "C." As humans and half-elves of this role shun missile weapons, their Dexterity codes must be "X." Elf and dwarf cavaliers, on the other hand, are expected to be proficient archers and crossbowmen—they must have Dexterity codes of "A." Yet these cavaliers disdain shields, which restricts their Agility codes to "C" or lower.

Half-elves, civilized humans, Hylar and Daewar dwarves, and Qualinesti and Silvanesti elves can be cavaliers.

As most heroes of this role are at least minor members of the nobility (or at least well paid), their wealth scores must be 5 at minimum.

Advantages

Bold and skillful leaders in battle, cavaliers may consider any card played to close with the enemy automatic trump.

A hero may become a cavalier during play if he locates a sponsor to instruct him in the ways of chivalry. The hero first must succeed in an average Presence (Presence) action to convince this sponsor of his suitability for training. Then he must complete a quest in the service of the sponsor before he can begin playing the role.

Disadvantages

A cavalier—a flamboyant and honorable warrior—never receives a trump bonus to achieve surprise before combat.

The cavalier owes direct service to his lord (or must tend his own property) for forty to sixty days a year. The Narrator can devise a special quest for the cavalier and his companions during this period, or the hero can simply leave the game for a time.

If a player wishes, he can have an independent and landless cavalier hero. Perhaps he is a disinherited knight or a second son of a landed member of the nobility. Such a hero need not perform any period of service, but his wealth score may not rise above 5.

The Knight of the Lily

The Knights of Takhisis divides itself into three orders. Each of the three emphasizes different aspects of the Code (a set of rules defining how a Knight should advance the interests of the Order). However, neither the Order of the Skull—which stresses spiritual power—nor that of the Thorn-Dark Knight sorcerers—epitomizes a true warrior's role like the *Knight of the Lily*. The members of this order of Dark Knights, the death lily emblazoned on their armor, form the backbone of the Knighthood's formidable military power.

While the Dark Knights model their Order after the Solammic Knighthood, they dedicate their lives to the Evil goddess Takhisis rather than the forces of Good. Even though she and the other gods have withdrawn the affairs of Krynn, these Knights remain committed to world conquest in the name of their Dark Queen. Their continued brief glimpses of the Vision—believed to be her divine plan for her Faithful—help them maintain their allegiance to the Blood Oath: "Submit or die."

The entry-level order within the Dark Knighthood, the Order of the Lily includes inducted Knights as well as squires who have yet to petition for Knighthood. Steel Brightblade, fallen hero of the Chaos Urar, was a Knight of the Lily.

Role-Playing

Like all Knights of Takhisis, a Knight of the Lily must live according to the Code: Me must obey his superiors, respect all friends and honorable foes, and willingly sacrifice anything for the Order. The Order of the Lily stresses the value of obedience in particular, as well as the strength of the group—to be independent is to be weak.

Heroes entering the Knighthood must begin as squires in the Order of the Lily, demonstrating their loyalty before becoming full Knights. (See page 43 for more information on this process.)

All Knights of Takhisis are reviled almost everywhere except in the land of Neraka, which they control, and in the various Dragon Realms. Nonhuman races almost universally

detest the Dark knights. Nevertheless, the Knights have a reputation for honesty; some of the dragon rulers employ them as mercenaries and constables.

Knights of the Lily usually do not make good additions to adventuring parties. However, many of them operate covertly, gathering information for their superiors. Whole parties of Dark Knights also roam the land, seeking glory and booty.

Requirements


A Knight of the Lily is trained for war, so his Strength and Endurance scores must be at least 6. In addition, heroes with weak wills cannot follow the Code, nor can a Knight prove his loyalty without a strong character. Therefore, this role requires minimum Spirit and Presence scores of 5.

As Knights of the Lily must study the art of melee combat in preparation to fight and win any battle, heroes with this role must have Strength and Endurance codes of "A." However, a Knight of the Lily's emphasis on physical combat skills limits his initial Reason and Spirit codes to "C" or lower.

Only human and half-elf heroes can play the role of a Knight of the Lily, as only these two races may join the Knights of Takhisis.

Players must pay attention to the cards they select to determine a Lily





Knight's personality. The hero's demeanor must come from a card with a value of 5 or lower, while the card describing his nature must be 4 or higher.

Advantages

A member of the Order of the Lily leads boldly and skillfully in battle. Any card he plays to close with the enemy automatically becomes trump.

However, a quality unique to Dark Knights is that they despise the Legion of Steel. After all, not only does the Legion dare to assume the name of one of the most honored Dark Knights, it was founded by Sara Dunstan, a traitor to the Order. Consequently, Knights of the Lily receive an automatic trump bonus for melee attacks against Legionnaires.

When riding a mount in a battle, any card a Knight plays for a melee attack becomes automatic trump. (This benefit is not cumulative with the previous one.)

If a hero with this role has a reputation below Adventurer when he begins play, he starts as a squire in the Order of the Lily. After a quest or two, when his reputation has advanced to Adventurer, he can petition for Knighthood in the Order of the Lily (see page 43).

A Knight of the Lily can appeal for advancement again after completing one quest; because all three orders within the Knights of Takhisis are equal, his reputation rating need not improve one category as does a Solamnic Knight's. Should the Dark Knight's appeal succeed, he has three options:

- ✚ He can remain a Knight of the Lily and immediately attempt to improve his Presence score, as described at the end of Chapter One in the *Book of the Fifth Age*. A hero receives this benefit only once.
- ✚ He can become a Knight of the Skull and learn to follow the path of dark mysticism. *
- ✚ He can become a Knight of the Thorn and pursue the role of an Evil sorcerer. *

* Other FIFTH AGE supplements will detail roles for Skull Knights and Thorn Knights.

During his attempt to become a Knight of the Lily, a hero receives a personal version of the Vision, showing him his part in the future of the Knighthood. In game terms, the player draws a random card from the Fate Deck; depending on the card, the hero can receive a bonus to certain Presence actions. A Knight also can, at any time, receive information from his superior through the Vision. The workings of the Vision, are described more fully on page 38.

Disadvantages

A Dark Knight's honor is his life. Should a hero fail in his petition for Knighthood, the Order immediately puts him to death. In addition, a Knight of Takhisis can be called upon to answer for conduct deemed unbecoming a Knight (see page 44).

All members of the Order of the Lily are subjected to a rigorous mental examination by their superiors upon joining as youths. This experience wrenches the mind and drains the spirit, such that a member of this order never receives a trump bonus when resisting mysticism.

All Knights of Takhisis remain subject to a rotating duty roster, which assigns them forty to sixty days of direct service to the Order each year. As in the case of cavaliers, the Narrator can devise a "duty" quest for a Knight of the Lily and his companions, or the Knight can simply leave play for a time.

To become a Knight of the Lily, a hero must join the order as a youth. No older hero can acquire this role—or join the Knights of Takhisis—during play. If a Knight of the Lily wishes to abandon this role, he must immediately begin playing the role of a rogue knight (see page 20).

The Knight of Solamnia

Despite several grim chapters in its history, the *Knights of Solamnia* remains the preeminent order of chivalry in Ansalon. The Oath of these Knights, *Est Sularus oth Mithas* (“My honor is my life”), is widely imitated and serves as the standard for knightly conduct almost everywhere.

This role includes Knights and squires who have entered the Order, as well as heroes seeking admittance. The legendary Sturm Brightblade matched the Solamnic Knight role even before his formal induction into the Order.

Role-Playing

A Knight of Solamnia follows the Measure, a set of rules that defines how to put the Oath into effect in one’s daily life. The Knight must obey his superiors within the Order and remain steadfastly true to those who have earned his loyalty through station or past deeds. This courageous hero will make valiant sacrifices on behalf of the weak, the oppressed, the poor, the falsely imprisoned, and fellow Knights. He commits his life to justice and compassion.

The three Solamnic orders each emphasize a different aspect of the Measure, though all Knights are still expected to embrace this entire doctrine.

- 👑 The Order of the Crown stresses obedience and loyalty.
- ⚔️ The Order of the Sword emphasizes courage, honor, and strength of spirit.
- 🌹 The Order of the Rose epitomizes wisdom, justice and service to the cause of good.

A hero entering the Knighthood must begin as a squire in the Order of the Crown. Before he becomes a Knight of the Crown (or, once a Crown Knight, before he can enter another order), he must demonstrate his commitment to the order’s ideals (see pages 29 and 30

for more on these orders).

Knights of Solamnia can expect at least a grudging welcome wherever they go, except in areas controlled by a dragon or the Dark Knights. In regions under the Order’s protection—Gunthar, Ergoth, and Solamnia—the common folk recognize Knights as their guardians and in some cases as representatives of civil authority.

Requirements

Ever ready to fight for a just cause, a Knight of Solamnia must have Strength and Endurance scores of at least 6. It takes a strong will to follow the Oath and the Measure, so he must have a Spirit score of at least 6 as well. The rigors of knightly life and total dedication to the Order’s ideals tends to create an imposing figure. Therefore, a Knight must have a Presence score of at least 6.

A Knight of Solamnia must know the art of melee combat, which calls for a Strength code of “A.” These warriors are known for their elaborate plate armor, translating into an Endurance code of “A.”

As a Knight’s emphasis on physical combat skills limits his ability to study magic at first, heroes with this role must begin play with Reason and Spirit codes of “C” at maximum.

Only civilized humans and half-elves should play the role of a Knight of Solamnia, as these are the only groups the Order admits. However, if a hero of another race feels inspired to live according to the Oath and the Measure due to his admiration for Solamnic principles, a Narrators can allow him to play the role.

Players may not select a card with a value higher than 4 for a Knight of Solamnia’s demeanor in hero creation, nor use a card with a value higher than 5 to determine his nature. As the Knighthood offers its members at least minimal support, the hero’s wealth score should be at least 3.





Advantages

Like a cavalier, a Solamnic Knight proves a bold and skillful leader in battle. Any card such a hero bids to close with the enemy is automatically trump.

The Knights of Solamnia also receive another, more unusual trump bonus. Solamnics resent both the Knights of Takhisis and the Legion of Steel for copying their organization and, in the Dark Knights' case, perverting their ideals. So, if a Solamnic enters combat against Knights of Takhisis or Legionnaires, any card he plays for a personal or melee attack becomes trump.

When riding a mount in a battle, any card a Knight plays to resolve a melee attack also becomes trump. However, this benefit is not cumulative with the one mentioned above.

Each order within the Knighthood has its own inherent advantages, too:

The Order of the Crown

Joining the Order of the Crown and advancing within (and beyond) it are detailed further in Chapter Two.

- ❖ On beginning play with this role, a hero becomes a squire in the Order of the Crown. When his reputation advances one category (or to the Adventurer rank, whichever is higher), the squire may become a Knight of the Crown.
- ❖ When the Knight's reputation moves up to the next category, he can petition the Order for advancement. If successful, a Crown Knight can either advance to the Order of the Sword or immediately attempt to increase his Presence score, according to the rules at the end of Chapter One of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.
- ❖ A hero who remained a Knight of the Crown can repeat the petition again the next time his reputation advances one category.

The Order of the Sword

- ❖ As a Knight of the Sword, a hero enjoys an automatic improvement of one grade in his Spirit code, to a maximum of "B."

- ❖ The hero can petition the Order for advancement again the next time his reputation improves one category. Success means he can either immediately attempt to improve his Presence score or enter the Order of the Rose.
- ❖ Knights of the Sword can draw on Solamnic funds for their own (modest) needs and to further the causes of the Knighthood. When in contact with a local circle of the Knighthood, these heroes can access that circle's stores; in game terms, they may use one-half their Presence scores instead of their wealth scores when attempting wealth actions.

The Order of the Rose

- ❖ As a Knight of the Rose, a hero automatically increases his Spirit code by one grade, to a maximum of "A."
- ❖ When these high-ranking Knights successfully petition the Order for advancement after an increase in reputation, they can immediately attempt to improve their Presence score.
- ❖ When drawing on the Knighthood's treasury (as described above for Knights of the Sword), a Rose Knight can use his full Presence score instead of his wealth score when attempting a wealth action.

Disadvantages

A Knight of Solamnia's rigid code of honor imparts several drawbacks to this role to counter its benefits. First, as an honorable combatant, a Knight never enjoys a trump bonus to achieve surprise before combat. As a Knight's honor is his life, his Presence score immediately falls 1 point if he should so shame himself as to fail a petition for advancement. Further, if the Narrator ever thinks the Knight has violated the Measure (see page 35), the hero must attempt a *daunting Presence* action, immediately losing 1 point of Presence if he fails. Should the Knight commit a serious breach of conduct, a knightly council can call him to answer for his actions.

Knights of Solamnia are loath to retreat from or refuse combat with Evil

foes. No Knight will retreat from a battle once it has begun or refrain from attacking the Order's foes (see page 31), unless he considers the fight foolish or useless. To tear himself away from combat, the Knight must succeed in the action below:

➤ **Abandon/Refuse a Fight**

Difficulty:	Varies
Action ability:	Reason
Opposition ability:	Presence (only intelligent foes)

Comments: The difficulty of this action depends on the hero's order:

- 👑 *Crown Knight:* Average (8)
- ⚔️ *Sword Knight:* Challenging (12)
- 🌹 *Rose Knight:* Daunting (16)

In addition, this action always becomes *easy* when an enemy of equal or greater Strength (or Physique) outnumbered the Knight and his group at least three to one.

If a trusted ally urges the hero to refuse or abandon a fight, the ally adds his Presence score to the Knight's Reason score for this action.

A higher-ranking Knight (one with a greater reputation or official office, as

described on page 28) can order the hero away from a fight, but the superior must succeed in this action himself before he can issue the order.


As a Knight finds no dishonor in living to fight another day, he may add his foe's Strength (or Physique) score to his Reason score for this action.

Mishap: The Knight's foe gets a free counterattack outside the normal combat sequence.

Like cavaliers, Knights of Solamnia owe forty to sixty days of direct service to their Order each year. (The rest of the year, a Knight can either continue to serve the Order or can pursue personal adventures. The Knighthood encourages such quests as a means of strengthening character.) The Narrator can devise a quest for the Knight and his companions during this period, or the hero can simply leave the game for a time. In the latter case, the player must use a different hero. However, Knights take part in many adventures as part of their period of service.

Knights are expected to donate most of their wealth to the Knighthood, including





extra income from their ancestral estates. Each time a hero's reputation advances to the next level, his wealth score falls 1 point, to a minimum of 2. Experienced Knights can have lower wealth scores than the poorest Novices. However, they can use their Presence scores to access the Order's treasury, as described under "Advantages."

To become a true Knight of Solamnia, a hero must begin preparing himself during his youth. Therefore, heroes may not acquire this role during play, though most can join the Order as auxiliaries (see page 33).

The Legionnaire Warrior

A third great chivalric Order has arisen in the wake of the Chaos War: the Legion of Steel. The first *Legionnaire warriors* were Knights of Takhisis who decided that the Knighthoods dedication to solidarity at all times and persistence in all endeavors was more important than its fanatic desire to rule the world. In more recent years, the Legion has also attracted disaffected Knights of Solamnia—impatient with their Order's attempts at reform—and other stalwart souls with a desire to help the world through its troubles. Silver Claw, described in the Appendix of *Dusk or Dawn*, is a Legionnaire warrior—and High Elder of the organization.

Role-Playing

Governing the life of a Legionnaire warrior is the group's motto: "All we have is each other." Members of the Legion also follow a Legacy, derived from both the Measure of the Knights of Solamnia and the Code of the Knights of Takhisis. The Legacy stresses the value of service to others, self knowledge, personal integrity, steadfastness in the face of adversity, loyalty to those to whom loyalty is due, and justice for both the innocent and the guilty.

This role includes full members of the Legion as well as those who aspire to join. Though the Legion is not a covert organization, many members work undercover. Legionnaire warriors care very

little for pomp and ceremony. This practical breed concerns itself more with doing the right thing than with personal honor or glory.

These warriors find themselves generally respected throughout Ansalon, though non-elf Legionnaires in elf lands can still expect the cold shoulder. Minotaurs find Legionnaires slightly more tolerable than other nonminotaurs. Many Knights of Solamnia consider members of this group independent upstarts, too undisciplined to make the grade as Knights. The Knights of Takhisis regard the Legion as an enemy organization filled with deserters and traitors. A Legionnaire captured by Dark Knights can expect a swift trial and execution—at best.

Requirements

A Legionnaire warrior, strong in both mind and body, has Strength and Endurance minimum scores of 6 and Dexterity and Agility minimums of 5. These heroes also must have Presence and Perception scores of at least 5 and a Spirit score of at least 4.

Expected to be physically fit and to fight when necessary, a Legionnaire must have codes of "C" or higher in all four of his Physical abilities. In addition, he must have a code of "A" in either Strength or Dexterity. The Legion expects vigilance from its members, so this role requires a Perception code of "B" or higher.

His strenuous regimen of physical conditioning leaves a Legionnaire warrior little time for arcane studies, so his Reason and Spirit codes can be no better than "C" as play begins.

Only humans, dwarves, and half-elf heroes generally play the role of a Legionnaire warrior, though a member of any race might be moved to acquire it.

A Legionnaire warrior's wealth score cannot be higher than 5, as most members of this group have loftier goals than gaining wealth and often contribute excess funds to the Legion. Finally, players may not assign cards with values of higher than 6 to their hero's demeanor and nature.

Advantages

Widely regarded as champions of the common people, Legionnaire warriors always enjoy a trump bonus when dealing with a character of Commoner social status or less, no matter what the hero is trying to accomplish. In a city, town, or village, a Legionnaire warrior can use his Presence score instead of his wealth rating to obtain equipment or mounts.

Members of the Legion return the enmity of other Knights. Therefore, any card these warriors play becomes trump when used to resolve any form of combat against Knights of Takhisis. In addition, they enjoy a trump bonus to any card they play for a personal or melee range attack against a Knight of Solamnia.

As an organization, the Legion concerns itself with training its members. A hero who begins play as a Legionnaire warrior with a reputation of Novice or lower becomes an apprentice—he must undertake a series of quests to prove his worth to the Legion. Once he gains Adventurer reputation, he can apply for full membership (see page 51). Should a hero with a reputation of Adventurer or higher begin playing this role, he automatically becomes a full member.

As a full member, a Legionnaire warrior receives the services of an apprentice with a reputation of Unknown. Players should consider an apprentice's ability scores and codes each 1 point or rating lower than the hero's. For example, if the hero has a Strength of 6A, the apprentice's Strength becomes 5B. It is entirely possible that these scores will not allow the apprentice to meet this role's ability requirements—in that case, it's the hero's job to train him to make certain he does, in time.

The Narrator secretly determines the apprentice's wealth score by drawing one

card from the Fate Deck. For game purposes, this character has an effective wealth of 1, as he depends on the hero for upkeep. The apprentice's actual wealth score merely helps determine his social status.

A Legionnaire warrior's apprentice can be of either gender and any race, provided that the character's ability scores and codes meet racial requirements. He accumulates quests just as a hero does and ends his apprenticeship when he has gained enough quests to move into the Novice reputation category (at which time he can undertake an individual quest for acceptance into the Legion).

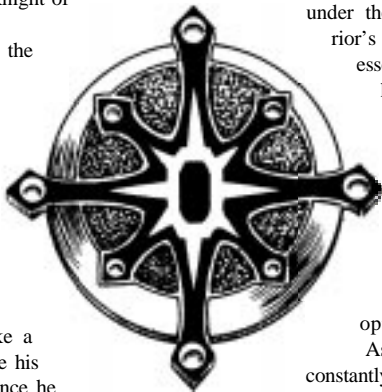
During his apprenticeship, this character remains completely under the Legionnaire warrior's control, functioning essentially as a second hero for the player.

When an apprentice has moved on, the Legion assigns the hero a new one within a month or two, at the Narrator option.

As the Legion of Steel constantly seeks new members, a warrior-style hero can begin playing this role at any time.

However, a hero with a reputation lower than Novice must apprentice himself to an established member. Unlike an apprentice character, such a hero retain his own unique ability scores and codes but must meet all the requirements of this role. The Narrator should provide a mentor character with a reputation higher than the hero's. Once the hero's reputation reaches Novice, he may embark on a quest to become a full Legionnaire.

Of course, a hero can become a member of the Legion without actually assuming this role (see page 50).





Disadvantages

As noted previously, the Knights of Takhisis usually execute any Legionnaires they capture. Although the Solamnic Knights often ally with the Legion of Steel, a great rivalry exists nonetheless between the rank-and-file members of the two organizations. Therefore, a Legionnaire warrior never gains a trump bonus for a Presence action involving either a Knight of Solamnia or a Knight of Takhisis.

Every Legionnaire, including warriors within the group, bears the responsibility for his apprentice's safety and well-being. Should the apprentice die in the line of duty, the Legionnaire suffers great humiliation: The hero's player must immediately draw one card from the Fate Deck, then reduce his hero's Presence score by one-third the value of the card, rounded up. Should the player draw a card from the Suit of Dragons, the hero also drops one category in reputation, as well.

In spite of this danger, the Legion expects its warriors to take their apprentices along on adventures, so they can learn what it means to be Legionnaires. Should a hero ever leave his apprentice behind while he undertakes a quest, he must attempt an *average Presence (Presence)* action to prevent the apprentice from quitting the Legion. Failure means the hero must immediately make a random draw, just as if the apprentice had died. Of course, a hero can send his apprentice to a place of safety during a dangerous portion of a quest. However, the Narrator should call for the Presence action mentioned above only in the most extreme cases of overprotection that could hinder the character's training.

The Mariner

Krynn's oceans and coasts remain thick with traffic even in these dangerous times. True *mariners* adore the sea. Where others see and hear towering waves and screaming winds, the mariner hears a siren's song.

The role of a mariner includes sea explorers, fishermen, navigators, pirates,

traders, and common seamen. The ranks of Ansalon's mariners include Rig Mer-Krel, introduced in the Appendix of *Dusk or Dawn* and featured in *The Rising Storm* and the novel *The Dawning of a New Age*.

Role-Playing

Mariners are as varied as the ships they sail, sharing only one common trait: their love of the sea. Mariners find life on land wearisome. In fact, the farther they get from the sea, the more dispirited they become. Many mariners also are quick-witted and not prone to take unnecessary risks—the sea is not forgiving to the thick-headed or the reckless.

All mariners feel a certain comradeship, though stronger feelings engendered by race, philosophy, or politics tend to take precedence. To a minotaur sea captain, for example, a human mariner is still an inferior being, but inherently more honorable and minotaurlike than a human landlubber. Dwarves—not fond of deep water themselves—tend to view mariners as crazy, or at least hard to fathom. Kender generally admire mariners' adventurous spirits.

Requirements

As life aboard ship requires deft movement, quick thinking, and a sharp eye, a mariner needs minimum Agility, Reason, and Perception scores of 5. Most sea voyages have their share of physical hardships, so a mariner also must have an Endurance score of at least 4.

Knowledge of missile weapons is a great advantage at sea, so a mariner needs a Dexterity code of at least "B." However, as mariners favor light armor and weapons, they may never have Strength or Endurance codes of "A."

Human, minotaur, elf, or half-elf heroes can play the mariner role.

It is hard to keep secrets aboard ship—a mariner can never maintain an outward demeanor substantially different from his true nature for very long. Therefore, a hero acquiring this role must assign to these two personality traits cards whose values differ by no more than 2.

Advantages

The sea is home to a mariner. The player of a hero with this role always enjoys a trump bonus to resolve attacks at sea. In addition, any card he plays to resolve an action regarding a feat of seamanship (riding out a storm, maneuvering a ship or boat, making emergency repairs, etc.) is considered trump as well.

Disadvantages

Mariners feel quite out of place on land—so much so, in fact, that they receive a -3 penalty to Strength or Agility actions while engaged in combat on land.

Mariners must have the sea in their blood. Therefore, if a hero has had a past vocation unrelated to a sailor's life, he may not acquire this role during play.

The Mercenary Warrior

A *mercenary* fights for pay, either out of need or greed. The hero probably has spent his life selling his services to the highest bidder or taking on quests that offer profits. The role includes bounty hunters, sellswords, fortune hunters, smugglers, and highwaymen. Kitiara uth Matar—the Blue Lady, who killed Sturm Brightblade during the War of the Lance—started out as a mercenary.

Role-Playing

A mercenary remains always on the lookout for a payoff of some kind. Money need not be such a hero's only goal—a mercenary warrior might seek fame, new skills, or victory over the enemy. Everything the mercenary warrior does has a definite purpose, as this hero has no time to waste on frivolous activities. Though brave, a mercenary seems unwilling to undertake a task that doesn't offer a reasonable chance of success, unless he sees no alternative.

Dwarves likely will respect a mercenary warrior's sense of purpose. Gnomes, too, admire the hero's dedication to the task at hand, though they find his desire to complete tasks puzzling. Render and centaurs view mercenaries as grim and humorless.

Requirements

A mercenary, accustomed to making a living through his skill with weapons, counts on his ability to stand up to the rigors of combat. Therefore, he must have an Endurance score of at least 6 and a minimum Strength or Dexterity score of 5. The hero's remaining Physical abilities must be at least 4. However, due to the dispassionate nature of a sellsword, his Spirit score can be no higher than 6 at maximum.

Long hours of practice with his favorite weapon require a mercenary warrior to have a code of "A" in either Dexterity or Strength. The codes for his remaining Physical abilities must be "C" better. A mercenary's worldly outlook limits his Spirit code to "C" at maximum, while his Reason code can be no higher than "B."

Members of any race can play the role of a mercenary warrior.

Advantages

Mercenaries are crafty fighters. Once during any battle, such a warrior can observe his opponents and the surrounding terrain and adjust his tactics to maximum effect. To gain the advantage, the mercenary must refrain from attacking for one round and attempt an *average Perception (Presence)* action. Success means that the cards he plays for combat are considered trump until the battle ends. Battle must be joined before the mercenary can use this ability, however.

In addition, the hero cannot attempt this action while surprised, while waiting in ambush, or when fighting opponent he cannot see or cannot reach.

A hero can acquire the role of a mercenary warrior during play.

Disadvantages

Unfortunately, a mercenary's callous attitude always shows through; this warrior never enjoys a trump bonus for any Presence action, except to resist mystic magic.





The Rider

Ansalon's more arid plains are home to several tribes of horse barbarians. These mounted wanderers resemble the plains barbarian warriors described earlier in this section, but their way of life revolves mostly around their horses. The largest group of *riders* lives in northeastern Ansalon and recognizes the overlordship of King Shredler Kerian of Nordmaar in North Keep.

One such rider is Voram Cidroveh, mentioned in the "Mohrlex" entry in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn*.

Role-Playing

A rider's most valued possession is his horse, which he cares for as though it were a member of the family. Not otherwise tied to land or property, the rider remains content with the few meager possessions he can place on his mount.

However, this lack of concern with wealth does not prevent the rider from enjoying the giving and receiving of gifts. In his homeland, his tribe expects to exchange gifts with every visitor, even those just passing through. Of course, a rider hero need not exchange gifts with everyone he encounters, but he ought to present one to every important person he meets and should exchange gifts with his closest friends.

No rider has much tolerance for thieves. The hero gladly shares what he can with people in need—if they ask—but taking something without asking for it is a serious breach of courtesy. Not surprisingly, therefore, riders do not tend to get along well with kender. A rider might learn to appreciate a kender's ability to "find" things, however, if the kender proves an otherwise trustworthy companion.

Requirements

A life spent mostly in the saddle makes a rider tough; this role requires a hero to have Endurance and Strength scores of at least 6 and minimum Agility and Dexterity scores of 5. The need to stay alert to the condition of his mount calls for a

hero playing this role to have a Perception score of at least 5.

A rider is skilled with all horseman's weapons, including bows and lances. Therefore, he must have a minimum code of "A" in either Strength or Dexterity, with the other code in the pair at least "B."

As riders tend toward superstition and distrust of sorcery, their Reason codes must be "D" or lower. Their knowledge of combat and horsemanship leaves them little time for spiritual matters, placing their Spirit codes at a maximum of "B." Finally, the light armor riders favor makes their Endurance "2" or lower.

All riders are barbarian humans. Their nomadic lives keep them from attaining a wealth score beyond 3.

Advantages

A rider is born to fight and travel on horseback. When attacking or maneuvering while mounted (including forced marches), this hero can play any card as trump. In addition, a rider always begins play with a light horse.

Disadvantages

Understandably, a rider feels out of place when he's out of the saddle. A hero with this role receives a -3 penalty to Strength and Agility actions when fighting on foot.

A hero cannot be a rider unless he was born to a tribe of horse barbarians or raised by one. Players can select this role only during hero creation.

The Rogue Knight

The Chaos War and the tumultuous events that followed it shook the very foundation of the Knights of Takhisis (as described in Chapter Three of *Dusk or Dawn*). Many Knights took advantage of the confusion to quit the Order, which ordinarily would mean death at the hands of their former comrades. Though the Knights have never openly acknowledged such desertions, all members realize that escape from the Order is quite possible, though dangerous.

The *rogue knight* is a hunted fugitive hiding from both his former brethren and

from the darker episodes of his past. A rogue knight whom the Order recaptures can expect a painful and humiliating death. At the same time, should anyone else discover his past, this hero could face execution, banishment, or even forgiveness—depending on how well he has chosen his new friends and neighbors.

Dhamon Grimwulf, introduced in the Appendix of *Dusk or Dawn* and featured in *The Rising Storm* and *The Dawning of a New Age*, is a rogue Knight of Takhisis.

Role-Playing

One might leave the brotherhood of Dark Knights for a variety of reasons. Because applicants who fail the required tests of loyalty meet with execution (see page 43), the hero might have doubted his ability to successfully petition for final induction to the Knighthood. Or perhaps he suspected he would not be judged fairly. A rogue knight might have grown disillusioned with the Order and its ruthless philosophy, or he could have learned just how much chicanery the Knights currently use to keep their members loyal. In any case, a hero playing this role undoubtedly has experienced and done things while a member of the Knighthood that he prefers not to talk about.

To most folk, a rogue knight seems like any other mercenary or adventurer. People usually are appalled to learn the hero's true past and will shun him unless he has proven himself to them. Elves—particularly the Qualinesti, who have lived under the Dark Knights' thumb for thirty years—find it hard to trust any former Knight of Takhisis. The fact that some Dark Knights operate covertly these days often justifies people's suspicion of anyone known to have a connection with that Order.

Requirements

The rogue knight, as a trained warrior, possesses Strength and Endurance scores of at least 6. In addition, it takes a strong will to turn one's back on an organization as powerful and dangerous as this Knighthood, calling for a Spirit score of

at least 5. A rogue knight, while naturally proud and imposing, remains ever wary of attracting too much notice. Therefore, his Presence score must fall somewhere between 5 and 8.

This hero's military experiences have given him a good knowledge of armor and weapons, requiring a code of "A" in both Strength and Endurance.

Though no longer preoccupied with physical combat, most rogue knights are not well versed in the powers of the heart or the mind. Therefore, these heroes' Spirit and Reason codes should not exceed "C" at the beginning of play. (Narrators may choose to make exceptions for heroes who were once Skull or Thorn Knights.)

As anyone with this role was once a Knight of Takhisis, it is open to only humans and half-elves.

A rogue Knight of Takhisis has both a demeanor and nature based on cards with values of 5 or lower. In addition, heroes cannot begin playing this role with a wealth score higher than 3.

Advantages

A rogue knight knows his former comrades well. This background gives him an automatic trump bonus when combating Knights of Takhisis; any card he plays is considered trump for melee and missile attacks, surprise, and initiative, but not for artillery attacks. When attempting to impersonate a Knight of Takhisis, any card the rogue knight bids for a Presence action becomes trump as well.

The rogue retains a benefit from his days in the Knighthood: When riding a mount in battle, he receives a trump bonus for any melee-range attack. As always, this benefit is not cumulative with the previous ones.

Heroes with this role become rogues only after realizing the mistake they made in joining the Knights of Takhisis. Only heroes abandoning the role of a Dark Knight can acquire this one during play, immediately after their desertion from the Order of dark paladins.





Disadvantages

The mental and spiritual scars from a rogue knight's time in the Order pain him still. Consequently, when resisting mysticism, no card he plays is trump.

Players should remember that the Knights of Takhisis never give up searching for members of their Order who have disappeared—even if the rogue knight staged his own death. This hero faces certain execution if the Knights of Takhisis capture him and discover his true identity.

Although a hero can abandon the rogue knight role, he forever remains a fugitive from the Knights of Takhisis, no matter what he does.

The Warrior-Mystic

The discovery of the power of the heart, or mysticism, has given rise to a new breed of warriors who depend on the strength of their spirits as much as they do the strength of their sword arms.

Unlike the priests and clerics of previous ages, *warrior-mystics* do not rely on the gods to lend them power and need not limit their selection of armor and weapons, as warrior clerics did.

Role-Playing

The warrior-mystic values self-reliance and simple living. Many live hermitic lives and spend their time contemplating spiritual matters. Others wander the countryside, seeking to further a cause they consider worthy of their attention.

Most folks think of warrior-mystics as eccentric loners who wield strange powers—such as transforming their hands into claws in an attack, as in the picture at right. Centaurs shake their heads at their simple ways, but barbarian humans tend to view them as people touched with special wisdom and usually accord them great respect.

Requirements

As a warrior-mystic depends on self-discipline and physical fitness, he must have Strength and Spirit scores of at least 7. He needs a 5 in Endurance and Agility.

A warrior-mystic must have Spirit and Strength codes of at least “B.” His reliance on spiritual power tends to make him shun sorcery, giving him a Reason code of “C” or less. Rather than armor, the warrior-mystic prefers to rely on his own body and spirit for defense, making his Endurance code “C” or less.

Only barbarian humans, Kagonesti elves, half-elves, and Hylar, Neidar, Klar, and Daewar dwarves can play this role.

A warrior-mystic's magical spheres must include at least one of the following: channeling, healing, meditation, mentalism, or sensitivity. A warrior-mystic may never learn spells from certain other spheres (see “Disadvantages”).

Advantages

When a warrior-mystic uses a spell in combat, the action is always trump, as long as the range is near missile or less. To get the trump bonus, the spell must either be aimed at harming or hindering enemies or toward enhancing the warrior-mystic's own attacks or those of his party.

Though he can use armor and weapons, any melee or personal range attack a warrior-mystic attempts becomes trump if he is unarmed, unarmored, and shieldless. Heroes can acquire this role during play.

Disadvantages

The warrior-mystic may never learn spells from the spheres of alteration or necromancy.

Combat is a personal matter to a warrior-mystic—he prefers to meet his foes face-to-face. Therefore, no attack he makes at far missile range or greater is ever trump, even spell attacks.

The Warrior-Sorcerer

The rise of the art of sorcery in the Fifth Age has created a new breed of mages unbound by the restrictions of the Orders of High Sorcery: *warrior-sorcerers*. The old wizards, more powerful magically than the sorcerers of the Fifth Age, spent so much time studying musty tomes they could afford little time to develop their physical prowess.

Sorcery has proven considerably less demanding, and many warriors of the Fifth Age have discovered talents for magic that can make them even more effective in combat.

Role-Playing

The warrior-sorcerer might act as avaricious as any mercenary or as idealistic as an adventurous warrior. What truly sets him apart from his fellow warriors is his reliance on magic to help pull him through a fight.

Dwarves, centaurs, minotaurs, knights, and cavaliers might come to respect a warrior-sorcerer's combat prowess, but usually can't help considering the hero either a weakling who uses magical power as a crutch or a power-mad killer.

Many elves and afflicted kender see warrior-sorcerers as skillful, well-rounded folk who possess useful blends of talents.

Requirements

As a warrior-sorcerer depends on a keen mind and a finely tuned body, he must have Strength and Reason scores of 7 at

minimum. In addition, his Endurance and Agility scores must be at least 5 for him to qualify.

A warrior-sorcerer needs Reason Strength codes of at least "B." When forced to fight at a distance, the warrior-sorcerer prefers spells to missile weapons, giving him a maximum Dexterity code of "C." His reliance on sorcery tends to make him shun spiritualism, requiring of him a Spirit code of "C" or less.


Only civilized humans, Silvanesti elves, Qualinesti elves, and half-elves can play this role.

A warrior-sorcerer's schools of sorcery must include at least one of the following: aeromancy, cryomancy, electromancy, enchantment, or pyromancy. A warrior-sorcerer may never learn spells from certain other schools (see "Disadvantages").

Advantages

When a warrior-sorcerer uses a spell in combat, the action is always trump. To qualify for the trump bonus, the spell must either be aimed at harming or hin-





dering his enemies or toward enhancing his own attacks or those of members of his adventuring party.

Disadvantages

The warrior-sorcerer may never learn spells from the schools of spectramancy, summoning, or transmutation.

No attack he makes with a thrown or missile weapon is ever trump, as he normally uses spells in missile range combat.

Finally, the warrior-sorcerer likes to have both hands available to employ spells freely in combat. Therefore, regardless of his actual Agility code, he cannot employ shields at all.

The Yeoman

A *yeoman* is an outdoorsman adept at tracking and stealth. He may come from a city or from a barbarian tribe, but he has made his own way in the world. This role includes explorers, scouts, pioneers, trappers, mountain men, and itinerant do-gooders. Tanis Half-Elven, a Hero of the Lance, was a yeoman.

Role-Playing

The yeoman has a strong sense of duty and justice. He usually has no formal obligation to uphold the law or to assist others, but he seems naturally inclined to do the right thing. The hero may not leap to assist everyone who crosses his path, but he does what he can for those legitimately in need. In addition, he appreciates nature and its gifts and usually makes his home in the wilderness.

Elves likely admire the yeoman for his skill at woodcraft and his high ideals (if he is an elf) or at least recognize the yeoman as unusually gifted and sensitive (if he is of another race). Centaurs and dwarves identify with this hero's outlook to a point, but find his altruism hard to understand.

Requirements

A life out of doors toughens a yeoman hero and requires minimum Endurance and Strength scores of 6 and Agility and

Dexterity scores of at least 5. A yeoman also must remain alert to danger, which calls for a Perception score of at least 5.

The yeoman's life of danger makes skill with weapons of all kinds a necessity. This hero must have a code of "A" in either Strength or Dexterity, with the remaining code in the pair at least "B." Keen senses often keep a yeoman alive, so a hero with this role needs a Perception code of at least "B."

Dedication to weapon use and outdoor skills limits the yeoman's ability to study the metaphysical, keeping his Spirit and Reason codes at a maximum of "B." And, as yeomen prefer to travel light, their Endurance codes remain at a maximum of "C."

Human, elf, half-elf, and Neidar and Klar dwarf heroes can have this role.

Finally, a yeoman's wealth score cannot exceed 5, and his nature should derive from a card with a value of 3 or less.

Advantages

Outdoors, any card these woodsmen play to avoid or achieve surprise becomes trump. They also enjoy a trump bonus for outdoor Reason or Perception actions to follow a path or a creature's trail.

Disadvantages

When out of their element, yeomen suffer disadvantages similar to those of a mariner on land. In this case, every action a yeoman attempts while indoors or underground suffers a -3 penalty to his action score.

Because a yeoman's knowledge of the outdoors takes a lifetime to attain, heroes cannot acquire this role during play.

Changing Roles

Heroes often develop and change as a campaign progresses. Perhaps recent experiences have altered the way a hero thinks and feels, or maybe the player would like him to acquire a new set of skills.

Assuming the Narrator agrees, a hero can abandon his role and begin playing another. Because most roles are rooted in

a hero's childhood and upbringing, the process is never quick or easy. However, it becomes an option whenever a hero completes a quest. (Heroes normally do not change roles right in the middle of an adventure.)

Abandoning a Role

When a player announces his hero's desire to abandon a role, the hero immediately drops one category in reputation. His number of quests then falls to the minimum number required for this new reputation category. The loss represents the hero's efforts to learn new ways of doing things and to shed old habits, which die hard. It also reflects the fact that the hero would garner less respect in his new role than he enjoyed in his previous one, until he gains standing.

For example, Nika Cozen, a human mercenary warrior, decides to give up her rapacious and calculating ways. She has completed eight quests, giving her a Champion reputation. This reputation immediately drops to Adventurer, and she now has only four quests to her credit.

A hero immediately loses all advantages from the role he has abandoned, but any disadvantages remain until he completes one quest. Ability score and code restrictions from the abandoned role remain in place until the hero's reputation improves to the next category.

Acquiring a New Role

Any hero free from all the disadvantages and ability restrictions or a previous role can acquire a new one, with the Narrator's approval. Of course, the hero must meet all requirements for the new role—race, ability scores and codes, etc. If some of his ability scores or codes are too high, he can reduce them voluntarily to the role's maximums. Should some of his scores and codes prove too low for the new role, the hero must improve them to meet the minimums before acquiring it.

Once the hero meets all the new role's requirements, he immediately acquires its disadvantages. However, it takes time to pick up on the skills of a role that some

people have gained over a lifetime. Therefore, a hero cannot enjoy the advantages of his new role until he completes at least one quest, which should allow him to exercise skills or gain experiences the Narrator deems relevant to the new role. For instance, a hero cannot gain the advantages of the warrior-sorcerer role unless he has used spells in combat.

The hero is assumed to study with a mentor and to practice his new skills in his spare time. Should the Narrator decide the hero lacks the leisure for study and practice, the hero cannot begin playing the role. If doubt arises as to the hero's ability to play the desired role, the Narrator can require the hero to make a successful challenging Presence action or wealth action—or both. This action reflects the hero's efforts to learn the new role, as well as the cost of doing so.

Note that some roles cannot be acquired during play. In addition, some are more difficult to begin playing than others. See the individual role descriptions in this chapter for details.

Again, the process of shedding one role for another is not meant to be easy. After all, if the legendary Heroes of the Lance had changed their attitudes and professions like weather vanes swinging in the wind, readers would have found them less than believable. However, when a hero switches roles as a response to the dramatic events of a campaign, the change becomes a vital source of character development.

Characters and Roles

A role is a guideline of how one should play a hero. Therefore, *characters* technically never acquire roles. Of course, they can display characteristics of these roles and belong to the groups the roles represent. For instance, characters may be members of the Solamnic Knighthood or they might resemble mariners in their behavior and skills. They might even share some of the advantages of a role but, as characters, they are not bound to all of a role's strictures.



CHAPTER TWO



*ear knotted
Sturm's
stomach, his
skin grew
cold....
Escape!
his brain
screamed.*

*Escape! The
dragons would
swoop into the
courtyard. The
knights could*

*not be ready yet, they would
die.... The Tower would fall.*

*No! Sturm got hold of himself.
Everything else was gone: his
ideals, his hopes, his dreams.
The Knighthood was collapsing.
The Measure had been found
wanting. Everything in his life
was meaningless. His death
must not be so....*

*Raising his sword in the air,
he gave the knight's salute to an
enemy. To his surprise, it was
returned with grave dignity by
the Dragon Highlord.*

*—At the High Clerist's Tower,
Dragons of Winter Night*

The most famous and respected (or feared) warriors in Ansalon are the Knights of the three great Orders of chivalry: the Knights of Solamnia, the Knights of Takhisis, and the Legion of Steel. These Knights—figures such as Sturm Brightblade, who laid down his life for his beliefs and his friends—inspire the folk of Ansalon to rise against the new threats they face in Krynn's Fifth Age. In addition, these knightly characters create some of the most moving and dramatic scenes in any DRAGONLANCE tale.

Chapter Three of *Dusk or Dawn* recounts the history of each of these remarkable Knighthoods. In addition, the material on hero roles in the previous chapter provides a glimpse of each Order. This chapter delves into the nuts and bolts of each Order's operations, organization, and current affairs.

Knights of Solamnia

The Knights of Solamnia, the oldest of the three Knighthoods, arose in the Age of Might, about two millennia before the War of the Lance. Founded by a wise and visionary general named Vinas Solamnus, this Order of warriors emerged from the ruin of the decadent Ergothian Empire to bring freedom to many nations. Despite the persecution this group faced after the Cataclysm and the criticism it received during the Fourth Age for its blind adherence to a ponderous and outdated Measure, the Solamnic Knighthood remains the most valiant and dependable champion for Good that the world has ever seen.

Organization

The Solamnic Knighthood comprises three separate orders—the Knights of the Crown, the Sword, and the Rose. These three groups operate across most of Ansalon—even covertly in areas controlled by dragon overlords.

Circles

At the local level, the Knights are organized into small units known as *circles*. Everyone belongs to a circle, from the lowliest squire to the highest-ranking officer.

A typical circle includes all the Knights in a particular town or rural area. Most circles have forty to eighty members, though circles located in sparsely populated areas have considerably fewer members and those in densely populated areas have considerably more.

KNIGHTLY ORDERS

The number of circles throughout Ansalon has fluctuated greatly over the years. However, new ones are formed each year as the Solamnic Knights solidify their position against the Great Dragons. Appendix Two lists the best-known circles operating during the Fifth Age.

Knightly Offices

Offices within the Knighthood generally are assigned by popular vote. Office holders are well respected, but have no special rights or precedence except in matters directly related to their office. The leader of a circle, for example, is the master at his own council table, but defers to more experienced Knights on other matters.

The High Knights and the Grand Master are exceptions. These officers, who serve for life, outrank all others in the Order. Of course, only the most senior Knights can hope to achieve these high offices.

Senior Knights

All members of a circle defer to a Senior Knight of at least Adventurer reputation. The more members in a circle, the higher the Senior Knight's reputation. This officer usually has one assistant for every ten Knights under his command.

Matters concerning the entire circle are decided by a council consisting of the Senior Knight, representing his own order, and one member from each of the other two orders. If a representative from one of the Knighthood's three divisions is not available, the circle's most experienced Knight may sit in his stead.

High Knights

For most of its history, the Knights of Solamnia were ruled by a trio of high-ranking officers called High Knights. The High Warrior led the Order of the Crown, the High Clerist was in charge of the Order of the Sword, and the High Justice governed the Order of the Rose.

High Knights gained their posts through nomination and election from within their own orders. According to the Measure, an order may elect only one of

its own members to the office of High Knight and must conduct the election without interference from the other two orders. However, in the days after the War of the Lance, when the Knighthood was just beginning to regain respect among the populace, there were insufficient experienced Knights to fill all of its offices. At that time only, an order was allowed to nominate a Knight from a different order to a High Knight position.

Warrior Lords

The Knighthood's normal organization can handle most daily affairs and diplomacy. In times of war, additional officers are appointed or elected as needed.

For example, groups of Knights go into battle under the command of a *Warrior Lord*. This officer, responsible for choosing battle plans and directing the fight, is elected by a knightly council made up of the heads of circles participating in the battle. However, a Warrior Lord also can be appointed by one of the High Knights or their superior, the Grand Master.


When planning a large military campaign, the Knights usually name a Warrior Lord to make decisions and give orders to the troops. He becomes the direct authority for that campaign. Sturm Brightblade held this responsibility at the battle for the High Clerist's Tower during the War of the Lance.

A Warrior Lord also commands the garrison of each castle under the Knighthood's control. Usually, this commander also serves as the Senior Knight of the local circle, but not always.

Grand Master

The *Grand Master* ranks above all other officers and personally commands the Grand Circle of Knights near Whitestone Glade on Sancrist Isle. Only a High Knight can be nominated for this office, and only a body of Knights drawn from all three orders can elect him. Each circle can send two members to the electing body; seventy percent of the circles must send delegates to achieve a quorum.





The office of Grand Master remained vacant from the Cataclysm until 353 AC. During that dark time, the Knighthood could not achieve a voting quorum—many circles had been destroyed or could not send delegates due to the rampant persecution of the Order. Nevertheless, these nonresponsive or defunct circles were still officially part of the Knighthood and required official representation, according to the letter of the law.

This difficulty was not resolved until some Knights decided to put practicality ahead of tradition and rewrite the rules.

Revising the Measure

Individually, all Knights of Solamnia are bound by the Measure, a set of guidelines governing proper chivalric behavior. Set down by the followers of Vinas Solamnus millennia ago, the Measure serves as the Knight's creed, body of laws, and rules of conduct. It touches every aspect of one's existence and dictates the Knighthood's proper hierarchy.

Over the centuries, the original Measure grew as each generation added to it. By the time of the Cataclysm, the document filled thirty-seven ponderous tomes of three hundred pages each. No single person could understand it all.

Immediately after the War of the Lance, in 353 AC, a group of Knights under the direction of the newly appointed Grand Master Gunthar Uth Wistan began an extensive revision of the Measure. The Knights began to cull or condense long-winded sections covering minor details such as courtly etiquette, formal address, protocols for minor tasks—the rules for proper saddling of a mount ran seventy-five pages long!

Lord Gunthar's ultimate goal was to create a work that would inspire Knights to emulate their founder rather than blindly follow an outdated set of rules.

The new Grand Master started making changes even before his project's completion. In 382 AC he inducted the first Knights not native to Solamnia. Before then, an obscure technicality in the Measure prevented Knights from recruiting outside of their land of origin.

Unfortunately, Lord Gunthar did not live to see his reforms completed. Shortly after Gunthar's passing in 9sc (perhaps motivated by it), his protege Liam Ehrling revealed the new Measure and was elected Grand Master—the first *elected* head of the Order since before the Cataclysm.

Rank and Precedence

In earlier ages, a Knight's rank depended on which of the three orders he served. Knights of the Rose outranked Knights of the Sword, who outranked Knights of the Crown. There were numerous exceptions, of course. The High Knights outranked anyone who was not a High Knight, and the Grand Master outranked everyone. Senior Knights with reputations of Champion or higher were called Lord Knights and outranked those of lesser stature, even if they belonged to a superior order. For instance, Sir Thomas of Thelgaard, commander of the High Clerist's Tower during the attack in the Summer of Chaos, was a Lord Knight.

Under the new Measure, however, a Knight's rank depends solely on his achievements, reflected by his reputation category. Knights still are encouraged to strive for the spiritual strength and purity required to join the Order of the Rose, but members of this division of Knighthood no longer enjoy automatic senior status.

Knightly Councils

Knights might call a council for a variety of reasons, including considering applicants for knighthood or petitions for advancement within the Order and dealing with questions of honor. Such an assembly ideally includes at least one Knight with a reputation of at least Master from each of the three orders. Minimally, it must contain the Senior Knight of the local circle (or his designated representative) and two other Knights.

The High Council

Together, the Grand Master and the three High Knights form the *High Council* that conducts the Knighthood's affairs and makes decisions for the organization.



High Command

Appointed by the High Council during times of crisis or war, the *Solamnic High Command* oversees the performance of the Order's Warrior Lords. This cadre of officers answers only to the High Council with regard to military matters.

The Oath and the Measure

Even after the reforms of the past sixty years, the Knights' Oath remains unchanged: *Est Sularus oth Mithas*— My honor is my life. For well over a thousand years, every Knight in the Order has sworn to live according to this simple precept: to sacrifice all for the sake of honor, for without it, life means nothing.

The Measure, on the other hand, has been extensively revised over the centuries, as described earlier. Based on the historic judgments and councils of Vinas Solamnus, the Measure ultimately swelled into an unwieldy attempt to define "honor." The Measure today is contained in three volumes that include writings known, or

Considered to be, authored by Solamnus himself and certain other works that help Knights carry his ideals in their hearts. The Knights still keep the bulk of the old Measure for study, but they no longer strain to follow every word to the letter.


Although all Knights of Solamnia hold the entire Measure sacred as the definition of honor, each of the three orders dedicates itself to one particular aspect of the document.

The Order of the Crown

According to the new Measure, honor begins with loyalty and obedience. The Knights of the Crown exemplify these two traits in all that they are and do.

Loyalty is a Knight's commitment to a higher power and authority. Justly given, loyalty becomes a treasure beyond price. Obedience is the practical manifestation of loyalty. A Knight obeys those to whom he is loyal, regardless of his own opinion or personal welfare.

The Knights remain loyal to Habbakuk, Kiri-Jolith, Paladine, and all the gods of Good, even now that they have



withdrawn from the world. The new Measure recognizes the three deities as patrons of the Knighthood who, along with their brethren, are entitled to a Knight's loyalty, just as a Knight remains loyal to his superiors even in their absence. The Knights' loyalty to departed gods leaves them open to ridicule, but they remind their detractors that the gods have withdrawn from Krynn once before, only to return. And, even if the gods never return, say the Knights, honor demands that mortals continue to offer thanks for their gifts and pay homage to their memories.

The Knights of the Crown also pledge loyalty to all that is Good, to those oppressed by Evil, and to those rulers who govern with justice and compassion.

In days past, the High Council kept a list of approved rulers. This List of Loyalty compelled all Knights, especially Crown Knights, to obey those listed without question. Today, the Measure includes instructions on how to recognize deserving rulers, and the High Council provides a List of Honor. Knights owe loyalty to rulers on this list, but not unquestioning obedience.

The Order of the Sword

The next components of honor are heroism, courage, and spirituality—qualities stressed by the Order of the Sword.

A strong spirit is the wellspring from which all courage and heroism flows. Courage is the will to strike a blow for the cause of Good, no matter what sacrifice the effort demands. Heroism involves this same spirit of self-sacrifice, dedicated to defending against the myriad forces of Evil that stalk the world. The heroic and courageous Knight champions the weak, the poor, the oppressed, the enslaved, and the falsely accused. He always renders aid to fellow Knights in need and to the defenseless.

Under the old Measure, no truly courageous and honorable Knight could decline combat with or flee from an Evil enemy, no matter how outmatched the fight. The new Measure, however, recognizes the value of prudence and the virtue of living to fight another day.

The Order of the Rose

The final components of honor are wisdom and justice, ideals embraced by the Order of the Rose. However, the Knights' definition of wisdom has changed much throughout the centuries.

Under the old Measure, knightly wisdom dictated that a Solamnic willingly risk all for the sake of any point of honor and never surrender to an Evil foe. The new Measure recognizes a new wisdom: Surrender might create an opportunity for escape or negotiation, either of which could achieve a greater Good. Wisdom always demands that a Knight work for justice—whether it be to sacrifice his life for another or to ascertain that no life is ever given in vain.

The Knighthood Today

The Knights' current mission is to protect what is left of human civilization from the Great Dragons. The task has been neither easy nor entirely successful, as a look at the current map of Ansalon will show.

Ever since the Chaos War, the Knighthood has also kept busy trying to rebuild its numbers. In the past thirty years, the Order has recovered remarkably well, in spite of the Dragon Purge and competition for recruits. Of course, no other Order can boast the proud Solamnic tradition—nothing makes a mother quite as proud as seeing her son or daughter accepted into the Knighthood.

The Knights' land holdings are extensive; they control the realms of Gunthar, Ergoth, and Solamnia. In these areas, the Solamnics maintain the government and provide the civil authority. They have established their headquarters in Gunthar: Castle Uth Wistan lies not far from Whitestone Glade, where Vinas Solamnus so long ago received the vision that inspired him to found the Knighthood.

The Knights also remain openly active in Abanasinia, Schallsea, and those portions of Southern Ergoth not firmly under the control of Gellidus—or Frost, as men call the White Dragon. They operate covertly in the realm of Khellendros, the Blue Dragon, especially in Palanthas.

Allies and Enemies

The world of the Fifth Age holds many challenges for the Knights of Solamnia—they face opposition from not only their traditional foes, the Evil dragons, but also from the Dark Knights. They are not without allies in their struggles, however, and their recent reforms have increased their membership and better enabled them to fight for the cause of Good.

The Dark Knights

The Knights of Solamnia have never forgotten that the Knights of Takhisis were formed specifically to defeat them and conquer the world in the name of the Queen of Darkness. Nor have they forgotten the defeats they suffered at the hands of these Knights during the Summer of Chaos. The fact that the Knights of Takhisis were founded on Solamnic principles twisted to Evil ends has inspired a deep antipathy among the Knights of Solamnia for their dark brethren.

In the aftermath of the Chaos War, however, the remnants of the two Knight-hoods buried their differences, literally and figuratively, at the Tomb of the Last Heroes in Solace. The rival Orders interred the ill-fated Knights who died in the final battle with Chaos, laying them side by side in the beautiful marble tomb, along with Hero of the Lance Tanis Half-Elven.

At the time, no Knight of good conscience could deny that it had taken the efforts of both Orders to defeat Chaos and save the world from utter destruction. Senior Knights from both Orders agreed to mutually keep the peace and respect each other's territories during that period of rebuilding. At the Council of the Last Heroes, the Knights signed a treaty granting the Solamnics their traditional Solamnia, as well as Northern and Southern Ergoth and Sancrist. The Knights of Takhisis were ceded the Vale of Neraka and lands northeast to the Miremier and southwest to the New Sea.

This arrangement deeply divided the Solamnic Knights. One faction was pleased that the Dark Knights would not dispute the Solamnics' title to their original lands, much of which had fallen to the

forces of Takhisis prior to the Chaos War. However, another faction found the accord appalling, arguing that the residents of lands granted to the Knights of Takhisis should not be abandoned to suffer under their yoke. In the end, the dissenters reluctantly agreed that the Solamnic Knights should take care of their own first and worry about saving the rest of the world later.

Officially, no hostilities exist between the two Knight-hoods. Unofficially, though, both sides know they have an uneasy truce. It has become clear to the High Council that the Knights of Takhisis have not abandoned their desire for world conquest. Nor have they forsaken their Dark Queen—any more than the Knights of Solamnia have abandoned their founding gods.

For now, the Solamnics bide their time and watch the Knights of Takhisis carefully. They have vowed not to be the ones to break the truce, but nonetheless, they expect to meet their old enemies in battle again very soon.

Other Foes

The Solamnic Knights' greatest enemies are the Great Dragons, who seized territory during the Dragon Purge. They particularly loathe the White Dragon, whose territory includes the Tomb of Huma, one of the greatest Knights ever to live. They also hate and fear the Blue Dragon, Khelendros (whom men also call Skie), ruler of both the former Solamnic capital of Palanthas and the ruined High Clerist's Tower, once a mighty Solamnic fortress.


In its quest to root out Evil, the Knight-hood also seeks to defeat lesser chromatic dragons, aggressive draconians, foul sorcerers, and dark mystics.

Allied Groups

The Solamnic Knights maintain good relations with cavaliers who serve rulers on the List of Honor. They do not automatically consider enemies those working for other rulers, but generally regard them with cool suspicion.

The Solamnic Knights consider Good dragons, of all the creatures and races of Krynn, their most valued and trusted





allies—particularly silver dragons. Though most metallics went into hiding at the start of the Dragon Purge, the Knighthood has kept in contact with several silver, gold, and bronze dragons. Some of them currently masquerade as human members of knightly circles on Sancrist and Northern Ergoth.

The Solamnic Knights regard the Legion of Steel with a great deal of skepticism and no small amount of resentment. Although they recognize the Legion as a force for Good, they also see it as a rival for new recruits and as yet another organization that borrowed their ideals and now purports to get along in the world better than they do. Relations between the two Orders are officially cordial but privately strained. Both groups have agreed to aid each other in the event of an attack by the Knights of Takhisis or the dragon overlords.

Goals and Activities

Though growing stronger with each passing year, the Knighthood today follows a purely defensive strategy, making sure that, above all else, it loses no more territory to the dragon overlords. Knights actively patrol Solamnia's current borders, watching for spies and any sign of an impending invasion.

As their secondary task, the Knights prepare to carry the fight to the enemy. However, the Knighthood currently has too few experienced troops to launch a war against the dragon overlords. The High Council knows it will not be easy to defeat these Great Dragons, each of whom is powerful enough to ensure victory on a battlefield he visits personally.

Teams of Knights scour the countryside, seeking magical items from past ages, particularly enchanted weapons and especially dragonlances. The Order hopes to stockpile these weapons for use in the battles that inevitably must come.

Operating covertly in the city of Palanthis, the Solamnics keep a wary eye on Skie and his minions. Knights there watch for signs of an attack on Solamnia and help the city resist the dragon's control wherever they can.

Of all the Knighthood's ongoing activities, the High Council has deemed defending Solamnia and containing Khelendros its two main objectives. High Command directs all military operations in Solamnia and adjacent territories.

Joining the Knighthood

The Knights of Solamnia eagerly accept members of knightly families as new recruits, but seek out other honorable warriors as well. While the Knighthood remains a warrior Order, it also embraces mystics and sorcerers as auxiliary members (see next page).

To join the Knighthood, a hero needs Strength and Endurance codes of "A" so he can handle the greatest swords and lances and the heaviest shields. The Knighthood accepts men and women, humans and half-elves as full members. Warrior heroes of other races, or those who admire the ideals of the Knighthood but do not wish to become full members, can join the auxiliary.

Becoming a Squire

The first step toward Knighthood is to be accepted as a squire. To become a candidate, a hero must locate a Knight of Champion reputation willing to sponsor him. The sponsor must be in good standing with the Solamnic Knights. As a rule, Knights only sponsor applicants of whose deeds they have firsthand knowledge.

The sponsor must present the candidate before a knightly council, as described on page 28. After vowing allegiance to the honor and ideals of the Knighthood, the candidate must submit to an examination by the council. Players and Narrators should act out this interview, called a Knight's Trial. The assembly considers the applicant's deeds and pedigree (the former taking precedence over the latter under the new Measure) to determine his worthiness to enter the Order.

➤ Knight's Trial

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Presence
Opposition ability:	Presence

Comments: To be found worthy, an applicant must succeed at the Knight's Trial action, the opposition score provided by the Knight on the council with the highest reputation. The hero also must have a demeanor drawn from a card whose value did not exceed 4. If the candidate has not assumed the Knight of Solamnia role, he must subtract this value from his action score in order to pass the Trial.

If the hero fails at this action, he may attempt it again after completing a quest assigned by his sponsor or the Senior Knight on the council.

Should the applicant ever have engaged in any unknighly behavior during his life, any Knight present can raise a question of honor (see page 35) The council must resolve this matter before considering the application.

Mishap: The hero has suffered a devastating setback: He committed some gaffe, a witness revealed an embarrassing fact, or a council member asked an unanticipated question he could not answer. The Knight immediately loses a point of Presence.

If the council finds the applicant worthy of the Knighthood after this lengthy process, he may join the Order of the Crown as a squire to a Knight. Squires can adventure with their Knights or can undertake missions on their behalf.

Playing the Role

A hero need not assume the Knight of Solamnia role to join the Knighthood, but it does offer several advantages (see Chapter One), including making it easier for a hero to pass the Knight's Trial for advancement in the Order.

Heroes who select the Knight of Solamnia role at the start of play automatically begin as members of the Order of the Crown without going through a Knight's Trial. They serve as squires until they either become Adventurers or increase one reputation category. Other heroes must locate sponsors and petition for membership in the Knighthood, as described above.

Auxiliary Membership

The Knighthood has always been an Order for warriors. However, the contribution of wizards such as Palin Majere and other nonwarriors to the defeat of Chaos three decades ago showed the Knights the value of divergent backgrounds. Therefore, the revised Measure allows for an auxiliary made up of mystics, sages, sorcerers, and rogues who are sympathetic to the Knighthood's ideals. Warriors unwilling to make a Knight's commitment to the Order and members of races not considered for Knighthood also may become auxiliary members.

Auxiliary members enjoy the same status as squires in the Order of the Crown without officially joining that order. The Knighthood recognizes them as members but does not allow them to draw on the treasury, command Knights, or sit in knightly councils. The main benefit of auxiliary membership is being recognized as a kindred spirit by the Knights.


Honorary Knighthood

An auxiliary member can become an honorary Crown Knight by completing the requirements for entry into that order (see below). Thereafter, he can expect deference from Knights of junior rank and may find himself invited to sit on knightly councils, especially those concerning his area of expertise. Honorary Knights have no special obligations to the Knighthood and cannot seek advancement. Tanis Half-Elven became an honorary Knight prior to the Summer of Chaos.

In rare cases, the Knighthood grants immediate honorary Sword Knight status to very worthy individuals, even if they have not made any special effort to join the Solamnic Knights. To receive this honor, a hero must have repeatedly accomplished quests consistent with the Knighthood's ideals (such as defeating Solamnic enemies).

To be granted this high honorary status, a Knight of at least Champion reputation must bring the hero's accomplishments to the attention of a High Knight or the Grand Master. The prospective honorary Sword Knight must then succeed in a *chal-*





lenging Presence (Presence) action, resisted by the High Knight or Grand Master. If he has performed particularly noteworthy deeds, the Narrator can reduce the difficulty to *average*.

Advancing in the Order

The Knighthood rewards its members who have accomplished worthy deeds with training in the mystic arts.

Becoming a Crown Knight

A squire may become a Knight of the Crown after his reputation reaches the Adventurer category (or advances one category, if he already had a reputation of Adventurer or better).

When he feels ready to petition for knighthood, the squire must give an account of himself to a knightly council and perform another Knight's Trial action as described earlier. To be deemed worthy of knighthood, the squire must have either assumed the Knight of Solamnia role or have achieved a score of 5 in Strength and Endurance. In addition, he cannot have a Reason code higher than "C" and may not voluntarily lower it to become a Knight, as he has already displayed his higher aptitude in sorcery to the Order. Squires who cannot meet these requirements can join the auxiliary.

If the hero meets the above conditions and passes the Trial, the council declares him worthy and knights him in the Order of the Crown.

Becoming a Sword Knight

A Knight of the Crown can enter the Order of the Sword after his reputation increases one category. To be considered, the Crown Knight must have accomplished the following since his knighting:

- ❖ A journey of at least thirty days that covered at least five hundred miles.
- ❖ Restoring something that was lost.
- ❖ Victory in single combat with an equally powerful Evil foe (one with a Physique score at least equal to the hero's Strength score).
- ❖ Three tests of wisdom, one of generosity, and one of compassion.

When the Knight has met these requirements, he may present himself before a knightly council and petition for advancement. He must undertake a Knight's Trial action. The hero gains a +1 bonus to his action score if he can produce a reliable witness to his deeds and accomplishments (another Knight or anyone with a demeanor drawn from a card with a value lower than 5).

If the hero has assumed the Knight of Solamnia role, he can appear before the council to attempt to increase his Presence score (according to the rules at the end of Chapter One in the *Book of the Fifth Age*) instead of petitioning for entry into the Order of the Sword.

A hero can attempt only one Knight's Trial for advancement or one attempt to improve his Presence each time he attains a new reputation category. If the hero failed his action this time, he can try again after he reaches a new category.

Upon becoming a Sword Knight, a hero enjoys an automatic improvement of one grade in his Spirit code (from "D" to "C," for instance), to a maximum of "B," representing the spiritual growth he gained through his tests of wisdom, generosity, and compassion. As Sword Knights, heroes who have not assumed the Knight of Solamnia role can draw on the Knighthood's treasury as described for the role (see page 14), with a -2 action penalty (applied after cutting the Presence score in half for the withdrawal).

Becoming a Rose Knight

A Knight of the Sword can attempt to enter the Order of the Rose after he advances to a new reputation category. While a Knight of the Sword, the hero must have accomplished the following quests, which differ slightly from the requirements for Sword Knighthood:

- ❖ A journey of at least thirty days that covered at least five hundred miles.
- ❖ Restoring something that was lost.
- ❖ Victory in single combat with a more powerful Evil foe (one with a Physique score higher than the hero's Strength).
- ❖ One test of wisdom, three of generosity, and three of compassion.

When the Knight has met these requirements, he may present himself before a knightly council and petition for entry into the Order of the Rose. He must have a reliable witness to his deeds, as described earlier. A witness with a reputation of Champion or higher gives him a +1 action bonus to his Knight's Trial.

If the hero meeting the above requirements plays the Knight of Solamnia role and does not wish to attempt a Knight's Trial to enter the Order of the Rose, he can take a free attempt to increase his Presence score instead.

The Knight can attempt only one of these options each time he gains a new category of reputation.

Heroes in the Order of the Rose grow in Spirit as a result of their tests of wisdom, generosity, and compassion, just as they did upon becoming Sword Knights. Rose Knights have a maximum Spirit code of "A." Those who have not assumed the Knight of Solamnia role can draw on the Knighthood's treasury as described on page 14, with a -2 action penalty.

Questions of honor

Whenever a Knight engages in behavior considered inappropriate or unbecoming, his honor can be called into question. Unknightly behavior includes spending the Knighthood's funds for personal gain, fleeing the enemy, refusing assistance to the downtrodden, disloyalty, and any other situation in which the Knight compromises the principles of the Measure for his own personal safety or benefit.

A knightly council resolves all questions of honor brought to its attention by a full member of the Order, either a Knight or honorary Knight. If someone outside the Knighthood wishes to have a question of honor considered, he must ask a Knight to plead his case. Any Knight may question any other one about a matter of honor—some Knights even choose to have themselves questioned before a council.

Questions of honor based on hearsay or speculation are themselves considered dishonorable. Therefore, the Knight bringing the matter before the council must have witnessed the questionable inci-

dent himself or produce a witness. The Knight whose honor has been questioned must be present also.

Questions of honor fall into one of the following categories:

- ✦ **Trivial point:** The Knight allegedly violated a rule of common courtesy, gave offense to a fellow Knight, or failed to carry out a minor order from a superior through no fault of his own.
- ✦ **Minor transgression:** The Knight is said to have shown discourteous or inconsiderate behavior, insulted a fellow Knight, disobeyed a trivial order, or failed to carry out an important order through misjudgment or inattention.
- ✦ **Transgression:** The Knight stands accused of such egregious behavior as acting rude, cowardly, greedy, or cruel, or willfully disobeying an order or failing to carry one out due to self-interest or the desire for self-preservation.
- ✦ **Major transgression:** The Knight stands accused of slaying a fellow Knight, telling a damaging lie about an innocent person, committing a capital crime, or betraying the Knighthood in some other way.

Once the council has heard the accusation, the Knight must attempt an action to defend his honor, as described below.


➤ Defending One's Honor

Difficulty:	Varies
Action ability:	Presence
Opposition ability:	Presence

Comments: The difficulty of defending one's honor depends on the severity of the alleged offense, as does the punishment:

- ✦ **Trivial point:** Average (8). If the action fails, the council issues the offender a reprimand or word of advice.
- ✦ **Minor transgression:** Challenging (12). A hero who fails at this action suffers disgrace, immediately losing a point of Presence *. He receives a stern lecture from the council and may be assigned some task as penance. If the question arose during a Knight's Trial or another appearance before a council, the hero's request is denied.



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- ❖ **Transgression:** Daunting (16). A Knight failing to defend his honor immediately loses a point of Presence. * In addition, the Order banishes him or assigns him some impossible task to redeem himself. Until he has done so, he cannot petition for advancement or draw funds from the treasury.
 - ❖ **Major transgression:** Desperate (20). If the action fails, the Knight is imprisoned or executed.
 - * A hero with the Knight of Solamnia role who lost a point of Presence when the question of honor arose (see role description) does not lose an additional point if he fails in this action.

If the Narrator considers the charge against the Knight particularly weak (based on a misunderstanding or mitigating circumstance), he may reduce the difficulty one degree. However, if he finds the charge particularly warranted, he may make the action one degree harder. In the rare case where a the charge seems entirely unwarranted, the Narrator should make this action *easy* or not require it at all. Anyone making a baseless charge against a fellow Knight is guilty of unknighly conduct himself (a major transgression).

The Presence score of the Senior Knight on the council serves as the opposition value for this action.

Mishap: The hero has suffered a devastating setback: He committed some gaffe, a witness revealed an embarrassing fact, or a council member asked an unanticipated question he could not answer. Not only has the Knight failed to defend his honor, he suffers the penalty from the next worse category of offense.

Knights of Takhisis

An Order of Dark Knights formed some twenty years after the downfall of Neraka, the stronghold of the dragonarmies during the War of the Lance and the center of influence for Takhisis, the Dark Queen. In the years after the War of the Lance, the Knights of Takhisis quickly emerged as a cohesive force of order—and Evil—in a world still reeling from years of war.

Organization

From the day he founded his Order of Dark Knights, Lord Ariakan—son of Highlord Ariakas and, bards say, the goddess of tempests, Zeboim—stood strong as its single guiding force. He ruled the Knighthood through his own personal magnetism and the Dark Queen’s favor.

Today, Mirielle Abrena—Governor-General of Neraka and the Knights of Takhisis—maintains the highly military structure Ariakan favored. She makes changes only as necessary to allow for the growth of the Order and its holdings.

Divisions and Offices

Like the Solamnics, from whom Ariakan gained his inspiration, the Dark Knighthood is divided into separate groups. However, unlike the Knights of the Crown, Sword, and Rose, these orders all enjoyed equal status within the Knights of Takhisis from the beginning. In addition, each division has a specialty: the Order of the Lily comprises warriors, the Order of the Skull includes dark mystics, and the Order of the Thorn contains exclusively sorcerers.

Lord Knights

Lord Ariakan administered the Knights of Takhisis with the help of twenty-four *Lord Knights*, and Governor Abrena continues this tradition. Lord Knights win their position by merit, usually through force of arms; dueling to obtain an office is not only allowed, it is encouraged.

Three Lord Knights hold responsibility for the three orders. However, these figures may issue only those commands pertinent to their individual orders; issuing military and other commands remains the duty of the commanders of military units within the Knighthood.

For example, the Nightlord—the Lord Knight in charge of the Order of the Thorn—can instruct the Gray Robes on the proper way to deal with captured sorcerers and their magical items. However, individual Thorn Knights must answer to their military commanders when in the barracks or on the battlefield.

The other twenty-one Lord Knights, who led the Knighthood’s armies during

the Summer of Chaos, handle special assignments, such as administering the city of Palanthas for the Blue Dragon, handling the daily business of governing the Dark Knights' capital, or overseeing recruitment efforts.

Military Structure

All Dark Knights, regardless of their order, assume positions in a *talon*: a unit of nine Knights of the same order. Historically, talons were grouped together to form larger units, as shown on the chart below:

Unit	Complement
Talon	9 Knights
Wing	5 talons (45 Knights)
Compgroup	7 wings (315 Knights *)
Shield	5 compgroups (1,575 Knights)
Quadron	4 shields (6,300 Knights)
Army	7 quadrons (44,100 Knights)

* Compgroups also contain between thirty and forty support staff members.

Of course, the decimation the Knights of Takhisis endured during the Chaos War all but destroyed this precise military organization. While the Knighthood survived (though its ranks were substantially diminished) the larger units effectively disintegrated due to the deaths of Lord Ariakan and most of the ranking officers. In the first years of the Fifth Age, the compgroup Commanders remaining after the Chaos War continued to handle their troops as they always had, while the surviving members of the upper echelon gathered the remnants of the Order and reestablished it in Neraka.

Today, as head of the Knighthood, Governor-General Abrena has abandoned the Knights' traditional military structure above the compgroup level. She fills most major administrative posts with Lord Knights and with the officers of her own personal compgroup. At this point, the Knighthood remains small enough for individual compgroups to handle most daily affairs and for the Governor-General to oversee all their Commanders directly.

These compgroups contain four wings of Lily Knights, two wings of Skull Knights, and one wing of Thorn Knights. The Knights of each talon remain under the direct supervision of two junior officers—usually a Knight-Officer and a Knight-Warrior, both of at least Adventurer reputation. A Subcommander handles each wing, while three additional Subcommanders serve as aides to the Commander of each compgroup. Naturally, officers of these higher ranks have achieved correspondingly better reputations than their subordinates.

The compgroup Commander is responsible for the close to three hundred fifty people under his command: three hundred fifteen Knights plus support staff. The twenty-eight wing officers assist him in running the compgroup.

Decision-making power rests with the officers at each level; only the Governor-General can make decisions for the entire Knighthood, as Lord Ariakan once did.

Of course, should the Dark Knights take the field again in force, they would revert back to their traditional structure with various armies, each once again under the command of a Lord Knight.

Rank and Precedence

Though personal reputation remains important, the Dark Knights base one's standing within the Knighthood solely on military rank. A talon Knight-Officer outranks common Knights, even those of a superior reputation category. A wing Subcommander outranks all of his subordinates, as well as common Knights and junior officers from other wings, and so on.

The only exception are Adjudicators of the Code (see page 44), who enjoy special privileges of this unique rank when sitting in judgment on a case.

Dark Guideposts

Though bound to a strict chain of command, individual Knights also follow the Vision, the Blood Oath, and the Code, as handed down from Lord Ariakan. Even when separated from his superiors, a Knight knows what is expected of him.





The Vision

In simple terms, the Vision is a statement of the ultimate goal of the knighthood as it pertains to each individual member. The Vision shows each Knight a subjective view of his part in achieving this goal: the total and unquestioned domination of the entire world of Krynn.

Before the Chaos War, all Dark Knights received a personal version of the Vision, which they could consult for guidance when faced with difficult problems. No one knows whether this personal Vision came directly from Takhisis or from her clerics, always in attendance at the induction of new Knights. It is certain, however, that all Knights of Takhisis lost their personal Visions during the Chaos War—legend has it the Vision faded the instant Lord Ariakan died. However, mystics on Ansalon today believe it was the withdrawal of Takhisis from the world, not Ariakan's death, that robbed her paladins of the Vision. Before the Vision faded, Knights of Takhisis faced with difficult problems could consult their personal Visions for guidance.

Today, the Dark Knights still receive a Vision. However, they see it only upon their induction into the Order and on other rare occasions. The image it provides is vivid but short-lived, and its meaning often proves hard to fathom.

Experiencing the Vision

When he takes what is called a Test of Takhisis to become a Knight of the Lily (see page 43), a hero receives a personal version of the Vision—a brief but intense mental image said to convey the will of Takhisis, so the new Knight might clearly understand the goals of the Order and his own place in it. This message, while never literal or direct, often provides clues that help dark paladins make important decisions.

While it might be true that, before the Chaos War, the Vision came directly from Takhisis, its continuation in the Fifth Age is not what it appears. The Knight of the Skull presiding over a prospective Knight's Test of Takhisis generates a personal Vision for the hero using dark mysticism. Thereafter, the Skull Knights can transmit simple orders and information to the Knight in the field via the "Vision."

Mirielle Abrena took advantage of Goldmoon's discovery of mysticism to revitalize the spiritual aspect of her Order. She sent a trio of disguised Skull Knights to the Citadel of Light to learn the secrets of mentalism and the other mystic arts. Upon their return to Neraka in 15sc, they developed a magical method to resurrect the Vision—with no assistance from Her Dark Majesty—and used it to convince the Knighthood of their goddess's plan to return. This Vision inspired the ranks with new hope and determination, just as Abrena had intended.

Of course, due to the nature of the Vision in the Fifth Age, Knights cannot consult it at will, as they used to. Instead, they merely receive periodic messages through it, at the Order's will. The true source of the Vision is known only to the senior commanders and the upper echelons of the Order of the Skull.

The Vision Play

The Narrator represents the personal Vision each hero receives upon his knighting by shuffling the Fate Deck and drawing one card. This Vision card functions as a hero's secondary nature card: The Knight should consider its inscription (as well its character portrait) whenever difficult circumstances arise. The player can note his Vision card's inscription on his hero sheet for reference.

In addition to the inscription and portrait, the card's suit gives a portent of the

♣ **Swords:** The Knight is fated to perform great deeds of arms: He receives a +1 action bonus to his current Test of Takhisis (when attempting to enter the Order of the Lily) and to any adjudication actions while he remains a Knight of the Lily. (See page 44 for details on adjudications of the Code.)

♠ **Moons:** The Knight is fated to perform great deeds of Reason: He receives a +1 action bonus to his Test of Takhisis when attempting to enter the Order of the Thorn and to any adjudication actions while a Knight of the Thorn.

♥ **Hearts:** The Knight is fated to perform great deeds of Spirit: He receives a +1 action bonus to his Test of Takhi-

sis when attempting to enter the Order of the Skull and to any adjudication actions while a Knight of the Skull.

♣ **Dragons:** The Knight shows the favor of Takhisis: He receives a +1 action bonus to all Test of Takhisis and adjudication actions.

♣ **Other suits:** The Narrator can invent suggestions related directly to his campaign or to the adventure at hand.

Communicating through the Vision

Periodically, Knights receive information from their superiors through the Vision. This communication is never under a player's control: A hero cannot consult the Vision to get information or request aid. However, the Knight's commanders might send simple missives consisting of a single image of a person, place, or thing and a verbal message of twenty-five words or less.

The Blood Oath

A Dark Knight's second guidepost, the Blood Oath, is simple and straightforward: "Submit or die." When joining the Order, each Knight dedicates body and spirit utterly to the cause. He must submerge any personal desires in favor of furthering the Knighthood's mission. Even today, when the Dark Queen seems more distant than ever, he knows she will reward him after his death.


Yet, despite this sublimation of will, Dark Knights are expected to think for themselves at times. The Code guides them in their thinking.

The Code

The Code is complex, yet elegant in its detail. According to Ariakan, the strict, unyielding exactitude of the Solamnic Knights' Measure caused their long fall from the glory they enjoyed during the Age of Might. Despite their victory in the War of the Lance, Ariakan noted, the Knights of Solamnia had a long way to go to bring peace and order to Ansalon.

Knowing the kinds of weaknesses inherent in mortal creatures, Ariakan crafted a detailed set of laws that relate principally to military situations, but





which also can extend to govern the lives of each member of the Knighthood. He required strict adherence to the Code, but always considered each case on its own merits and was known to make exceptions based on circumstances.

After the War of the Lance—during Ariakan's time as a prisoner, and later a student, in the High Clerist's Tower—the Knights of Solamnia under Lord Gunthar held knightly councils to consider revisions to their Measure. After observing many of these council meetings, Ariakan decided they were a waste of time.

Indeed, before Lord Gunthar's reforms, the Solamnic Knights were prone to endless bickering over trivial points of law and honor. Ariakan established his Code to require no argument over fine points. The Law was as written. Violations were obvious and dealt with summarily.

However, Ariakan considered such rigidity to the letter of the law a flaw in the Measure of the Solamnic Knighthood at that time. To allow flexibility as occasion demanded, he established a means to consider an exception to the Code and either accept or reject it on its own merits. This system of adjudication remains at the heart of Dark Knight operations today (see page 44).

Military Code Guidelines

The bulk of the Code deals with establishing and maintaining lines of communication and authority. It explains how a Knight gives an order and dispatches it quickly. The Code also describes how Knights act on such orders rapidly and efficiently.

However, Ariakan knew that from time to time his followers would find themselves cut off from the chain of command. Therefore, he devoted major sections of the Code to teaching them how to act on the Vision to carry out the will of the Knighthood while on their own.

Even within the bounds of the Code, a Knight enjoys a broad discretion in carrying out orders. As long as his actions do not violate the Vision, the Knighthood's standing orders, or his own specific orders, he is free to act as he thinks best.

Other Code Guidelines

The rest of the Code covers the basic precepts that guide the three divisions within this Knighthood.

Order of the Lily. *Independence breeds chaos. Submit and be strong.* Knights of the Lily provide this organization with its military power. For the common folk of Neraka (as well as the realms of Khellendros the Blue and Beryllintranox the Green), Knights of the Lily serve as both police and judiciary. This order, by virtue of its sheer physical might, became the center of political power in the Knighthood, though all three divisions were theoretically equal. The Knights of the Lily kept the Order together in the wake of the Chaos War, as they remained the only effective branch left after the loss of magic.

Order of the Skull. *Death is patient, flowing from without and within. Be vigilant in all and skeptical of all.* As members of the dark mystic branch of the Order, Knights of the Skull serve as healers, diviners, advisers, and Adjudicators of the Code.

Order of the Thorn. *One who follows the heart finds it will bleed. Feel nothing but victory.* Knights of the Thorn remain wholly committed to mastering new forms of sorcery and wielding their magic in support of the Knighthood.

The Dark Knights Today

At the dawn of the Fifth Age, the Knights of Takhisis set for themselves a threefold mission: Rebuild their Order, conquer the world in the name of Takhisis, and help her return to Krynn. Of these tasks, they have been most successful with the first.

From their stronghold in Neraka, the Dark Knights control almost all the northern Khalkist Mountains except for the city of Sanction. They also have seized the southeast portion of the Plains of Throt and the coastal plain to the northeast. Overall, the Knights control the entire area ceded to them in the Council of the Last Heroes—except Sanction.

The Knights operate openly in almost all the dragon-controlled lands, providing troops and security in return for ample payments of slaves and steel. Teams of Dark Knight adventurers move freely

through Ansalon, though they find themselves welcome almost nowhere outside their own borders.

Currently, the Dark Knights are nowhere near conquering all of Krynn, or even Ansalon. The dragon overlords are far too powerful to unseat, and the free realms that survived the Dragon Purge are not likely to collapse as easily as they did during Ariakan's invasion thirty years ago.

As for the third task, returning Takhisis to Krynn, no mortal knows if it is possible. If the Dark Knights do find a way to open a door for their Queen, there's no telling whether she would walk through it. Her Knights believe she would.

Allies and Enemies

Some brilliant alliances have helped the Dark Knights come back from the brink of destruction, which they faced at the end of the Chaos War. Perhaps Mirielle Abrena's smartest move was her association with several of the Great Dragons.

The Dragons

The Knights of Takhisis are perhaps the only group of humans the dragon overlords respect. Not only have the dark paladins concluded formal treaties with the Blue Dragon, Khellendros, and the Green Dragon, Beryllintranox, they maintain a constant dialogue with the Red Dragon, Malystyx. They enjoy cordial relations with the other dragon overlords as well. Payment from Skie and Beryl for their mercenary services generates considerable income for the Order.

Although they work very hard to forge and maintain alliances with the dragon overlords, the Dark Knights understand that the Great Dragons ultimately will prove their rivals for control of the world. And, while the Knights are prepared for war with the dragons, they know they will lose if it comes too soon. So they carefully avoid getting involved in disputes between dragon overlords or showing too much favor to any single one.

The Knights of Takhisis eagerly seek alliances with other chromatic dragons, too—especially blues, their most valued allies before and during the Chaos War. An

undisclosed number of young blue dragons (several dozen, at least) live in and around Neraka, serving as guards, mounts, and advisers. The blue dragons like working and fighting alongside humans, and often “adopt” their riders, treating them as they would their mates or offspring.

Numerous small Evil dragons of other types also dwell with the Dark Knights, seeking the protection of numbers against the larger dragons. These small wyrms still fear their larger cousins, even though the Dragon Purge ended years ago. They also enjoy the food and treasure the Dark Knights provide.

Other Knightly Orders

The Dark Knights know that some day they will do battle with the Knights of Solamnia again. Proudly recalling their sweeping victory over the Solamnics in 383 AC, they seem confident they can best their rivals once more, if they choose the place and time correctly.


Most Dark Knights bear a grudging respect for their Solamnic counterparts, however. They believe they faced a weak and soft enemy a generation ago, and that the Solamnics will prove a more worthy foe next time.

The only thing that would please the Dark Knights more than beating the Knights of Solamnia a second time is utterly destroying the Legion of Steel. They know the Legion would oppose any attempt from them to subjugate Ansalon again—that alone would mark the Legion for destruction. However, the real reason they detest this group is that the Legion's founder, Sara Dunstan, was a former Dark Knight herself.

The Knights of Takhisis consider Sara a traitor and deserter and the Legion nothing more than a body of treacherous cowards who ran out on them after the Chaos War. Actually, this belief has some basis in fact; many of the Legion's first members were deserters from the Knights of Takhisis, and more rogue knights continue to join the Legion every year.

The Dark Knights also resent the Legion for adopting the name of one of its most famous Knights, Steel Brightblade, who led the final assault on Chaos





during what has become known as the Battle of the Rift. They believe Legionnaires to be dishonorable opponents, not worthy of his name. Any Legionnaires unlucky enough to be captured alive by Knights of Takhisis can expect a short imprisonment—before execution.

Allied Groups

New allies of the Knights include the dwarves of Thoradin, with whom Abrena maintains a trade and military agreement. The dwarves receive the Knights' protection from the ogres of Blade, in addition to mining rights in portions of Neraka. For their part, the Dark Knights receive weapons, gems, and manufactured goods. They also use Thoradin as a base for their imminent campaign against Blade.

Goals and Activities

Today, from the point of view of most in Ansalon, the Dark Knights have assumed a largely mercenary role. Talons and wings operate throughout the dragon realms, serving garrison duty and keeping the populace under control. The Dark Knights are ruthlessly efficient in both roles. Some minor human rulers also employ wings as shock troops in battle and to guard against insurrections. The Knights actively round up troublemakers in Skie's territory, marching them away, never to be seen again. Dark paladins also act as administrators and liaisons between Beryl and the folk of her realm.

The Dark Knights claim they work only for "honorable" employers, though it isn't clear exactly what that means. The Governor-General handles all negotiations with prospective employers, receiving most payments directly at her base in Neraka. To date, only rulers have successfully hired Dark Knight troops; Abrena seems unwilling to supply troops to adventurers or revolutionaries.

Though many might wonder whether Ariakan would have approved of such mercenary activity, it certainly helps fill the Knighthood's coffers, seriously depleted ever since the Chaos War. And, some would argue that Ansalon functioned as well or better under the Dark

Knights' control than it did before Ariakahs invasion during the Summer of Chaos. The Knights' current work merely puts to good use the excellent military and administrative skills they displayed at the end of the Fourth Age, the Governor-General would explain.

It also gives them a believable cover for their current espionage activities.

The Dark Knights' mercenary work is actually an elaborate ruse designed to allow them to rebuild their Order's strength without alerting anyone to the danger they pose. Everywhere they serve, the Knights carefully note local defenses and military organization, storing away the information for future use. Their mercenary duties allow the Dark Knights to unobtrusively gather the intelligence they need to conquer Ansalon again.

Invasion Plans

The Dark Knights, aware that dragons always desire more territory, keep vigilant watch on their red dragon neighbors, Malystryx and Fenalysten. In fact, emissaries from Neraka frequent the lair of Fenalysten, known to men as Cinder. They have told Cinder of their plan to invade the Estwilde and have offered an exchange of territory that would give them an overland route for their armies and give the dragon a slice of the Khalkists.

Ultimately, the Knights hope to seize not only the Estwilde but also Nordmaar. In preparation for this campaign, they have forced the draconians of Teyr to become a vassal state of Neraka. In return for a reasonable amount of independence for their adopted country, the draconians have promised to send units to march alongside the Knights.

Though the port of Sanction on the New Sea has resisted initial invasion attempts, the Knighthood has no intention of allowing the city or its ruler, the sorcerer Hogan Bight, to live in peace. The Knights have dispatched an army to block the passes leading northeast from Sanction Vale, and the troops split their time between raiding the valley and building a fortress, which they intend to use as a forward base to launch direct assaults on the city.

Meanwhile, the Knights are on the verge of an invasion of Blöde, taking advantage of their dwarf allies' knowledge of the mountains. Until the attack begins in force, the Dark Knights continue to launch raids into Blade from both Neraka and Thoradin.

The Knights also hope to obtain the secret of the dwarves' fireweapon technology, but the Daewar Severus Stonehand and his subjects have refused to part with it so far. Dark Knights assigned to tasks in Thoradin have instructions to quietly seize any information about fireweapons that they can lay their hands on. The Knights would gladly break their alliance if they could get the dwarves' secrets—perhaps from the exiled Zhakar?

Joining the Dark Knights

Like the Solammics, the Knights of Takhisis require candidates for membership to have a sponsor of at least Champion reputation. However, the sponsor's word is not enough to get an applicant considered for membership.

Becoming a Squire

All candidates for membership in the Order must undergo a program of rigorous physical training and indoctrination. Most start this training at the age of twelve, and no candidates are accepted after age fourteen.

From the moment a candidate applies for entry into the Order, he devotes his life to training and preparing for the Test of Takhisis, which will determine his worthiness to become a Knight of the Lily. In effect, he assumes the Knight of the Lily role at this time, so a hero who begins play with any other role cannot become a Dark Knight.

This training lasts about three years, after which the candidate automatically becomes a squire in the Order of the Lily. (Anyone who would not qualify to become a squire, sadly, does not survive the training.) Thereafter, his commander assigns him various tasks to prepare him for full membership in the Knighthood.

Advancing in the Order

Although the three divisions of the Knighthood are theoretically equal, all members begin their careers as squires in the Order of the Lily and prove themselves as warriors.

When the squire's reputation reaches the Adventurer category, he must return to Neraka to undergo a Test of Takhisis, much like the Solammic Knight's Trial.

☞ Test of Takhisis

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Presence
Opposition ability:	Presence

Comments: The hero must give an accounting of himself before three ranking Knights (one from each order) assigned to his Test by the Governor-General. The Knight with the highest rank (or the Adjudicator, if present) provides the opposition score.

To be found worthy, an applicant must have assumed the Knight of the Lily role. Those who fail this action face immediate execution. There is no appeal.

Should the applicant stand accused of unknighthly behavior, the Adjudicator must resolve the question of a violation of the Vision or Code (see next page) before the Test can proceed.

Mishap: The applicant has unwittingly blasphemed the name of the Dark Queen or her Order of Knights, which denies him the honorable funeral due other applicants who fail the Test.

Entering the Order of the Lily

A squire seeking knighthood prepares himself by spending the day before his Test of Takhisis in solitary prayer to the Dark Queen. Before three Knights as described above (one of whom must be his sponsor), he takes his dark vows, offering his Queen his body, heart, and spirit. Upon passing the ritual Test, he receives the skull-shaped helm of a Dark Knight and a breastplate emblazoned with the death lily.





Entering the Order of the Skull

A Knight can enter the Order of the Skull once he has completed at least one quest as a Dark Knight and demonstrated his interest in the workings of dark mysticism. His adventure must have promoted the Knighthood's interests in some fashion, and he must provide a reliable witness or submit tangible proof of his deeds.

Reliable witnesses include other Dark Knights or any individual with a demeanor derived from a card whose value is less than 5. Tangible proof might include a prisoner, a treasure won (presented to the Knighthood, of course), or a trophy from a defeated foe.

In any case, the Knight then undertakes a Test of Takhisis, described above.

On entering the Order of the Skull, the Knight begins a period of study with dark mystics, after which he may improve his Spirit code by one grade but lower one of his Physical codes one grade.

Entering the Order of the Thorn

A Knight seeking to wield the powers of dark sorcery in the name of Takhisis may attempt to enter the Order of the Thorn after completing one quest as a Knight and satisfying the conditions required to enter the Order of the Skull. A successful Knight begins a regimen of study with the Gray Robes, after which he may improve his Reason code instead of his Spirit code.

Violations of the Code

Should one Knight accuse another of violating the Vision or the Code, the Order handles the matter in much the same fashion as Knights of Solamnia handle questions of honor (see page 35).

Adjudicating the Code

According to the Knighthood's tradition, the Governor-General selects a Knight from a chosen few in command positions (usually of Master reputation) to adjudicate exceptions to the Code when a Knight stands accused of a violation. The outward, visible sign of this *Adjudicator* is a scepter, presented to the Knight by Mirielle Abrena.

If the Adjudicator decides the Code has been broken and permits no exception, he metes out punishment to the offender immediately. Since a Knight who casts aside the Code is seen to have also violated the Vision and broken the Blood Oath, the punishment is generally death.

Unlike the Solamnic Measure, the Code permits Knights of Takhisis to lie, steal, and murder—if such behavior advances the Vision. No Knight may commit such acts for personal gain or through loss of self-control. Knights of Takhisis are not prone to looting, wanton destruction, or other capricious acts, deemed adverse to the advancement of their Vision of an ordered world.

Execution is carried out by the Adjudicator, or by the Knight's commander, in the Adjudicator's absence. Normally, the Knights do not view death as the ultimate end, but rather as advancement to a higher rank. Takhisis, the final judge of a mortal's life, is believed to reward her Knights upon their deaths for their faithful service. However, a Knight found guilty of breaking the Code could have reason to fear Her Dark Majesty's wrath in the aftermath, for she punishes eternally.

A Knight who wishes to appeal the ruling of the Adjudicator may do so: Once his spirit is dispatched to Takhisis, she will hear the plea. Before the Chaos War, the Dark Queen was believed to send Knights wrongfully judged back to Krynn to correct the error. As the Knights believe that Takhisis will one day return, Adjudicators take care to make their decisions based on the facts.

Types of Violations

As Dark Knights enjoy considerable leeway in interpreting the Code, particularly when it comes to personal conduct, their categories of severity differ quite a bit from those used by Solamnic Knights.

✶ **Trivial violation:** The Knight allegedly violated a rule of common courtesy when dealing with a superior (or an employer, when serving as a mercenary), gave offense to a fellow Knight, or failed to carry out a minor order from a superior though no fault of his own.

❖ **Minor violation:** The Knight stands accused of insulting a fellow Knight, disobeying a trivial order, striking a cowardly blow against an honorable opponent, telling an unnecessary lie, cheating or stealing during a quest, or failing to carry out an important order through misjudgment or inattention.

❖ **Major violation:** The Knight allegedly has slain a fellow Knight, lied to superior officer (the Code tolerates lying to enemies and outsiders, but not to one's superiors), failed to carry out a critical order through misjudgment or inattention, or betrayed the Knighthood in some other way.

❖ **Egregious violation:** The Knight is accused of willfully disobeying a direct order of any kind, stealing funds from the treasury or from another Knight, divulging the Knighthood's secrets to someone outside the Order, assisting a rogue knight in escaping, or committing another blatant act of selfishness or betrayal.

Once the Knight and his accuser have stated their cases, the hero attempts the following action:

➤ Adjudication of the Code

Difficulty:	Varies
Action ability:	Presence
Opposition ability:	Presence

Comments: The difficulty of defending oneself before the Adjudicator depends on the severity of the alleged violation.

❖ *Trivial:* Average (8).

❖ *Minor:* Challenging (12).

❖ *Major:* Daunting (16).

❖ *Egregious:* Desperate (20).

As with Solamnic questions of honor, the Narrator may adjust the difficulty of the action based on the strength of the case against the Knight. Should the charge seem entirely unwarranted, the Narrator may make this action *easy* or not require it at all. In fact, anyone making a baseless charge against a fellow Knight has himself committed a major violation of the Code.

The Adjudicator's Presence score serves as the opposition for this action.

A Knight other than the accuser or the accused may speak on the case and affect the verdict. Such an advocate must rank at least as high in the Knighthood as the person he is speaking against. Should he offer a statement against an accused hero, the player must subtract the advocate's Presence from his action score. However, if the advocate supports the accused hero, the player adds his Presence score to the action score. The Adjudicator will hear only an advocate who has witnessed the incident in question or possesses relevant knowledge.

An advocate who intervenes successfully on either side receives a free attempt to improve his Presence score. Should he fail in his advocacy attempt, however, he must make an immediate *challenging* Presence action. Failing means the advocate Knight loses a point of Presence.

In all cases, failing to defend oneself before the Adjudicator means execution for the accused Knight, with no appeal. **Mishap:** The accused has unwittingly blasphemed the name of the Dark Queen or her Order of Knights, which earns him torture before his execution.

The Legion of Steel

This new knightly organization arose during the Dragon Purge as a force for order, tempered by freedom, in a world increasingly ruled by the ambitious and the strong without regard for the weak.


Organization

Though the rogue knight Sara Dunstan originally conceived the Legion of Steel as a covert Order, it has operated openly all across Ansalon for almost twenty years. The group continues its clandestine activity in some of Ansalon's more hazardous realms, however, making the Legion an organization of two parallel groups working toward the same ends.

Cells

Originally, the Legion comprised a web of covert *cells* across the continent, which continue to operate in Dragon Realms and in other areas hostile to the Legion.





Each cell consists of anywhere from a pair of Legionnaires to two dozen of them living and working in the same area. In larger cells, only the leader knows all the cell's members. Only cell leaders have any knowledge about other cells and their activities—and even that is limited: They may know one or two other leaders, but they have no information about their members. In this way, an enemy's discovery of one cell could threaten only a few others.

The Legion passes on messages and orders through cell leaders using a system that protects their anonymity. A Legionnaire with a message to pass along to a cell leader leaves a prearranged signal for him to notice: a ribbon tied to a tree, a curtain drawn over a shop window, a jar of wine left on a doorstep, or the like. Upon seeing the signal, the cell leader goes to a prearranged place and picks up the message, without ever seeing the messenger. The leader then disseminates the message or orders to his cell and may even pass it on, should circumstances require.

Plenty of Legionnaires prefer remaining in clandestine cells, even in areas that welcome the Legion. Some of these members feel they can be more useful if they remain anonymous, while some of them have something to hide. For example, the Legion still includes a fair number of former Knights of Takhisis—these Legionnaires would prefer not to be found or identified.

In any case, the Legion considers its clandestine arm as legitimate as its public one. Anonymous Legionnaires have the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the Order and must answer to the senior officers.

Circles

Since the completion of the Legion's Solace headquarters in 11sc, the Order has adopted a more open organization modeled after the structure of Solamnic *circles* (see page 26). Every Legionnaire belongs to a circle, except for anonymous members of covert cells.

The head of the local circle often maintains contact with the leaders of cells in his area, seeking to protect them even though they do not fall under his authority.

Senior Officers

A *High Elder* based in Solace rules the entire Legion, cells and circles alike. A Plainsman named Silver Claw was elected to this post only recently.

Three officers called *Keepers* assist the High Elder. These four senior officers are appointed by election, just like the Solamnic Grand Master and High Knights (see page 27). Any Legionnaire can vote for a Keeper or High Elder.

The four senior officers officially serve for life, but they often step down in favor of younger and more energetic successors, or simply to taste the freedom of being rank-and-file Legionnaires for a while.

In times of war or other danger, the four senior officers often appoint *Centurions* to take charge of specific matters. A Centurion's rights and responsibilities resemble those of a Solamnic Warrior Lord (see page 27).

Rank and Precedence

While Dark Knights stress the importance of one's military rank, the Legion values personal achievement (reputation). In fact, this knightly group does not divide its members into individual orders or ranks.

Of course, heads of circles and cell leaders have the last word on all matters that directly concern their groups, while the four senior officers hold authority over all other Legionnaires. Generally speaking, however, the Legionnaire with the highest reputation outranks his less experienced comrades.

The Legacy

The Legacy—a code of conduct derived from instructions Sara Dunstan gave her followers just before her death—provides the moral anchor for the Legion of Steel. This ideology resembles the Measure of the Knights of Solamnia and the Code of the Knights of Takhisis in that it contains instructions from the Order's founder on how members should act. Unlike the other two works, however, the Legacy has never been written down, at Sara's request. Many Legionnaires have written about it over the years, however.

All prospective Legionnaires receive extensive instruction in the Legacy. Mentors examine them carefully to test their ability to live according to its tenets before accepting them as full Legionnaires (see page 51).

When speaking about the Legacy, every Legionnaire offers a slightly different variation. The most widely accepted version contains six key points.

Have the Courage to Do Right

The right thing to do is seldom the easy thing to do, Sara told her followers, and doing right often entails suffering. A Legionnaire must prepare himself to sacrifice wealth, pride, and personal safety for the greater Good. When trying to determine the right thing to do, a Legionnaire should remember the following:

- ❖ Personal preferences carry no weight—no task is beneath a Legionnaire's dignity if it brings a Good end.
- ❖ When faced with two alternatives, choose the plan most likely to succeed.
- ❖ Sometimes one must harm another to achieve a right and Good result.

Know Yourself

A Legionnaire must understand his own weaknesses, limitations, and foibles. To attempt a task for which one is not suited invites failure, Sara said, and failure leads to unnecessary suffering. In addition:

- ❖ Self-deception is more dangerous than any sword or serpent's tooth.
- ❖ A Legionnaire should never choose a course of action out of greed, fear, ignorance, or laziness.
- ❖ The difference between heroism and villainy lies in how strongly self-interest guides one's thinking.

Respect Virtue

Legionnaires should respect virtue, and only virtue, wherever they might find it. Station and power do not command respect, Sara pointed out, wisdom and good character do—in anyone who possesses them.

She also warned that Legionnaires should beware the power of misdirected virtue: An enemy with courage, loyalty, cunning, and persistence is deadly, and often underestimated.





Stay Alert

Failure through adversity is a shame, Sara said, but failure through inattention is a disgrace. Related advice includes:

- ❖ Be skeptical, but consider what truths might hide within every lie.
- ❖ Live every moment as though it could be your last.

Everyone Deserves Justice

All beings have an equal right to justice, Sara told her followers, challenging them to make justice their primary goal.

- ❖ Justice is a two-edged sword. It punishes the thief, the murderer, the cheater, the liar, and the glutton. However, it also brings compassion to those who have been robbed, injured, cheated, misled, or deprived. Justice must seek to heal wounds as vigorously as it seeks to bring vengeance.
- ❖ Justice is as generous as it is ruthless.

Never Give Up

Only death ends a Legionnaire's struggle, said Sara. The world will always hold battles to be fought for justice.

- ❖ A Legionnaire may set aside an unfinished task, but never forget it.
- ❖ Patience and wisdom can win the day after passion and ingenuity have failed.

The Legion Today

Legionnaires stay busy across Ansalon performing feats both grand and humble: Patching a hole in an old widow's roof is just as important in the eyes of the Legion as bearing arms against a minion of one of the dragon overlords. Every member of this Order dedicates his life to restoring freedom, justice, and prosperity to Ansalon in any way he can.

The Legion owns very little in its own right. It controls a few businesses and owns some buildings in towns and cities where it operates actively, but it depends on individual Legionnaires to make their property available as necessary.

Nevertheless, circles and cells of Legionnaires operate everywhere there are people to serve, from Sanctrist Isle to Nordmaar.

The Legion exists openly where it can and covertly where it must—including areas like Sanctrist, Solamnia, and the fringes of Silvanesti, where local rulers, while not hostile, look askance at Legionnaires.

The Legion's headquarters in Solace is a rambling edifice perched high in a large vallenwood tree. The building, which overlooks the Last Heroes' Tomb, serves as the administrative center for the organization and residence for the High Elder.

Allies and Enemies

Some groups, such as the Solamnic Knight-hood, consider the Legion of Steel both friend and foe. Others, such as the Dark Knights, bitterly oppose its very existence.

The Knights of Solamia

The Legion seems a natural ally to the Knights of Solamnia. Both Orders require upright behavior from their members, and both stand against the darker forces still active on Krynn. To date, the Legion has never interfered with any activity the Solamnic Knights have undertaken, and individual Knights and Legionnaires have come to each other's aid numerous times.

Still, a great rivalry exists between the two Orders. The Knights respect Legionnaires for their strong character and sense of justice, but resent them for borrowing their best traditions. In the same vein, Legionnaires respect the Knights for their deeds and ideals, but consider them overburdened with meaningless traditions.

Usually, friction between Knights and Legionnaires comes to nothing more than harmless gibes. Sometimes, the rivalry proves beneficial, such as when the two groups seek to outdo each other in deeds of chivalry. At times, however, the rivalry causes problems: Brawls break out occasionally between Knights and Legionnaires, even though both groups prohibit such hot-headed behavior and offenders frequently find themselves disgraced or assigned to onerous duties. Of course, this punishment only exacerbates the hard feelings between the combatants.

Knights and Legionnaires sometimes let their desire to outdo their common rivals override their better judgment,

which has led them to take joint risks that end in tragedy. One of the most infamous such incidents occurred not long ago, when several Legionnaires and Knights met in Sanction and resolved to sally forth against the Knights of Takhisis besieging the city. The entire group was slain, forcing both Orders to abandon their clandestine activities in Sanction and start anew.

Allied Groups

The Legion stays on good terms with most rulers of free realms. Overall, the organization regards cavaliers with the same general sense of competition that it holds for the Solamnic Knights.

The Dark Knights

The Legion's greatest enemies are the Knights of Takhisis. Legionnaires suspect (correctly) that the Dark Knights' renewed dedication to Takhisis is based on the clever use of mortal sorcery and mysticism. They also have no doubt that the Dark Knights even now are enacting a plan to conquer Ansalon again—except that this time there is no Lord Ariakan to hold them to their strict code of honorable behavior.

This distrust alone would make the two Orders enemies, but the Dark Knights also make it their business to hunt down and execute Legionnaires (see page 42). Members of the Legion would never surrender to a Knight of Takhisis—they would prefer to die fighting rather than suffer the pain and indignity of execution at the Dark Knights' hands. (They also worry they might reveal vital information during the “interrogation” that usually precedes an execution.)

Legionnaires avoid negotiating with the Dark Knights whenever possible, but have been known to do so when left with no other choice. However, they assume that any such agreement will be broken as soon as the Dark Knights find it convenient.

Overall, the Legion believes Krynn would be better off with the Knights of Takhisis destroyed. They think the Solamnics made a foolish and dishonorable agreement by ceding land to them in the Council of the Last Heroes, and they gladly would join Sir Liam Ehrling, the Solamnic Grand Master, in an invasion of Neraka.

Other Enemies

The Legion also seeks to contain or eliminate the dragon overlords. They believe that defeating Malystryx, the most powerful of the Great Dragons, would loosen the wyrms' hold on Ansalon.

In addition, the Legion generally opposes any attempt to consolidate political power or conquer territory. The Order recognizes that strong government brings security to common folk, but distrusts the concept of empire.

The Legion also works to eliminate brigands, pirates, and other forces that prey on the innocent.

Goals and Activities

Although smaller than the other two knightly Orders, the Legion remains active over a larger area than both of them combined. Every major town in Ansalon holds at least a pair of Legionnaires working at one task or another.

Western Ansalon

In the realms of Sancrist, Ergoth, Solamnia, and Abanasinia, the Legion keeps tabs on strangers and aids the poor.


A few Knights of Solamnia in this area also belong to the Legion. These people, who take care to follow both the Measure and the Legacy, keep the High Elder informed about the Knights' plans and try to steer their fellow Solamnics toward courses of action more in accord with the Legion's emphasis on practical tactics.

Beryl's Realm

In Qualinesti, the Legion actively assists Gilthas, the Speaker of the Sun, in his underground trade with Thorbardin and his refugee smuggling (see Beryl's entry in *Dusk or Dawn*, Chapter Two). With Gilthas's blessing, the Legion smuggles goods to elf refugees in Southern Ergot and the isle of Cristyne.

The Legion also assists Porthios in guerrilla war against Beryllinthanox the elven Senate. Though there is no love lost between Porthios and Gilthas, the Legion sympathizes with them both. They see Gil doing as any good Legionnaire would: Swallowing his pride and his





honor to save lives. At the same time, they consider Porthios and his wife, Alhana Starbreeze, unjustly exiled from the elf community. They ensure that Porthios's raids do not upset Gil's activities and have pledged to help the dark elf place his son, Silvanoshei, on the throne when the time is right.

Silvanesti and Surroundings

The Legion works covertly to end Silvanesti's isolationist policies. Operatives from brass Iyesta's realm reconnoiter Malys's territory, help small groups of slaves escape from Takar in Sable's realm, and smuggle goods into the struggling communities along the Bay of Balifor. The elves resent this activity, which they fear might provoke Malystryx and Onysablet. Despite the magical shield of protection around their forest, the Silvanesti seem none too comfortable with their proximity to three Great Dragons.

Legionnaire champions of elven unification constantly attempt to penetrate the elves' shield, hoping to remind the Silvanesti of the desperate plight of their Qualinesti brethren. The effort has produced no results so far, but the Legion is patient.

Members of this Order also keep in contact with Iyesta, or Splendor, as they know they can count on her to provide a never-ending stream of information about local happenings.

The East

In spite of the considerable danger, the Legion maintains several covert cells in Neraka and Thoradin. Legionnaires posted to these areas generally confine themselves to espionage and helping rogue knights escape—bolder actions carry too much risk.

The Legion knows about the Dark Knights' desire to steal dwarven technology. Members in Thoradin keep all Dark Knights entering the city under close watch. Should any of them learn the secret to fireweapons, the Legion will slay or expose them.

The Legion also maintains a presence in most Dragon Realms, where members assist displaced residents in addition to spying on the dragon overlords.

Joining the Legion

Its devotion to secrecy notwithstanding, the Legion offers aspiring members a clear method of applying to the Order.

Heroes with the Legionnaire warrior role are already assumed to have completed the initial interview necessary to join the Order. Those with this role who started play with a reputation of Novice or lower are apprentices working under a mentor, while heroes of Adventurer or higher reputation have been fully inducted into the Legion.

Heroes who have not assumed the Legionnaire warrior role but want to join the Order need to take a trip to Solace.

Joining Openly

A hero can approach the Legion's headquarters in Solace openly for an interview with a member of the High Elder's staff. This interview usually requires the applicant to consider a number of moral dilemmas and answer a series of seemingly innocuous questions. From his answers, the interviewer determines how readily the hero could learn to live by the Legacy.

To pass the interview, a hero must have a demeanor and nature drawn from cards with values of 6 or less. In addition, he must succeed at the following action:

➤ Initial Interview

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Reason and Presence
Opposition ability:	Presence

Comments: The hero must succeed at both a Reason action and a Presence action to pass the interview. The examiner provides the opposition value.

If a Legionnaire sponsor of at least Champion reputation vouches for the applicant, the hero receives a +5 action bonus to each action. Those who fail the interview may try again after a year.

Mishap: The applicant has demonstrated contempt for the ideals of the Legacy so clearly that he may never attempt another interview again.

Successful candidates with a reputation of Adventurer or above should be

treated as experienced heroes seeking to join the Order (see next page). Those with a Novice reputation or lower who pass the interview are turned over to a mentor for training, as described below.

Joining Anonymously

Applicants who wish to join the Legion anonymously should come to Solace and stay the night at the Inn of the Last Home. A brief word with the staff alerts the Legion to the candidate's presence. If an applicant comes recommended by a high-ranking Legionnaire sponsor, the sponsor will have given him a star-shaped jewel—reminiscent of the Legion's star-jewel symbol—to pass to the Inn staff.

In any case, the anonymous applicant can expect to be interviewed within two days. Those who pass the interview will receive a mentor, as described below, if they have a reputation of Novice or less.

Mentors

In the Legion's early days, Sara Dunstan often reflected on the inspiring words her adopted son Steel Brightblade reportedly spoke to the Chaos god during the Battle of the Rift: *We still have each other.*

The Legion that bears Steel's name takes these words to heart. Its members teach and support each other, though the rest of the world might stand against them. To accomplish this goal, every hero of Novice reputation or lower who succeeds at the initial interview action becomes apprenticed to a mentor.

A mentor refines a hero's understanding of the Legacy and provides any other training he might need. Those who join the Order anonymously are assigned a discreet mentor willing to keep the hero's identity secret. To avoid the risk of favoritism, an apprentice's sponsor (if he had one) cannot act as his mentor.

Narrators can either create a mentor character who assigns quests to the apprentice or can assume the hero has completed his work with his mentor and was sent forth to quest on his own, as a test of his independence.

An apprentice must obey and serve his assigned mentor to the best of his ability.

He learns humility by cooking, cleaning, and performing other chores for the mentor. He hones his heart and mind through long discussions of the Legacy with his mentor, followed by solitary meditation. He faces constant tests his mentor springs on him unexpectedly to challenge his mind. Further, he accompanies the mentor on quests to observe a experienced Legionnaire in action and gain real-world experience before his own formal induction into the Legion.

Formal Induction

Once the apprentice's reputation reaches the Adventurer category, his mentor arranges for an induction ceremony. An induction can be held anywhere, but at least three Legionnaires of Master reputation or higher must be present, not counting the hero's mentor.

The three Legionnaires review the apprentice's performance and decide whether to admit him to the Order. Frequently, these examiners are anonymous. They might be robed, hooded, conceal in shadows, or disguised in another way.

To be inducted, the apprentice must first explain to the examiners what he has learned about the Legacy and describe quests in detail for them. They will certainly ask him many questions, as they try to fathom how he thinks and feels.

Narrators creating an induction for hero should base these questions on the description of the Legacy offered earlier, in addition to references directly related to the hero's recent quests. The hero should find it somewhat discomfiting that the examiners seem to know things about him that they shouldn't be able to know.


To satisfy the examiners, the hero must succeed in the action below:

➤ Induction Examination

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Presence
Opposition ability:	Presence

Comments: The examiner with the highest reputation provides the opposition value. If the apprentice has not assumed the Legionnaire warrior role, he receives a -5 action penalty. However, a reliable





witness—a Legionnaire other than the mentor or anyone with a demeanor drawn from a card with a white aura—provides a +1 action bonus per witness.

Examiners must resolve matters of the Legacy (see next page) before concluding the induction.

Those who fail the examination can either withdraw from the Legion or continue working toward full membership. Heroes who choose the latter are treated as any experienced hero seeking entrance into the Legion (see below).

Mishap: The applicant is dismissed from the Legion with no chance of ever becoming a member. If he has information damaging to the Order, he might be detained, at the Narrator's choice.

Experienced Applicants

If an applicant has a reputation of Adventurer or higher when he seeks entry into the Legion, or if he fails his examination after an apprenticeship, he must wait for an invitation to join.

After his initial interview (or failed examination), various Legionnaires observe the applicant covertly. After the hero's reputation has increased one category, they ask him to present himself in Solace for examination, as previously described. The applicant's recent quests must have included the following criteria (which the Legion based on Solamnic advancement requirements):

- ❖ Restoring something that was lost.
- ❖ One test of wisdom, three of generosity, and three of compassion.
- ❖ Rescuing an innocent.
- ❖ Discovering information of importance to the Legion and previously unknown to the Order.

In rare cases, the Legion immediately invites very worthy individuals to join, even if they have not made any special effort to enter. The procedure is similar to obtaining an honorary membership in the Knights of Solamnia (see page 33), except that a Legionnaire of at least Champion reputation must bring the hero's deeds to the attention of the High Elder or one of the Keepers.

The sorcerer Palin Majere, veteran of the Chaos War and friend to Sara Dunstan, reportedly received an honorary membership for his work in saving many Qualinesti elves from the Green Dragon.

Apprentices

Once formally inducted into the Legion, a hero receives his own apprentice. Training these applicants remains an important part of any Legionnaire's efforts. As the description of the Legionnaire warrior role in Chapter One shows, an apprentice is at once a great responsibility and a great liability: The hero mentor is simultaneously responsible for keeping the apprentice safe and for making sure he learns something—preferably though actual experience.

In most cases, Narrators should allow players to treat their hero's apprentices as second heroes. However, if the player gets into the habit of abandoning the apprentice while the hero undertakes exciting and dangerous adventures—always leaving him at home, posting him to guard duty, or sending him off on routine tasks—the apprentice likely will become frustrated and bored.

The Narrator can take control of an apprentice in this instance, should the hero fail a *challenging Presence (Presence)* action opposed by the apprentice's Presence score. The apprentice character might secretly follow his mentor, engage in some form of mischief that gets him into trouble, or attempt some other action that causes complications for the hero.

On the other hand, a hero should never foolishly place his apprentice at risk. If such action leads to the apprentice's death, the hero suffers the penalty on page 18, and stands guilty of a major violation of the Legacy (see next page).

Should a hero decide to dismiss his apprentice, perhaps to see how the character can get along on his own, the Narrator should shuffle the Fate Deck and draw one card. Drawing a Dragons card means the apprentice has died on the mission, and the hero suffers accordingly. Any other result indicates that the apprentice successfully completes the quest.

When an apprentice dies, is dismissed, or becomes a full Legionnaire, the hero receives another one to train.

Enforcing the Legacy

The Legion keeps order in its own house. All Legionnaires are expected to watch their comrades for signs of personal ambition, cowardice, cruelty, or other forms of behavior considered contrary to the Legacy.

The Legion handles violations of the Legacy much like the Solamnic Knights treat questions of honor (see page 35). A trio of Legionnaires of Master reputation or higher examines the accused. Because, like Dark Knights, Legionnaires enjoy considerable freedom to act, they differ from the Solamnic violation categories:

- 🔥 **Trivial violation:** The Legionnaire is accused of failing to carry out a minor task assigned by a superior, taking a life that might have been spared, refusing to render aid to another individual in a dangerous situation, or committed some other act or omission that led to a bad end.
- 🔥 **Minor violation:** The hero allegedly made an unprovoked attack on another, was caught brawling with a Knight or cavalier, failed to complete an important mission through misjudgment or inattention, or allowed fellow Legionnaires or innocents under the Legion's protection to come to harm through some error or omission.
- 🔥 **Major violation.** The Legionnaire accused of telling a damaging lie, failing to complete a critical mission through misjudgment or inattention, using his position in the Legion for personal gain, killing an innocent, or betraying the Legion in some other way.
- 🔥 **Egregious violation.** The accused has allegedly slain a fellow Legionnaire, failed a mission due to concern for his own safety or self-interest, or committed some other blatant act of selfishness or betrayal.

After hearing the charges against him, the hero has an opportunity to prove to the examiners that he has upheld the Legacy in his actions.

Upholding the Legacy

Difficulty:	Varies
Action ability:	Presence
Opposition ability:	Presence

Comments: The difficulty of proving that one has upheld the Legacy depends on the severity of the alleged offense, as does the punishment:

- 🔥 *Trivial violation:* Average (8).
- 🔥 *Minor violation:* Challenging (12).
- 🔥 *Major violation:* Daunting (16).
- 🔥 *Egregious violation:* Desperate (20).

As with Solamnic questions of honor and the Dark Knights' violations of the Code, the Narrator may adjust the difficulty of this action based on the strength of the case against the Legionnaire. Should the charge seem entirely unwarranted, the Narrator may make this action *easy* or not require it at all. Because the Legion is founded on the importance of its members supporting each other, anyone making a baseless charge against a fellow Legionnaire has committed an egregious violation of the Legacy. The examiner with the highest reputation opposes this action.

Failing in this action generally calls for expulsion from the Legion. For trivial violations, the examiners might merely issue a reprimand. Legionnaires found guilty of capital crimes or causing irreparable damage to the Legion are executed. In rare cases—when the Legionnaire's judgment is in question, not his character—the examiners may assign him to a hopeless and probably fatal mission. Should he complete the mission and survive, the Legion vindicates and reinstates him.

Mishap: The offense shows such disregard for the Legacy that the guilty party faces immediate execution.



CHAPTER THREE

leave the bodies.” Tanis’s mind was working quickly. “And hack up the door. Sturm, knock over a few tables. We’ll make it look as if we broke in here and got into a fight with these fellows....”

—Following a fight with goblins, Dragons of Autumn Twilight

Heroes can face some tricky combat-related situations in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game. As players become familiar with the SAGA rules and as their heroes grapple with ever more devious foes in ever more desperate situations, they are going to want to improvise a little.

They might want to know, for example, just how quickly they can travel from Palanthis to Solanthus if they really hurry. A hero backed into a corner during a barroom brawl might become interested in taking a swing on that chandelier overhead. With a little common sense and the advice presented in this chapter, Narrators can handle just about anything players might want to attempt.

Role-Playing Action Modifiers

Sometimes, players get so caught up in the details of their actions or in the specifics of combat that they forget they’re supposed to be role-playing.

So any time the Narrator wishes to encourage players to exercise a little more thought and imagination in their heroes’ actions, he can assign a modifier to their

action score based on how well the player handles the situation. These role-playing modifiers, applied to the value of the action card, can help resolve any action in which the Narrator considers player input important.

—4 points to the action score if the player makes no attempt to role-play or describe his hero’s action. For example, the uninspired player might say:

“I ask the Knight to sponsor me,” or “I knock down the guard.”

—2 points to the action score if the player makes only a feeble attempt to role-play the scene or is repeating an old trick:

“Gee, Sir Colfax, that’s really nifty armor you’re wearing. How about sponsoring me for Knighthood?” or

“I grab the carpet and yank it out from beneath the guard’s feet.”

+2 points to the action score if the player makes a reasonable effort at role-playing or tries an unexpected maneuver:

“Greetings, Sir Colfax. I, who last week brought you the news that the Knights of Takhisis were sending fresh troops to Palanthis, humbly request that you sponsor me for membership in the Solamnic Knighthood,” or

“I squint and look at the ceiling and, when the guard looks up, I yank the carpet out from under him.”

+4 points to the action score if the player makes a truly outstanding role-playing effort or invents a clever maneuver on the spot:

“Good morrow, Sir Colfax. For six months I have labored on behalf of the Knighthood. I hope now to become a Knight myself; if you would honor me by becoming my sponsor,” or

“I put out the torches and draw the curtains so it is really dark, then I crumple up the paper from the desk and scatter it all over the poor. I’ll wait in a shadowy corner for the guard to come along. When I hear the guard lighting the torch or stepping on the paper, I’ll yank the carpet out from under him.”

ADVANCED RULES

Combined Actions

In the FIFTH AGE game, just like in real life, groups working together can accomplish feats far too difficult for any single individual. When not engaged in combat, spellcasting, or magical item use, two or more heroes can work together to accomplish an action.

The difficulty, action ability, opposition ability, and mishap of a combined action vary according to what the heroes are attempting.

➤ Combined Action

Difficulty: —
Action ability: —
Opposition ability: —

Comments: For fairly simple tasks—such as two or more heroes trying to lift a heavy object—the hero with the highest applicable ability score performs the action, and each helper adds his relevant ability score to the action score.

For example, say Rig (St 7), Dhamon (St 8), and Shaon (St 6) all try to heave a stuck wagon out of the mud. Since the wagon is fully loaded, the Narrator considers this an *impossible* action. Together, however, the above group has an action score of 21 before Dhamon's player even plays a card from his Hand of Fate: 7+8+6. Should Dhamon play a Five card, the group achieves an action score of 26—quite enough to succeed.

Groups performing an *impossible* combined action do not automatically gain one quest, as an individual would (*Book of the Fifth Age*, Chapter Three).

Mishap: Any mishap in a combined action usually affects the entire group, though the Narrator can call for an interpretive or random card play to see if anyone escapes. (In such cases, any card with a white aura might let the hero avoid the mishap.) For example, if the group pushing the wagon suffers a mishap, someone suffers an indignity, such as slipping and falling in the mud.

➤ Coordinated Action

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Presence
Opposition ability: Varies

Comments: Complex or dangerous tasks require planning and leadership. Heroes faced with the task of repairing their damaged ship, for example, can't just apply sheer muscle to the job. And heroes trying to scale a mountain probably will fail unless they coordinate their efforts.

A party leader performs the coordinating action. If he must rely on another for knowledge to complete the task, the difficulty goes up to *challenging*. For example, if Dhamon, a rogue knight, leads his group in the construction of a siege engine, he faces an *average* task. If however, he tries to direct his party to repair a damaged ship, he'll have to rely on the skills of Rig, a mariner, making his task harder. (Or Rig could become temporary party leader and try an *average Presence* action himself.)

If the coordinating action succeeds, the hero with the highest relevant ability score (or the required knowledge) attempts the intended complex action, adding one-half the combined ability scores from his helpers to his action score. Players should round fractions down after adding the scores together.

For example, say Rig (Dx 6), Dhamon (Dx 6), and Shaon (Dx 5) all attempted to repair their damaged ship. In this case, Rig gains a +5 bonus to his action score ($6 + 5 = 11 \div 2 = 5.5$, rounded down to 5).

The leader (or acting leader's) Presence code determines how many people he can coordinate in a complex action:

Presence	Number of
A	Crowd (25 people)
B	Large group (10 people)
C	Small group (5 people)
D	Couple (2 people)
X	None

Mishap: Mishaps usually affect the whole group, though a Narrator can call for an interpretive card play to see if anyone escapes, as described for combined actions.



Card Play

In general, Narrators should use the game's action-score-based resolution system when heroes are attempting dramatic actions with a significant chance for failure, especially if the action's result can affect the course of play. When players attempt inconsequential actions, the Narrator should simply declare whether the action succeeds or fails, based on the heroes' abilities, a random draw, or even an aura-based resolution. This decision-making speeds up the game and discourages players from executing a series of nonsensical actions in hopes of ridding their hands of bad cards.

Several of the rules presented in this chapter and elsewhere in this book use the random draw action resolution technique, introduced at the end of Chapter Three in the *Book of the Fifth Age*. Narrators should use a random draw not only when the rules specifically call for one but also in any situation where the hero does not entirely control his own Fate.

Random draws also keep players from stalling while they build up their hands in preparation for a key event in their hero's life. A Solamnic Knight's player, for example, might break off a quest and return home to petition for advancement the minute he draws a Nine of Crowns card. That's manipulating fate too much.

Overland Movement

Chapter Three in the *Book of the Fifth Age* presents standard daily movement rates for cross-country travel in miles per hour and miles per day (assuming about eight hours of travel each day). These numbers are already generous, but even that's not always fast enough for heroes with a mission.

On the other hand, these standard movement rates assume ideal conditions. Natural hazards and accidents can slow movement or halt a group altogether.

However, when determining base travel times, Narrators should remember that in the FIFTH AGE game, the rules take a back seat to the story. Therefore, the heroes can move as quickly as the story demands.

If the players insist that their heroes can make a trip in less time than the Narrator says it takes, or if the Narrator wants to add a sense of urgency to the trip, he can use the following rules.

Quick March

Heroes can reduce their travel time by pushing themselves hard, skipping rest breaks, or simply spending a little extra time each day on the trail.

➤ Quick March

Difficulty:	Varies
Action ability:	Endurance
Opposition ability:	None

Comments: The difficulty of a quick march depends on how much time the heroes want to save.

- ☛ *Average (8):* The party saves about five minutes off an hourlong trip, one hour off a daylong trip, or one day off a weeklong trip.
- ☛ *Challenging (12):* The heroes cut about ten minutes off an hourlong trip, one and a half hours off a daylong trip, or a day and a half off a weeklong trip.
- ☛ *Daunting (16):* The group saves about twenty minutes off an hourlong trip, three hours off a daylong trip, or two days off a weeklong trip.
- ☛ *Desperate (20):* The heroes cut about thirty minutes off an hourlong trip or four hours off a daylong trip. However, no mortal can maintain this pace for more than a day.
- ☛ *Impossible (24):* The heroes save about forty-five minutes off an hourlong trip, but they can keep up this impossible rate only over a short distance.

The heroes must declare how long they will quick march and at what rate. Each hero involved in a quick march attempts this action at the end of the march (weaker heroes are supported and encouraged by the others). The march ends when the period the heroes have specified elapses or when they stop marching to pursue some other action (such as combat).

If a hero succeeds in this action, he loses a point of Endurance at the end of the march. Failing makes his Strength and Endurance scores drop 1 point for each point by which he missed his target score.

These losses persist for the same amount of time after the march as the hero spent marching. If the hero rests, he recovers lost ability score points at twice this rate. Should a quick march reduce any of his ability scores to zero or less, he suffers a mishap (see below). If a hero has been quick marching for several days, he can attempt an *average Endurance* action (at his reduced score) at the end of each full day of rest. If he succeeds, the hero recovers all his lost points immediately.

Mishap: The hero collapses from exhaustion when the quick march ends. He loses all his cards and falls unconscious until he receives care, just as if he had lost all his cards through combat wounds.

Quick March Example

Say that Petrick has an Endurance score of 7 and attempts to jog about a mile along a mountain trail in thirty minutes. According to the *Book of Fifth Age*, a

hero can move about five miles through mountains in a day, or about one mile an hour. Moving the same distance in thirty minutes makes this action *desperate*.

Petrick plays the Seven of Helms, which gives him an action score of only 14. Fortunately, the Suit of Helms is trump for Endurance actions, so Petrick gets to turn over an extra card from the Fate Deck. He draws the Four of Swords for his trump bonus, giving him a final action score of 18.


Because he needed a score of 20, Petrick fails the action and temporarily loses 2 points of Strength and Endurance. He suffers this reduction for thirty minutes after his quick march—or for fifteen minutes, if he rests.

Other Effects of Quick Marches

Heroes cannot surprise opponents unless they end their quick march first. If an opponent tries to surprise the heroes, they receive a -4 action penalty to their attempt to avoid surprise.

Groups traveling with vehicles or mounts can attempt quick marches. Any card a mounted hero plays for this action





becomes automatic trump; he still has to attempt the action, though, as riding a mount requires some physical effort, and a long trip on a mount still involves some walking. The player of the mounted hero also uses a card from his hand to attempt the quick march action for the mount, using its Physique score as its action ability with a -3 penalty (carrying a rider is hard work).

If the heroes are all riding in a vehicle, only the driver must attempt this action; any card the driver plays is trump. If a team of creatures pulls the vehicle, the team makes one action attempt with a card from the driver's hand, using the group's average Physique rating as the action ability.

Shortcuts

Heroes moving overland upon anything but a road or clear terrain can save time by surveying the path ahead and choosing the shortest possible route. Shortcuts usually prove less demanding than quick marching, but they generally don't save as much time and they can lead to dangerous mishaps.

➤ Take a Shortcut

Difficulty:	Varies
Action ability:	Reason
Opposition ability:	None

Comments: Like quick marches, the difficulty of finding a good shortcut depends on how much time the heroes want to save.

- ☛ **Challenging (12):** The heroes cut about five minutes off an hourlong trip, one hour off a daylong trip, or one day off a weeklong trip.
- ☛ **Daunting (16):** The group saves about ten minutes off an hourlong trip, one and a half hours off a daylong trip, or a day and a half off a weeklong trip.
- ☛ **Desperate (20):** The heroes cut about twenty minutes off an hourlong trip, three hours off a daylong trip, or two days off a weeklong trip.
- ☛ **Impossible (24):** The group saves about thirty minutes off an hourlong trip or four hours off a daylong trip.

After the heroes declare how much time they hope to save with their shortcut, the party leader or scout attempts this action. Failure means the group cannot find a favorable route and saves no time in the journey.

Mishap: The Narrator can select one of the following mishap effects:

- ☛ **Accident:** Each player draws one card from the Fate Deck. A Dragons card means the hero met with some kind of accident. Affected players then draw another card; the hero loses 1 point from the ability score associated with the suit of the card selected. Turning up another Dragons card means the hero has suffered a catastrophic accident and loses all his cards. He remains unconscious until tended. Ability score losses persist for one day, or half a day if the hero stops to rest.
- ☛ **Circle march:** Instead of finding a shorter route, the heroes walk in a circle and wind up back where they started.
- ☛ **Detour:** The group strays off course and winds up somewhere other than intended. The heroes know their approximate location, but instead of saving time, they have made the trip take twice as long as normal.
- ☛ **Lost:** The heroes stray off course and have no idea where they are. To get their bearings again, they must travel for at least an hour. Then the leader or scout attempts a *challenging Reason* action. Failure means the group remains lost. While lost, the party travels in a random direction of the Narrator's choice.
- ☛ **Terrain hazard:** The group stumbles into dangerous terrain. (See the next section for hazard effects.)

Other Effects of Shortcuts

Unlike a quick march, taking a shortcut has no effect on the group's ability to achieve surprise. However, heroes following a shortcut (even a failed shortcut) are concentrating on their route so much, they suffer a 4 action penalty to any attempts they make to avoid surprise.

Groups traveling with vehicles cannot attempt shortcuts unless they abandon

their vehicles. Mounted groups can attempt shortcuts, but accrue a 4 action penalty, as mounts might encounter terrain hazards that would prove less of an obstacle to those on foot.

Used once successfully, a shortcut becomes a known route. Heroes wishing to use this path later need not attempt this action again.

Combining Quick Marches with Shortcuts

Groups willing to assume a risk can quick march while taking a shortcut. The heroes involved must play the appropriate cards, with a -4 action penalty for combining the two actions. If both succeed, the players may add the time savings together. However, a combined shortcut/quick march cannot reduce the total travel time by more than three-quarters.

For example, Petrick decides his party on a shortcut though a heavy forest and decides the heroes should pick up the pace as well. Their ultimate nation lies about sixty miles away, roughly a six-day trip. Petrick decides to combine a *challenging* shortcut and an average quick march. If both actions succeed, the party will save about two days. As party leader, Petrick attempts a *challenging Reason* action with a 4 penalty find a shortcut. Then every hero in the group makes an *average Endurance* action with a -4 penalty.

Of course, if the shortcut fails, the entire group could be quick marching into some sort of trouble. Should the party encounter a terrain hazard in the shortcut, the quick march ends, and the heroes must attempt their quick march resolution actions before dealing with the hazard.

Terrain Hazards

Heroes who wander off clear terrain or roads might stumble onto ground that proves dangerous or inconvenient.

The Narrator can refer to this section when the heroes encounter a terrain hazard due to a shortcut mishap, or he can place these hazards in their path for them to overcome. A hazard can figure

prominently in an adventure scene as obstacle for the group.

If a group encounters a hazard as part of a scene, the leader or scout can attempt a challenging Perception action to avoid running headlong into the hazard. (For quick marching groups, the action becomes daunting.) However, the group must detour around the hazard or deal with it in some other way. Failing the Perception action brings the group stumbling right into the hazard.

Common hazards are described below. Each description begins with a parenthetical list of the general type of terrain where it occurs, followed by its game effects. In each case, the Narrator may choose to allow heroes with the yeoman or an appropriate barbarian role an automatic trump bonus for actions related to their home terrain.

Brambles or Tangle

(Forest, swamp, hills)

The group encounters dense vegetation that obscures vision and slows movement. Though not dangerous itself, the vegetation might hide an enemy or another hazard. Visibility within the tangle never extends beyond near missile range. The heroes find their Agility, Dexterity, and Perception scores reduces by 2 points when they move or fight in the undergrowth. This hazard could delay a party anywhere from ten minutes to one day, at the Narrator's option.

Cave-In or Rockfall

(Mountains, subterranean)

When falling rock endangers the heroes, they first attempt to avoid surprise. surprised, they must immediately defend themselves from two missile attacks from falling rock; those not surprised suffer only one. The attack's severity varies with the size of the rockfall, which the Narrator selects from the table below:

Size	Damage	Difficulty of Escape
Minor	4	Average
Major	8	Challenging
Severe	12	Daunting



Adjustments for armor and shields do not apply to a hero's defensive action, nor do they reduce damage.

A mishap means debris buries the unlucky hero. He can escape on his own with a *challenging Reason* action, followed by a *Strength* action whose difficulty depends on the rockfall's size. If either action fails, the hero must be rescued.

To accomplish a rescue, a hero must succeed in the action below:

➤ **Rescue a Cave-in Victim**

Difficulty:	Varies
Action ability:	Perception
Opposition ability:	None

Comments: One hero attempts the rescue, adding a +1 action bonus for each person assisting. The difficulty of the action corresponds to the chart above. A search for a buried hero takes ten minutes. Victims lose 1 point of *Endurance* each hour from a minor rockfall, 1 point per ten minutes from a major one, and 1 point per minute from a severe rockfall. A buried hero reduced to zero *Endurance* points loses all his cards and dies if not rescued within an hour. Once rescued, the hero stays unconscious until someone tends his injuries.

Mishap: A cave-in of the excavated area around the buried individual injures everyone involved, forcing them each to lose a card and start the rescue over.

Crevasse or Dust Pit

(*Snow, desert*)

The ground under the heroes' feet seems dry, but too soft or weak to hold any weight. Upon encountering this hazardous terrain, the hero in the lead (most likely the scout) must make a *daunting Perception* action. (If he has taken precautions, such as probing the ground ahead with a walking stick, the action becomes *challenging*.) Failing the action means the hero falls into the crevasse or dust pit.

Anyone so unfortunate should immediately attempt a *challenging Endurance* action. Those who fail plummet to the bottom, suffering a one-card injury. Heroes who succeed manage to grab a handhold

on their way down. They suffer no injury but must succeed in an *average Strength* or *Agility* action to climb out again.

A hero who falls into a dust pit must make a *challenging Spirit* action. Failure means the hero panics and sinks to the bottom, where he lies buried just as though caught in a major rockfall. His companions can rescue him as though rescuing a cave-in victim (see above). Succeeding in the *Spirit* action lets a hero attempt a *challenging Agility* action to escape the dust pit on his own. Otherwise his friends can rescue him automatically.

In the event of a mishap, the hero(es) next in line must make *challenging Endurance* actions to avoid falling in, too.

Precipice or Canyon

(*Mountain, hills*)

The heroes encounter a sheer drop or wall, too steep to scale, which forces them to either follow or detour around it. While near the cliffside wall, the group may be subjected to rockfalls, at the Narrator's discretion. A group at the top of such a precipice remains in no particular danger unless faced with poor visibility. In such cases, the person in the lead may fall off the edge, according to the procedure under "Crevasse or Dust Pit."

Quicksand or Bog

(*Swamp, forest*)

The group encounters a soggy area where groundwater makes the footing treacherous. The hazard's effects resemble those of a dust pit, except that a hero sinking to the bottom finds himself buried as though by a severe rockfall or cave-in.

Advanced Combat

Players who crave truly dramatic combat scenes do more than just trade blows with the enemy—they approach combat with a sense of flair and daring.

This section broadens the selection of combat options available to heroes. It's helpful before reading further to review the standard terms at the beginning of Chapter Four in the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

All the action descriptions included here assume a fairly even fight, with neither side having any significant advantage over the other. When this isn't the case, Narrators should refer to "Combat Advantages" on page 68.

Some of the actions below have no indicated difficulty, action ability, or opposition ability, because they apply to the action the hero just attempted—the player does not play another card.

While reading these sample actions, players should think of creative ways to combine or alter them to form new actions. Some examples are provided.

Offensive Actions

When attacking a foe, the hero has a number of advanced combat options. Some examples of creative attacks follow, arranged alphabetically.

➤ Charge

Difficulty: Easy (4)
Action ability: Agility
Opposition ability: Agility

Comments: A hero speeds toward the enemy across an open space, using his momentum to help launch a melee attack against one opponent. Heroes can attempt the charge action only when the group has just closed to melee range with a foe. The hero must select an opponent to charge before playing a card.

Even if the group successfully enters melee range, charging becomes an option only for heroes who can move in a fairly straight line through open terrain. Charging is not possible up steep inclines or through dense undergrowth. However, any unusual condition that allows rapid movement in a straight line makes a charge possible: A hero might swing on a vine or chandelier while making a charge, to avoid obstacles that would otherwise prevent this action.

A hero who successfully charges can attempt an immediate melee attack with a +3 bonus to his Strength score. However, the hero must face a penalty of -3 in defending against the foe's counterattack in the *next exchange*: The hero's momen-

tum either carries him past the foe or makes him stop short; either result creates a moment of instability or vulnerability for the hero after the charge exchange.

Individual heroes can attempt to charge, or the leader can direct the whole group in a charge. In the latter case, the difficulty becomes average.

Mishap: The foe gets a free counter-attack. If a single hero was charging, his intended target can make this assault. If the entire group was charging, however, every opponent within melee range free counterattack.

➤ Cut or Smash

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Strength or Dexterity
Opposition ability: Endurance or Agility

Comments: A hero can cut or smash object to destroy it. He uses Strength action ability if applying a melee weapon or natural weapon (claws, etc.) to an object or Dexterity if using a missile weapon.

Missile attacks against objects at far missile range have a difficulty or challenging rather than average. If no creature holds or guards the object, the action goes unopposed. The action's difficulty also assumes the hero is trying to cut or smash a fairly small object that is neither exceptionally sturdy nor particularly fragile. such items include taut ropes, metal flasks, torches, and chairs. Smaller or tougher objects make the action harder, while larger or weaker objects make it easier.

In some cases, the Narrator might assign an object a Physique score, forcing a hero to inflict that many damage points to destroy it (see Appendix Four). Of course, common sense also must apply: A hero armed with a mace cannot chop through a rope or destroy a book easily. And, while someone could smash a gem with a sword, it would be much easier with a mace.

Mishap: The hero must defend himself against an immediate counterattack from the creature guarding or holding the item. If the object is unattended, he must defend himself against an attack from his own weapon, due to an unexpected fumble.



➤ Disarm

Difficulty: Challenging (12)

Action ability: Strength or
Dexterity

Opposition ability: Endurance

Comments: A hero can attempt a disarm action to make a foe drop his weapon (or another item in his grasp). Of course, he cannot force a foe to drop an item he is wearing, such as a ring or backpack.

At melee range, a hero uses his Strength to disarm a foe. At farther ranges, Dexterity becomes the action ability, as he tries to shoot an object from his foe's grasp.

Normally, a successful disarm action causes the opponent to drop his weapon but inflicts no damage. Should the hero's action score exceed the difficulty rating by at least 5 points, however, the opponent suffers normal damage in addition to dropping his weapon.

A hero can attempt a disarm action in combination with a charge or reckless attack (see below), or both.

Mishap: The hero must defend himself against a free counterattack from his foe.

➤ Fast Attack

Difficulty: —

Action ability: —

Opposition ability: —

Comments: Wanting to land a blow extra quickly, a hero must leave himself open to counterattacks. A fast attack works just like any other attack at personal, melee, or missile range. A hero making a fast attack resolves his action, including resulting damage, before his opponent counterattacks. In this way, he has a chance to incapacitate or kill his foe before he can react.

However, since a hero concentrating on speed cannot pay equal attention to self-protection, he can offer no defense against counterattacks during this exchange, if his foe survives the fast attack; armor and shield defense ratings still apply.

Heroes cannot combine this option with a charge, great blow, or reckless attack (see below), nor can they use it for a free attack gained as the result of a mishap or surprise.

Mishap: The hero faces an immediate counterattack from his opponent and can offer no defense.



➤ Grab

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Strength
Opposition ability:	Strength

Comments: A hero fighting at personal range can grab something his foe holds or wears and tear it away. A hard-to-grasp or well-anchored object makes the grab action *challenging*. Heroes cannot grab very small or dangerous items, such as rings or daggers, unless they successfully grapple the foe first (see below).

A hero can attempt a grab action the same minute as he successfully closes to personal range or grapples, but the combination increases the difficulty one degree.

Mishap: The hero has to defend himself against an immediate counterattack.

➤ Grapple

Difficulty:	Challenging (12)
Action ability:	Strength
Opposition ability:	Strength

Comments: A hero fighting at personal range can immobilize his foe instead of attacking. To attempt a grapple, the hero must have both hands free. If it succeeds, he inflicts damage points equal to his Strength score and holds the opponent immobile, unable to counterattack. If the attempt fails, the foe can counterattack.

In subsequent exchanges, a successful hero can maintain the grapple and inflict damage with an *easy Strength (Strength)* action. He inflicts damage points equal to his Strength score for each minute the grapple holds. If this maintenance action fails, the foe escapes his grasp and can counterattack normally.

Only after releasing his foe can the hero can attempt another action, such as a grab or a normal attack. A hero can attempt a grapple during the same combat minute as he successfully closed to personal range with no difficulty adjustment. However, if the grapple action fails, the hero faces a -3 action penalty when defending against the opponent's counterattack, just as if the hero had been charging.

Mishap: A mishap while attempting or maintaining a grapple forces the hero to defend against a free counterattack.

➤ Great Blow

Difficulty:	—
Action ability:	—
Opposition ability:	—

Comments: Should a hero wish to land an extra-devastating blow in combat, he leaves himself vulnerable to counterattacks. A hero attempting a great blow can double his Strength score for one normal attack at personal, melee, or missile range. However, because he puts all his effort into this attack, he can offer no active defense to his foe's counterattack during this exchange of blows (defense ratings from armor or shields still apply).

A hero can combine this option with a charge, adding the +3 action bonus from the charge before doubling his Strength score. (Charging gives the opponent a +3 Strength bonus when counterattacking in the next exchange.) A free attack cannot be a great blow, as such a blow requires some advance planning.

Mishap: The hero suffers an immediate counterattack from his opponent. He cannot offer any active defense against it.

➤ Reckless Attack

Difficulty:	—
Action ability:	—
Opposition ability:	—

Comments: A hero can produce some extra offensive punch in a time of great need-but he leaves himself open to counterattacks to get it. A reckless attack allows a hero to attempt an extra attack during one exchange of blows. However, the extra attack prevents him from defending against counterattacks during this exchange; defense ratings from his armor or shield still apply.

When combining this action with a charge; heroes may apply the +3 Strength bonus from the charge to both attacks. A reckless attack takes some forethought, so it cannot be used as a free attack.

Mishap: The hero suffers an immediate counterattack from his opponent and may attempt no defense.





➤ Rush

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Agility
Opposition ability:	Agility

Comments: Rushing the enemy can let heroes engaged in melee or personal combat slip past their opponents.

If no one is involved in combat at personal range, the heroes' leader can attempt a rush for the whole group; otherwise, this is an individual action.

Normally, heroes cannot attack while attempting to rush. When they try to rush the enemy and attack at the same time, their foe gets a counterattack. They cannot defend themselves against this assault, except with the defense ratings of their armor and shields.

Combatants can combine a rush with a shield slam (see below) or with a normal melee attack, but they must treat the combined action as a reckless attack.

A Reminder: When a group encounters foes at near missile or greater range, they can avoid the enemy by moving out of visual range and escaping (see range actions in Chapter Four in the *Book of the Fifth Age*). A group of heroes wishing to fight their way past their opponent must either defeat the enemy in combat or close to melee range, successfully rush the enemy, and then open the range and escape.

Mishap: The enemy gets a free counterattack against the group or hero who attempted the rush. If the heroes were attacking at the same time, the enemy gets two counterattacks, and the heroes cannot use their Endurance or Agility scores to defend against either of them.

➤ Shield Slam

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Strength
Opposition ability:	Endurance

Comments: In a shield slam, a hero uses his shield as a melee weapon. When determining the action's success or failure, a player adds the shield's defense rating to the hero's action score. The shield chart in Chapter Four indicates its damage when used in a slam.

The hero cannot use his shield defensively during an exchange in which he attempts a shield slam.

Mishap: The hero cannot use his shield's defense bonus against a free counterattack by the enemy.

➤ Tackle

Difficulty:	Challenging (12)
Action ability:	Strength
Opposition ability:	Strength

Comments: In a tackle, the hero tries to grab his opponent and bear him to the ground. If he succeeds, the enemy falls down, the hero on top, and may not attempt a counterattack.

A hero can attempt a tackle in the same combat minute as he successfully closes to personal range. But, if the tackle fails, the opponent gains a +3 Strength bonus for his next counterattack, just as if the hero were charging.

The tackle inflicts no damage, but it does let the hero act first automatically the following combat minute. He can perform any action possible at personal range and enjoys a +3 action bonus as well. If he follows up the tackle by grappling his foe, the opponent cannot regain his feet until he breaks free.

No matter what the result of the hero's tackle attempt, the foe cannot try to maneuver the combat range or attempt a rush action. Usually, a hero will stay on top of a tackled foe, in which case the prone opponent can counterattack only at personal range. Should a hero choose to get off the foe, this opponent can stand up again automatically. However, that's all he can do during this minute—he cannot counterattack the hero, for instance. (Attempting to prevent a character from getting up is considered a grapple action.) To counterattack at personal range only—the foe must remain prone.

If several heroes try to tackle a single foe together, the leader attempts the attack as a combined action.

Mishap: The hero or group falls down instead of tackling the enemy. The opponent can make a free attack with a +3 action bonus (and remain standing) or automatically tackle a single hero.

Defensive Actions

Sometimes a hero finds himself faced with one of the attacks described in the previous section. The specific defensive actions that follow illustrate how to counter them.

➤ Avoid Being Disarmed

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Endurance or Agility
Opposition ability:	Strength or Dexterity

Comments: A hero can attempt to prevent someone from muscling his weapon from his grasp or even shooting an object from his hand. The action ability is Endurance at melee range or Agility at greater ranges. A successful hero retains his weapon or other target item, while anyone who fails drops it. (See page 70 for notes on recovering dropped items.)

Mishap: The hero not only drops his weapon or other item but suffers normal damage from the counterattack as well.

➤ Counter a Grab

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Strength
Opposition ability:	Strength

Comments: A hero can try to stop an opponent from grabbing something from him. Hard-to-grasp objects or those that seem particularly well anchored make this action easy. Foes cannot grab very small or dangerous items, such as rings or daggers, unless they first grapple the hero (see below).

A foe can attempt a grab action during the same minute as he successfully closed to personal range or grappled the hero. However, the combination makes it one degree easier for the hero to avoid the grab (his action's difficulty decreases from *average* to *easy* or from *easy* to *automatic*).

Mishap: The hero not only loses the targeted item, he also suffers damage from the grab as though it were an attack at personal range.

➤ Evade a Grapple

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Strength
Opposition ability:	Strength

Comments: When a hero successfully evades an enemy's attempt to grapple him, he suffers no damage and can make a normal attack. In addition, if the foe tried to grapple during the same minute as he closed to personal range, the hero receives a +3 Strength bonus for his next attack.

Should the hero fail in this action, he suffers damage equal to the attacker's Strength (or Physique) score and cannot attack until he breaks the grapple with a successful *challenging Strength* (Strength) action. Each minute he remains grappled, the hero automatically suffers damage equal to the attacker's Strength score. When the hero gets free, he can attempt a personal range attack.

Mishap: A mishap while evading or attempting to break a grapple forces the hero to defend against a free counterattack from the opponent.

➤ Hold or Delay


Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Agility
Opposition ability:	Agility

Comments: During personal or melee combat, a hero must attempt to hold or delay foes to make sure they don't slip past him or open the encounter range. If he succeeds, opponents currently at personal or melee range stay there. This action has no effect on foes at other ranges.

If none of the heroes are involved in combat at personal range, the group's leader can attempt the action for the whole party. Otherwise, a hold or delay action is performed individually. Normally, heroes cannot attack while attempting this action. Should a hero wish to hold the enemy at close or melee range and attack as well, he may do so; however, the enemy gets a counterattack. The hero can offer no opposition to this counterattack, though defense ratings for armor and shields still apply.

Mishap: The enemy opens the range, after making a free counterattack against the





group or hero who earned the mishap. If the heroes were attacking when they suffered the mishap, the enemy gets two counterattacks, and the heroes cannot use their Endurance or Agility scores to defend against either one.

≡ Prevent a Tackle

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Strength
Opposition ability: Strength

Comments: A hero who keeps an opponent from tackling him suffers no damage and can make a normal attack against his foe; if the foe attempted the failed tackle during the same combat minute as he closed to personal range, the hero receives a +3 Strength bonus to this attack.

If the hero fails in this action, he goes down under his foe and may not attempt an action in the next combat minute until after his opponent has resolved his. The tackler can perform any action possible at personal range and enjoys a +3 Strength bonus. If the opponent successfully grapples the hero at this time, the hero cannot regain his feet until he breaks free of his grasp.

Attempting to get up after being tackled is equivalent to avoiding a grapple. A hero can get up automatically should the tackler shift his weight off him, but can attempt no other action during that combat minute.

Regardless of whether the hero successfully avoided the tackle, he cannot try to maneuver the combat range or attempt a rush at this time. When the tackler gets off him, the hero may get up automatically as his only action that minute. If he remains prone, he can attack, but only at personal range.

If several foes try to tackle a single hero together, the hero must attempt to avoid the tackle under a -1 penalty for each foe beyond the first.

Mishap: The hero must defend against a free counterattack from his opponent. If his foes were attacking as a group, the group penalty applies to the hero's defense from this counterattack.

≡ Total Defense

Difficulty: —
Action ability: —
Opposition ability: —

Comments: The total defense action is the opposite of a reckless attack. The hero parries and dodges, giving up all possibility for an attack to gain a defensive benefit.

A hero using the total defense action doubles his Agility or Endurance score for purposes of defense only during the current exchange at personal, melee, or missile range. Alternatively, he can attempt this action to double his armor or shield defense rating when resisting damage from a single enemy assault. He must select one of these two options before playing any cards.

If the hero chooses the second option and finds himself subjected to more than one counterattack in the current combat minute, he must declare which one will receive the damage reduction. However, if he avoids that counterattack altogether, he receives no benefit from his total defense action. Should the hero fail in his total defense action, he suffers either the blow or the damage normally.

Mishap: The hero suffers an immediate counterattack. His ability scores are not doubled when defending against this free attack (nor against subsequent attacks, due to the defense failure).

Other Combat Actions

The combat actions in the previous sections provide merely a few examples of the types of maneuvers heroes can accomplish. Clever players can attempt all sorts of other unusual actions, and the Narrator should always encourage them to do so.

When a player declares an action not included anywhere in the FIFTH AGE game rules, the Narrator should first look through the published actions for an equivalent already in print, to use as a basis for the player's suggestion.

For example, if a hero tries to slide under a giant's legs and stab the creature in the back, that's like a reckless attack or a charge combined with a reckless attack.

When a hero attempts a maneuver with no published equivalent, the Narrator can create a combat action on the spot. Of course, every action must have a difficulty rating and an action ability. Any action involving another creature also must have an opposition ability.

Determining Difficulty

A combat action's difficulty depends on its impact; actions with superficial effects are easy, while those that could change the course of a scene should be harder. (Chapter Three of the *Book of the Fifth Age* offers guidelines for determining the difficulty of noncombat actions.)

Automatic

Many combat actions are so simple, a hero can succeed automatically if he meets no enemy resistance. A Narrator might require no card play if the hero faces no obvious chance of failure or can gain no clear advantage for success.

- ✦ Blowing out a candle
- ✦ Picking up or setting down an object
- ✦ Throwing an item
- ✦ Breaking into a run
- ✦ Leaping over a puddle

Easy (4)

Frequently, a hero attempts an easy combat action mostly for show. In other cases, the action would normally be so simple even a child could do it (automatic), except that the hero faces opposition or some slight risk of failure.

- ✦ Putting out a candle by hitting it with a sword
- ✦ Breaking a window or large mirror
- ✦ Throwing mud or food onto a foe
- ✦ Knocking off a foe's hat
- ✦ Leaping onto a tabletop

Average (8)

A combat action of *average* difficulty proves no more complex or significant than wounding somebody in an even fight. The action requires a certain amount of skill or luck, or both.

- ✦ Carving one's initials in somebody's clothing with a sword

- ✦ Cutting a button off a foe's shirt with a dagger
- ✦ Putting out a candle by slicing the wick
- ✦ Leaping onto a waiting horse
- ✦ Blinding an opponent by throwing dust into his face
- ✦ Catching an item thrown by a companion from near missile range

Challenging (12)

A *challenging* combat action often has an unusual effect that lasts into the next combat minute. It requires considerable skill or luck or both.

- ✦ Cutting of all a foe's buttons at once
- ✦ Leaping onto a galloping horse
- ✦ Picking an unattended object off the ground while riding a galloping horse
- ✦ Leaping off a roof onto the back of a waiting horse
- ✦ Scooping up a comrade and lifting him to the saddle while galloping

Daunting (16)

When a combat action will affect more than one opponent or has the potential to change the course of a fight, the Narrator must consider it *daunting*—something only an expert or a fool would try.

- ✦ Tripping or knocking down an entire unit of guards
- ✦ Picking up a struggling enemy and lifting him to the saddle while galloping
- ✦ Chopping through a candle so cleanly that the two pieces look undisturbed
- ✦ Leaping off a roof onto the back of a galloping horse
- ✦ Shooting an apple off the top of someone's head

Desperate (20)

A combat action with the potential to end a fight immediately should be considered *desperate*. It is so difficult that even fools and experts pause before attempting it.

- ✦ Knocking a whole pirate crew overboard with one attack
- ✦ Shooting a grape off the top of someone's head
- ✦ Catching a weapon thrown by an enemy



Impossible (24)

Some combat actions carry the potential for a permanent effect or seem *impossible*. Succeeding would be a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence for most mortals. Examples include the following: Shooting a grape off the top of someone's head while blindfolded
Snatching an arrow right out of the air
Maiming an opponent with one blow

Combat Advantages

Of course, not all fights are even. Sometimes one side will have the advantage of surprise, terrain, or size over a foe. Chapter Four in the *Book of the Fifth Age* describes conditions regarding surprise and related disadvantages. This section describes advantages (or disadvantages) for other common conditions.



Condition	Off./Def. Modifier
Cover for hero	—
Minimal	0/+1
Partial	0/+2
Full	0/+3
Cover for opponent	—
Minimal	+1/0
Partial	+2/0
Full	+3/0
Elevation	—
Higher or mounted	+1/+1
Lower position	-1/-1
Prone or supine hero	-3/-3
Prone or supine foe	+3/+3
Restricted movement	-1/-1
Size	—
Smaller	-1/-1
Larger	+1/+1
Visual conditions	—
Invisible or concealed	+4/+4
Unseen opponent	-4/-4
Unsteady	-2/-2



The table above lists various conditions and their associated combat modifiers. The modifier before the slash applies when the hero is attacking (or

attempting a combat-related offensive action) under the listed condition. The number after the slash applies to a hero performing a defensive combat action under that condition.

For example, if the hero Nika is mounted and her opponent is on foot, she would enjoy a +1 action bonus to her attack. If she were defending herself while mounted, she would gain the +1 bonus to her defense action score.

Brief descriptions of each type of condition follow.

Cover

The cover modifier usually applies to missile attacks. Minimal cover obscures less than half the defender, while partial cover hides about half the figure. Full cover obscures more than half the defender. Cover conditions might also apply to combat at melee range, when two opponents are sword fighting across a fence, for example, or even through an open window.

Elevation

When a hero fights from a *higher* elevation than his enemy, or while astride a horse against a foe not similarly *mounted*, he enjoys the indicated action bonus. However, if his attacker enjoys a higher elevation, the *lower* hero gets the penalty.

Prone or Supine

A *prone* figure has been tackled or knocked face down, while *supine* individuals are lying on their backs. In either case, individuals suffer various limitations due to their vulnerable position.

Restricted Movement

When the acting character or hero is not free to move normally, he suffers *restricted* movement. Typical conditions include wading or swimming, becoming mired, getting tangled in undergrowth, or finding oneself confined in a restrictive space.

Size

Size modifiers can apply to combat at personal range; to rushes, hold or delay

actions, cut or smash actions, and disarm actions; and to targeting missile fire. The Narrator should decide the amount of size difference required for an advantage based on the circumstances at hand.

Visual Conditions

An *invisible* hero may be the subject of an enchantment or spectramancy spell. A *concealed* hero is as good as invisible to his foe, due to the opponent's complete blindness or a blindfold, the hero's total concealment, etc. The acting hero faces an *unseen opponent* when physical conditions (such as utter blindness or a blindfold) or invisibility prevent him from detecting his opponent visually.

Unsteady

When the acting hero finds himself unsure of his balance or footing, he is considered *unsteady*. Such conditions include fighting on icy ground or a slippery floor or while balancing on a narrow beam or spar.

Special Combat Situations

Some types of combat require special treatment—especially when heroes have attempted (or come face-to-face with) one of the special actions detailed earlier.

Group Combat

Not all combat scenes involve one-on-one fights. Some of the actions described earlier in this chapter do allow the heroes to perform them as a group. However, when a party is specifically trying to work together to achieve a combat goal, Narrators should refer to the following action:

☞ Coordinated Attack

Difficulty: Easy (4)
Action ability: Presence
Opposition ability: Perception

Comments: When a group faces a larger, stronger opponent, the leader can attempt to direct a mass attack. If the above coordinated attack action succeeds, he can try making a single attack at melee or missile range on behalf of the entire group.

To resolve this second action, the leader chooses his method of assault and totals up the action score. Then he turns over one additional card for each extra hero or character involved in the attack and adds their values to his action score. If successful, this group action inflicts potential damage points equal to one-half the total combined Strength scores of the group, plus the damage value of the leader's weapon.

For example, Petrick and five Knights of Solamnia encounter a hill giant. If Petrick successfully launches a coordinated melee range attack against this giant, the entire group can make one attack, which Petrick must resolve. He has a Strength score of 6 and plays the Two of Swords for the attack, giving him an action score of 8. Because Sword cards are trump for melee attacks, Petrick turns over another card, the Five of Hearts, increasing the action score to 13. And, as the five Knights attack in unison with him, he turns over five more cards, adding another 31 points, for a final action score of 44—enough for a successful assault on the giant.


To calculate damage, Petrick adds the Knights' Strength scores (8 each) to his own (6), yielding a group Strength score of 46. As Petrick wields a long sword in the attack, the group inflicts 30 potential damage points upon the giant: one half the group's combined Strength (23), plus 7 points for the sword's damage rating.

Only heroes with Presence codes of "D" or higher can attempt to lead a coordinated attack. The leader's code limits the number of individuals who can contribute to the action:

Presence	Number of People
A	Crowd (25 people)
B	Large group (10 people)
C	Small group (5 people)
D	Couple (2 people)
X	None

If the coordinated attack—the first action—fails, the leader loses his opportunity to attack, but can defend. Those he was attempting to lead can still attack as individuals or attempt other combat actions.





Heroes can combine a coordinated attack with a charge, tackle, or reckless attack. In a reckless attack, the leader must attempt a separate coordinated attack action for each of the two assaults his recklessness granted him.

The Narrator must decide when coordinated attacks are possible; they require enough space for everyone involved in the assault to reach the opponent more or less simultaneously. Space concerns would prevent a group of humans from launching a coordinated attack against a giant on a trail, but the same group could launch one upon a kobold on that trail. Inanimate objects, such as a door, can be subjected to coordinated attacks.

Mishap: If a mishap occurs during a coordinated attack, everyone contributing to it loses the opportunity to act, but can still defend.

Heroes faced with a coordinated enemy counterattack should rely upon the following defense action:

➤ Evade a Coordinated Counterattack

Difficulty: Challenging (12)

Action ability: Perception

Opposition ability: Presence

Comments: A hero can try to counter a coordinated enemy assault when a group of smaller creatures attempts to mob him. The attacking creatures pool their Strength (or Physique) scores and launch themselves at the hero. Should he fail in this action, they inflict damage points equal to one-half the group's combined Strength (Physique), plus the lead foe's racial damage rating.

For example, if Petrick cannot evade a coordinated melee range attack by ten kobolds, the action difficulty for his defense increases from 12 (action difficulty of 10 plus a kobold's damage rating of +2) to 30 (action difficulty of 10 plus 20 for the kobolds' combined Physique scores). If the attack succeeds, the kobolds inflict 12 points of damage points-half their combined Physique scores is 10 plus the leader's racial damage rating of +2.

Mishap: The opponents win a free counterattack against the hero, at their increased Strength (or Physique) score.

Fighting While Disarmed

Combatants who have been disarmed (as described earlier) must change weapons or pick up their dropped ones. They have no time to attempt any action other than defense while picking up a dropped weapon or changing to a new one.

The hero or character automatically rearms himself unless a foe tries to prevent it. Retrieving a weapon (or changing to another one) or preventing such a maneuver requires an *average Agility (Agility)* action. Stopping a foe from rearming counts as a melee attack.

Nonlethal Combat

Not every battle need be fought to the death. If a hero or character wishes to subdue or vanquish a foe without slaying him, Narrators should simply use the normal combat procedures, but impose a -3 Strength or Dexterity action penalty upon the attacker. This modifier reflects the difficulty of striking only at nonvital areas and of "pulling punches" so they carry less risk of causing lethal damage.

Should a nonlethal attack sap all a character's Endurance points, he falls unconscious just as he would in normal combat and stays out cold until tended. (See "Resolution of Battle" in Chapter Four of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.)

If a hero loses all his cards as a result of a nonlethal attack, he blacks out as described in Chapter Four of the *Book of the Fifth Age*. He remains unconscious for ten minutes for each excess damage point he has suffered. Normal healing or first aid does not shorten the time spent unconscious, but mystical healing can.

For example, One-Ear the Giant decides to capture the hero Petrick and makes a series of nonlethal attacks with his cudgel. Petrick quickly runs out of cards from his wounds. He is reduced to one card, the Five of Crowns, when he

suffers 25 damage points. Petrick must discard 25 points worth of cards and cannot do so, since he has only 5 points. He applies his card to the wound; then, because the attack was nonlethal, he blacks out for just over three hours (200 minutes).

Wrestling, Boxing, and Brawling

Combat such as wrestling, boxing, and brawling takes place at personal range. Should both sides in the fray wish to fight this way, they may automatically close to personal range and conduct attacks using normal combat actions or those introduced in this chapter.

Fighting While Prone or Supine

In addition to the advantage modifiers noted on page 68, combatants who have been knocked to the ground cannot attempt to change range or rush. If the prone or supine hero or character can stand up (and chooses to), he cannot make any attacks at the same time. Should he remain down, he can attack his foe at personal range with no

penalty. Attempting to stand up while under the weight of an opponent (instead of attacking) is a *challenging Strength (Strength)* action, just like breaking a grapple.

Mounted Combat

Heroes riding trained mounts not only receive a +1 bonus to most combat actions when fighting unmounted enemies (see chart on page 68), they also may use their mounts' ability scores instead of their own when charging, changing range, rushing, and avoiding grapples and tackles.

Trained war mounts also fight along with their riders. A hero with a fighting mount plays cards from his hand to resolve the mount's attacks and defenses. Wounds the mount suffers, however, come off its Physique score, not from the player's hand. Typical Physique values for common mounts appear in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.



CHAPTER FOUR



am Theros Ironfeld,” the man called out in a deep voice. “And for the last month I have been forging these!” He shook the weapon in his hand.... “With the silver arm

given me by the gods, I have forged the weapon as legend foretold. And this I bring to you—to all the people of Kryynn—that we may join together and defeat the great evil that threatens to engulf us in darkness forever.

“I bring you—the Dragonlance!”

—At the Council of Whitestone, Dragons of Winter Night

The honor of wielding an ancestral sword, the ethnic pride of using a racial weapon with skill—even whimsically improvising with a skillet in a tavern brawl—can add a lot to the style of a combat scene. Players and Narrators should never overlook the value of a unique weapon in battle.

This chapter contains information on new weapons that can add variety to FIFTH AGE games. Different sections focus on a short range weapons (personal and melee), missile range weapons (thrown and missile), mounted weapons, and improvised weapons. Even shields have their place in this chapter, as warriors can use them offensively also.

Each section includes a chart of vital weapon statistics arranged by weapon class—from *very light* to *very heavy* — so players can find one suited to their heroes’ Strength or Dexterity codes. Unless stated

otherwise, the weapons can be used only at the range their section title indicates. (These weapon charts appear together in Appendix Four, with notations indicating favored weapons of the hero races.)

Following each chart appear brief, alphabetized weapon descriptions, including special properties and racial affiliations. The descriptions illustrate how a hero would use the weapon as well as how he would defend himself from it.

Short Range

The personal and melee range weapons below can supplement those offered in the Appendix Two of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Weapon	Class	Dmg
Bear claws †**	VL	+1
Belaying pin †*	VL	+1
Garrote †*	VL	+1
Death’s tooth kala †	VL	+2
Mallet †*	VL	+2
War pipe †	VL	+2
Weighted sash †	VL	+2
Whippik †***	VL	+2
Bolas †*	L	+2
Fang †	L	+2
Throwing stick †*	L	+2
Caff †	L	+3
Soris †	L	+3
Teeth chain †	L	+3
Hookshaft †	M	+4
Hoopak †****	M	+4
War club †	M	+4
Gnome pick †	M	+5
Sabre †	M	+5
Crook blade †	H	+6
Frostreaver †	VH	+8
Tessto †	VH	+9

Italic type indicates a weapon described in the “Missile Range” section.

† The weapon requires only one hand to use.

‡ The weapon requires two hands to use and cannot be used with a shield.

* The weapon also can be thrown at near missile range (throwing stick at far missile range).

** The weapon can be used at personal range only.

*** The weapon also can hurl missiles.

NEW WEAPONS

Bear Claws

A personal range weapon, *bear claws* consist of a pair of heavy leather gauntlets studded with iron spikes on the palms. They add a +1 bonus to all Agility and Strength actions involving climbing surfaces such as ice, wood, and packed dirt.

Belaying Pin



Most ships use short, thick wooden pegs called *belaying pins* for tying off lines from the rigging. They make handy (and inconspicuous) clubs.

Caff

The three-foot-long *caff*, a dwarven tool or weapon, combines the functions of a short pick and a gaff hook.

Its head features a half-pick while the other end has a leather thong, making it useful not only for probing and prying but also in melee combat—typical of dwarves' ingenuity.



Crook Blade

A machete-like melee weapon, the *crook blade* doubles as a chopping and digging tool. The crook in the blade gives the wielder extra leverage for prying and cutting. When used as a tool (not a weapon), a crook blade grants a +2 Strength action bonus.



Death's Tooth Kala

A *death's tooth kala* resembles a dagger with a short, wooden handle and a thin, flexible blade. This melee weapon doubles as a trowel or hoe and is easily concealed—



hiding it under a loose garment, such as desert robe, makes it next to invisible.

Fang

A fang is a potential iron rod with a hook set below the point. It resembles a gaff, a tool used to retrieve



objects from the water. The wielder can use a fang as a normal melee weapon, or he can attempt to trip his opponent with it instead. To trip an enemy, a hero must make a successful average Strength (Agility) action. To avoid being tripped requires an average Agility (Strength) action.

The hook also adds a +1 bonus to Agility actions for a hero climbing a ship's rigging or other area with abundant handholds, such as vines or small branches.

Frostreaver

Ice barbarian mystics fashion heavy melee weapons called frostreavers from dense ice carved from the hearts of polar glaciers. These big, enchanted axes offer the wielder a +4 action bonus in combat.

However, if exposed to warm weather, frostreavers begin melting, losing 1 point of combat bonus each hour. Due to their rarity, even among the Ice Folk, frostreavers are not normally sold or traded.

Garrote

A personal range weapon, the garrote is merely a thin, strong length of cord or wire, or a strip of knotted cloth. However, this simple weapon can prove deadly under the right circumstances.



If an attacker positioned behind his opponent has gained surprise, a successful attack lets him loop the garrote over



his foe's neck. Once he has it in place, he can hold on, inflicting damage automatically each combat minute. To hold on, an attacking hero must make a successful *average Strength* or *Agility (Strength)* action. Freeing oneself from a garrote requires an *average Strength (Strength or Agility)* action. In either case, the attacker chooses whether to focus on Strength or Agility during each combat exchange.

Gnome Pick

A *gnome pick* looks much like a normal hammer, with a curved fluke used to pierce armor and topped with a spike.

Many tinker gnomes add attachments to their picks, such as long chains or spring-loaded pincers. These additions often have disastrous results—Narrators should treat any failure in an attack with them as a mishap.



Hookshaft

A *hookshaft* is a wooden pole, six feet long, with a three-pronged rake set at the end. Heroes can use it in melee combat, to trip their foes, or as a climbing tool. (See the fang description for details.)



Hoopak

A traditional kender weapon, the *hoopak* is a five-foot ironwood staff with a spiked tip. A laced fork at the other end functions as a sling.



Mallet

Kagonesti *mallets*—short-handled hammers with stone or metal heads—weigh less than a pound. They can be used in melee or thrown.



Sabre

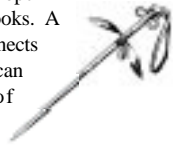
A short, curved sword, the *sabre* proves handy for melee combat at sea.



Soris

The *soris*, an elven weapon, is a two-part jointed staff frequently used by scouts. The weapon's lower half is five feet long and features a metallic spiked tip. The upper portion is one and a half feet long and ends in a loop of rope and four collapsible hooks. A hinged lock-joint connects the two portions and can fix the upper portion of the staff at any angle.

Elves can use this staff to aid them in climbing (a +2 action bonus) or fold it in half to use as a hooked club.



Teeth Chain

A *teeth chain* is a length of barbed chain with a handle. When the attacker flails at his opponent, the barbs rend the

target's flesh. After striking a foe with a teeth chain, a hero can attempt an *average Strength (Endurance)* action. Success means that the pain from the attack hampers the opponent, imposing a -2 action penalty for two combat minutes. Heroes struck by teeth chains can avoid this disability by making successful *average Endurance (Strength)* actions.



Tessto

A minotaur melee weapon, the *tessto* is a mean-looking six-foot spiked club. The wielder can use the loop of rope at its hilt to snag an opponent's head, hands, or feet, as with the bolas (next page).



War Club

A Kagonesti melee weapon, the carved wooden *war club* is weighted with stones and carefully



shaped to deliver maximum impact when striking an opponent. Kagonesti elves often decorate them with shells or feathers.

War Pipe

The *war pipe*, an iron melee weapon, doubles as a smoking pipe. Mountain barbarians use it to smoke blackroot, a mild intoxicant that outsiders find altogether vile.

Mountain barbarians usually swing this weapon like a club, but they also use it as a short range blowpipe. The pipe can propel a thorn coated with blackroot juice at melee range; in addition to the projectile's damage rating of +1, the blackroot juice requires a hero victim to make a *challenging Endurance* action. Should the action fail, the hero must succeed in a *challenging Agility* action or become disoriented, unable to change range or attack. A mishap at either action causes the hero to pass out. Both effects last one hour.

Heroes who hit an opponent with a thorn attempt an *easy Reason (Endurance)* action to determine whether the dangerous juice affected the target as above. If the hero achieved an action score at least 4 points higher than the minimum needed for success, his foe passes out for an hour instead.

Only mountain barbarians can use the war pipe to fire thorns.

Weighted Sash

An unusual melee weapon, this sash is a band of silk with metal weights concealed inside. Wearing it as a sash makes it indistinguishable from a normal garment. The wielder can use it as a normal

melee weapon or attempt to target it in the opponent's neck, arms, or legs (incurring the -5 action penalty and the chance for entanglement described under "Bolas").



Whippik

Kender frequently make use of the *whippik*, a thin wand of iron-wood with a short length of catgut at the



end. A loop at the end of this whip allows for many other functions, such as snaring game or forming a "whip bow" that can fire small darts.

Missile Range

Unless stated otherwise, all the entries in the chart below are thrown or missile weapons that can be used at either near or far missile range.

Weapon	Class	Dmg
Lasso †	VL	—
Belaying pin †*	VL	+1
Ice flask †	VL	+1
Mallet *†	VL	+2
Whippik *†	VL	+2
Bolas *†	L	+2
Pellet bow ‡	L	+2
Throwing stick †	L	+2
Ice grenade †	L	+2
Throwing stone †	L	+2
Throwing blades †	L	+3
Oil flask †	L	+3
Hoopak *‡	M	+4
Ice crossbow ‡	M	+4
Singing bow ‡	VH	+9

Italic type indicates a weapon described in the "Short Range" section.

† The weapon requires only one hand to use.

‡ The weapon requires two hands to use and cannot be used with a shield.

* The weapon also can be used at melee range near missile range only.

Bolas

Bolas are made from three leather-covered stones attached to a stone ring with short leather thongs. The wielder can flail opponents with the stones in melee combat or hurl the weapon as missile by swinging it several times overhead and releasing it.




Throwing the bolas is a normal missile attack. Attempting to strike at a foe's head, arms, legs, or other specific area imposes a -5 Agility penalty to the attack (or a +5 bonus to a hero's defense against it).

Successful bolas combat actions inflict normal damage and can entangle the victim; a hero must make a *challenging Agility (Strength)* action to avoid entanglement. To entangle a foe with the bolas, a hero must succeed in an *average Strength (Agility)* action. Entangling the neck strangles a target as in a garrote attack (see garrote description). Heroes with entangled arms cannot attack, and those with entangled legs cannot move or maneuver; they also cannot attempt missile attacks, and they suffer a -5 modifier to melee attacks. The penalties remain until the victim gets free.

To free themselves, heroes must succeed in *challenging Strength* actions; a hero's successful *easy Strength (Strength)* action prevents a character from getting free. A victim attempting to free himself cannot do anything else during that combat minute.

Bolas cannot entangle opponents when used as melee weapons.

Ice Crossbow



The *ice crossbow*, a missile weapon actually made of wood and bone, can hurl both icicles and ice bullets. In addition to inflicting normal missile damage against the target, the icy missile shatters on impact, sending up a spray of shards onto everyone within melee range of the point of impact.

A target that is hit by the missile directly suffers normal damage. Anyone within melee range of this target also must defend against a missile attack with a +4 damage rating due to the shards; armor and shield defense ratings reduce the damage.

This weapon's icy missiles melt in warm climes. To increase its usefulness, the crossbow also can hurl pebbles or clay

pellets, which affect only one opponent at a time.

Ice Flask


A character or hero can fill an ice *flask*—a missile weapon of hollow bone—with ash, salt water, and oil. When struck with the flask, a hero must make an *average Agility (Agility)* action or suffer a blow to the face, which blinds him for three combat minutes.

After striking an opponent with an ice flask, a hero should attempt a *challenging Agility (Agility)* action. If successful, he has blinded his opponent as above.

In very cold weather, the liquid from the ice flask soaks into the target's clothing and chills him, inflicting 2 damage points every minute until he dons warm, dry clothes. Creatures adapted to cold and damp, such as ice bears, suffer no chilling damage.

Once the oil in the flask has soaked in, the attacker can set it alight with a torch or other suitable source of flame. The oil burns for four minutes, inflicting 4 damage points each minute. Armor and shield defense ratings do not block this damage.

Ice Grenade



A metal sphere filled with water, the *ice grenade* is useless in anything but a sub-zero environment. When exposed to extreme cold for one minute, the sphere bursts, showering everyone within melee range with shards of ice and metal. If hurled, the sphere bursts on impact.

Every creature in the shower becomes subjected to a normal missile attack. Spheres simply left to burst on their own oppose heroes' defense actions with a score of 10. Armor and shield defense ratings reduce the damage.

Lasso

A *lasso* is a simple length of rope with a slip-knotted loop at one end. In a successful attack with this weapon, the loop settles around the target's body. In the next

combat minute, the attacking hero can attempt to pull the target off

his feet with an *easy Strength (Strength)* action. Heroes can avoid this maneuver with a *challenging Strength (Strength)* action.

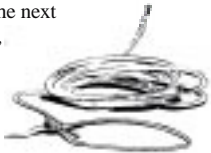
An assailant can attempt a normal missile attack to lasso a target or he can try to attack the target's head, arms, or legs (incurring the -5 action penalty and the chance for entanglement described under "Bolas"). A mounted attacker can use his mount's Physique score instead of his own Strength to pull the target off his feet.

A lassoed target suffers 5 damage points when pulled off a mount or moving vehicle. In addition, he receives another 5 damage points for each minute he is dragged from the end of a lasso over most types of terrain. (Soft, smooth, or yielding terrain, such as a beach or snowfield, inflicts less damage, while particularly rugged terrain inflicts more, at the Narrator's discretion.) Armor and shield defense ratings do not reduce this damage.

Oil Flask



A glass or ceramic container filled with flammable oil and fitted with a wick can prove a dangerous weapon. When lit and thrown, an *oil flask* breaks and douses one target with flaming oil. Players should treat the toss as a normal missile attack.



When the flask hits, the target suffers 8 damage points every combat minute for three minutes. Armor or shield defense ratings do not reduce this damage. In the event of a mishap during a combat action involving an oil flask, the flask lands near the defender, but does not break. The defender then has a free attack to toss the oil flask back at the attacker, or he can use another missile weapon.

Pellet Bow



A mountain barbarian *pellet bow* looks like a standard self bow: a short length of seasoned wood fitted with a string. The string has a pouch for holding small stones. This bow cannot fire arrows.

Singing Bow

A large recurved bow, the *singing bow* is a beautiful to look at as it is powerful. Its ornately carved wood appeals to the

centaur fondness for the aesthetic. The bow's string and arms thrum melodiously with the release of an arrow or in time to the centaur's gallop while he wears the bow slung across his back.



Throwing Blades

Three hinged blades fold up to form a missile weapon about the size of an axe blade. When thrown, the blades open into

a sleek shape that can sail quite a distance (across far missile range). A hero attacking with *throwing blades* can use either his Strength or his

Dexterity score to resolve the attack. The defender still opposes with his Agility score. Characters attacking with throwing blades oppose a hero's Agility defense action with either their Strength or Dexterity scores, at the Narrator's option.



Throwing Stick

Some barbarians know how to carefully twist curved, flat *throwing sticks* to help the weapons soar long distances. A plains barbarian who misses in an attack with this weapon can attempt an *average Agility* action to determine whether the stick returns to his hand, in boomerang fashion. Some throwing sticks can collapse for use in melee or personal combat.



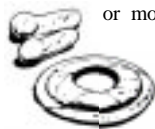
Throwing Stone

Ice barbarians can hurl specially shaped bits of stone a considerable distance (across far missile range). These folk use *throwing stones* as cores for hardened snowballs that can knock out their opponents.

An ice barbarian hero who strikes someone with a snow missile should then attempt an *average Strength (Endurance)* action. If he succeeds, the target's Strength and Agility scores both drop by 1 point until the end of the following combat minute. If a hero succeeds with an action score 4 or more points higher than the minimum needed for success, the attack knocks out the target for ten minutes.

On the other hand, a hero struck by a snow missile can avoid these special effects with a successful *average Endurance (Strength)* action. Should he fail, he incurs temporary ability score reductions as noted above. If he suffers a mishap, he is knocked out for ten minutes.

Only ice barbarians can use the throwing stones' special snow missile ability, and then in freezing weather only.



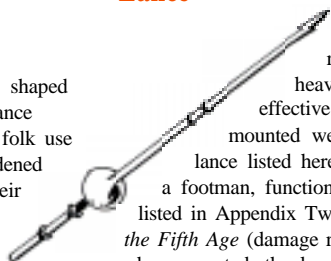
Mounted Weapons

Knights, cavaliers, and other cavalry warriors make use of certain mounted weapons not available to infantry.

Weapon	Class	Dmg
Light lance †	H	+9
Heavy lance †	VH	+10
Aerial lance †	VH	+11

† The weapon requires only one hand to use.

Lance



A lance—which resembles a long, heavy spear—is fully effective only as a mounted weapon. Any type of lance listed here, when wielded by a footman, functions as the lance listed in Appendix Two of the *Book of the Fifth Age* (damage rating of +6). Even when mounted, the lance wielder gets full benefit from the weapon only if his mount is strong enough to handle it:

Lance	Mount's Required Physique
Light	10
Heavy	15
Aerial	20

If the mount's Physique proves insufficient, the weapon functions as the next weaker lance type. For example, a heavy lance used from the back of a steed with a Physique of 10 would function as a light lance. Any lance wielded from the back of a steed with a Physique of less than 10 functions as though wielded by a footman (see above).

When a mounted character or hero charges with a lance, he can use his steed's Physique score instead of his Strength score when calculating combat action scores and damage.

Improvised Weapons

When heroes feel the need to grab whatever implements are handy and use them in a combat scene, Narrators should refer to the items listed on the improvised weapons chart on this page.

Though this table lists specific objects, such as chairs and torches, each entry actually represents a general class of similar items, allowing Narrators to extrapolate values for almost anything the heroes happen to grab. Unless otherwise noted, the items come into play in melee combat only.

As the items on this chart were never intended to be used as weapons, they usually break upon striking an opponent—the item itself suffers as much damage as it inflicts. For the purpose of determining damage to an item, the table contains a Physique score for each item. (Damage points are applied to an item's Physique score until it reaches zero and is considered destroyed.)

Weapon	Class	Dmg	Ph
Cup/Mug †*	VL	+0 (+2)	5
Bottle †*	VL	+1	6
Lantern †*	VL	+1	6
Torch †*	VL	+1(+4)	8
Platter/Tray †	L	+3	21 °
Tankard/ Jug †	L	+3	9
Poker/Candlestick †	L	+4	36 ¥
Stool †	M	+4	16
Skillet †*	M	+2	25 ¥
Table leg †*	M	+4	12
Chair †	H	+5	15
Table †	H	+5	18
Bucket/Keg †	H	+5	20
Bench †	VH	+6	18
Small strongbox †	VH	+7	42
Chandelier †	—	10	15
Bookcase †	—	15	20

† The weapon requires only one hand to use.

‡ The weapon requires two hands to use and cannot be used with a shield.

* The weapon can be used at melee range or near missile range only.

° Suffers no damage when used as a weapon, breaks only when attacker suffers a mishap.

¥ Suffers no damage when used against unarmed opponents.

Bench

Any fairly large and bulky piece of furniture can be treated as a *bench*. This category includes extra-large tables, heavy armchairs, crates, and stepladders. Before attempting his attack with a bench, the wielder must succeed at an *average Strength* action to pick it up and swing it. While human-sized creatures can swing a bench at a foe, they lack the strength to actually throw it.

Bookcase

The *bookcase* category includes any large, immobile object that one can drop or push over onto an opponent. The attacker must make an *average Strength* action to move or topple the case, after which he may attempt a standard missile attack to determine his aim. If this attack succeeds, the opponent suffers 15 damage points. Armor and shield bonuses do not reduce this damage.

Bottle

Any fairly small containers, including vases and flowerpots, can be treated as *bottles* (although a full bottle should be considered a tankard/jug). A broken bottle remains useful as a cutting weapon, as long as it has a neck the wielder can hold. A bottle's neck usually proves sturdy enough to last through an entire combat.

Bucket/Keg

Any large, sturdy container made from lightweight metal or seasoned wood may be treated as a *bucket* or *keg*. When full, Narrators should consider them small strongboxes. If the contents are hot, the weapon's damage rating gains a +2 bonus. An empty bucket or keg usually can withstand two or three hits before falling apart, while a single hit breaks a full bucket or keg apart.

Chair

Any large but lightweight piece of furniture qualifies for the *chair* category: Examples include kitchen chairs, tall stools, hat racks, and so on.



Chandelier

While a *chandelier* technically consists of a metal or wood frame suspended from a rope or chain, other large hanging objects—such as planters—can belong to this category as well. To make an attack with a chandelier, a hero first must cut the rope or chain, which requires a successful *average Strength* action. Afterward, he attempts a normal missile attack against everyone under the chandelier. Chandeliers holding oil lamps also douse everyone they strike with flaming oil (as an oil flask, described on page 77).

Cup/Mug

Cups or mugs include any small, open-topped containers made from glass, tin, clay, or wood. If filled with a hot beverage, the damage rating of this improvised weapon increases to +2. If thrown, the contents spills out but inflicts no extra damage.

Lantern

Any small item made of glass and metal, such as a hand mirror, fits into the category of *lantern*. If lit and filled with oil, a lantern becomes the equivalent of an oil flask.

Platter/Tray

A *platter* or *tray* can be any fairly light-weight, flat object, such as a plank or large book. An attacker can wield this object repeatedly, but it breaks if he suffers a mishap in any attack with it. (The attacker also has to defend against a free counterattack due to the mishap.)

Poker/Candlestick

Any short, heavy metal rod or bar falls into the category of *poker* or *candlestick*. Soft items, such as gold or silver candlesticks, get bent and useless after a few hits, while hard metal objects—such as fireplace pokers—sustain no damage at all when used against an unarmored opponent.



Skillet

A *skillet* (Tika Majere's favorite weapon) is a cast-iron frying pan about seven to nine inches across. If heated or filled with something hot, a skillet gains a bonus of +2 to its damage rating. Skillets suffer no damage when used against unarmored opponents. Any similar metal item, from a helmet to a kettle, belongs in this category.

Small Strongbox

Any sturdy, portable container fits into the category of *small strongbox*. A strongbox can stand quite a bit of punishment, but it breaks if the attacker suffers a mishap (in which case he must also defend against a free counterattack.) Narrators should treat a full or large strongbox as a bookcase.

Stool

A *stool* can be any footstool or other light, compact wooden item, such as a box or night table.

Table

Any piece of furniture between about three and five feet square is considered a *table*. Narrators should treat smaller items as chairs and larger items as benches.

Table Leg

Any short, thick piece of wood can be likened to a *table leg*: heavy chunks of firewood, bed posts, and tool handles all apply to this category.

Tankard/ Jug

The *tankard* or *jug* entry includes any fairly large, sturdy container made from glass, tin, clay, or wood. If full, a tankard or jug should be treated as a bucket/keg. If filled with a hot beverage, the damage rating increases by an extra +2. When thrown, the contents usually spills out but inflicts no extra damage. A corked jug will not lose its contents when thrown but will shatter on impact with armored opponents.

Torch

A torch is a lightweight chunk of resinous wood. Any heavy stick or small piece of firewood falls into this category. A hero can wield a lit torch like a club or use the flame to inflict 4 damage points. Assaults with a flame ignore the attacker's Strength rating, but also ignore shields and armor. If a mishap occurs during an attack with a lit torch, the attacker not only suffers a free counterattack from his foe, but the torch goes out as well.

Shields as Weapons

This section refers to the shields listed in the *Book of the Fifth Age*. As noted in Chapter Three, an attacker using a shield as a weapon adds the shield's defense rating to his action score when determining the success of his attack action. Sue attacks are permitted at melee range unless otherwise noted.

The shield table below translates that value into a damage rating. The number in the last column on the shield table below indicates the attack bonus for each type of shield. Note that a shield provides no defensive bonus when used as a weapon.

Otherwise, shields work like any other weapon, though their damage ratings are significantly lower than other weapons in their classes. While an individual's Agility score determines how large a shield he can carry, it is his Strength rating that determines how large a shield he can employ as a weapon. If a hero or character has an Agility score higher than his Strength score, he might carry a shield too large for him to use as a weapon.

Weapon	Class	Dmg	Att.	Bonus
Buckler *†	VL	—		1
Kite *†	L	+1		2
Target shield †	M	+2		3
Horse shield †	H	+3		4
Tower shield †	VH	+4		5

* The shield can be used as a weapon at melee range or near missile range only.

† The shield requires only one hand to use.



CHAPTER FIVE



The sun climbed high in the sky. The Knights stood upon the battlements of the Tower, staring out across the plains until their eyes ached. All they could see was

a great tide of black, crawling figures swarming over the fields, ready to engulf the slender spear of gleaming silver that advanced steadily to meet it.

The armies met. The Knights strained to see, but a misty gray veil crept across the land. The air became tainted with a foul smell, like hot iron. The mist grew thicker, almost totally obscuring the sun.

—Lord Derek rides forth from the High Clerist's Tower, Dragons of Winter Night

Sometimes a Narrator will want to create a combat scene that concerns more than just a few heroes battling a handful of foes. When whole armies go on the march, as in the above passage, the information in this chapter can help decide the outcome.

Terminology

Players conduct combat between armies in more or less the same way as they handle combat between individuals: Armies attempt attacks and counterattacks and suffer wounds, just like heroes.

Those familiar with the combat rules from Chapter Four of the *Book of the Fifth Age* already know most of the terms and

methods used in this chapter. However, as the battle alters a bit when armies fight, players and Narrators need to learn a few new terms, too, many of which appear in the table of Standard Armies on page 85.

Ranges

Mass combat can take place at four of the six range categories used in individual combat: melee, near missile, far missile, and artillery. Personal range is too close for the scale of mass combat, and visual range is too distant.

Time

Mass combat is a ponderous affair. Each exchange of attacks between armies takes one hour. (Most instances of individual combat, by contrast, include an exchange of blows each minute.) Heroes involved in a mass combat may freely attempt other actions while the opposing armies maneuver. Mass combat always proceeds in one-hour increments, regardless of range.

Surprise

An unexpected maneuver at the beginning of a battle might catch one side or the other unawares. Therefore, armies check for surprise before combat, just as individuals do.

Duties

An army's commander functions as its scout/sentry and leader. Of course, the commander does not stand guard over every soldier, nor does he lead each attack. However, the plans he makes and the orders he issues determine how well his army functions. For the sake of simplicity, an army as described in this chapter has only one commander.

Army Base Power

An army's *base power* depends on the combined abilities of the individuals in it. The more creatures in the army (and the more powerful they are), the more formidable it becomes. When two armies clash,

MASS COMBAT

their relative levels, of power determine how easily they can harm each other.

Average Coordination

An army's ability to maneuver in the field depends partly on the quality of its commander and partly on the mobility of its troops. An army mounted on griffins is quite mobile compared to an army of kobolds. In mass combat, an army's *average Coordination* works just like a creature's Coordination score.

Average Physique

It's no surprise an army of ogres tends to be meaner in battle than the aforementioned army of kobolds. In mass combat, an army's *average Physique* functions just as a creature's Physique score does in individual combat.

Command Score

Armies are generally only as effective as their commanders. While it is possible for highly skilled or powerful troops to fight well despite inept command, it is rare. An army's *command score* is equal to its commander's Presence score.

Command Hand

The army commander conducts all actions for his army by playing cards from a hand he draws at the beginning of the battle. If the commander is a hero, he must discard his Hand of Fate to draw his Command Hand.

A hero's Command Hand is based on his reputation rating, just like his Hand of Fate. Therefore, a commander with a Hero reputation would have a Command Hand of seven cards.

Army Final Power

As noted above, an army's effectiveness depends greatly on the capabilities of its commander. The presence of defensive fortifications also can make an army more powerful. Both these elements factor into an army's *final power*.

Standard Armies

Developing an army's scores from scratch would require a great deal of arithmetic. That's why the table of standard armies on page 85 provides game information for most of Ansalon's military forces. Players and Narrators can select the army that best applies to the situation at hand and move quickly into mass combat.

Those who want to create armies from scratch can refer to Appendix Three. The base power, average Coordination, and average Physique that appear in the chart for each standard army were calculated using the method described there.

Using the Armies

Each army's command score is based on the Essence rating of the creatures in it. In most cases, the command score is 1 point higher than the Essence rating for the race, as exceptional individuals tend to become army leaders.

Commanders

The Presence code of the above commander dictates how effectively he can lead his army. Therefore, the final power for each army on the chart includes an adjustment for the commander's Presence code (usually assumed to be a "B").

Players or Narrators can adjust the command score listed for a standard army, if they wish. Skilled leaders improve effectiveness and poor leaders reduce it as follows (round resulting fractions down):

Presence Modifier

A	One-quarter more than base power (x 1.25) *
B	Same as base power
C	One-quarter less than base power (x .75)
D	Half of base power (f .5)
X	One-quarter of base power (x .25)

* An "army" consisting of a single powerful creature, such as a Great Dragon, always enjoys this modifier.





Fortifications

The final power of the standard armies assumes they enjoy no fortifications. Of course, an army defending a castle or walled city has a tremendous advantage over attackers outside. Narrators can adjust an army's final power based on the type of fortification it defends—if any—according to the points below. As large armies often have more troops than can be effectively deployed along a fortification's walls, each type includes a maximum number of points an army can gain from it.

- ❖ **Small keep:** One-quarter more than base power (multiply by 1.25). The bonus can add no more than 1,000 points to base power.
- ❖ **Large keep or small castle:** One-half more than base power (multiply by 1.5). The bonus can add no more than 1,500 points to base power.
- ❖ **Large castle:** Double base power (multiply by 2). The bonus can add no more than 2,000 points to base power.
- ❖ **Fortified city:** Two and a half times base power (multiply by 2.5). The bonus can add no more than 10,000 points to base power.

Command Hands

Players and Narrators should assign the selected standard armies a Command Hand according to the commanding hero's reputation category, which should be at least Adventurer (four cards).

Of course, as with normal combat actions, all mass combat actions take place from the hero's point of view. In other words, no one holds a Command Hand for the army opposing the heroes—unless that army contains heroes as well. Usually, though, the Narrator decides the opposing army's intent (or determines it through random draws or interpretive card play), then allows the heroes' army the appropriate defense action. When each army in a mass combat contains at least one hero, the player of the hero with the highest Presence plays the Command Hand for his army.

Army Descriptions

The following section offers a few additional details on the standard armies.

Raiders

Groups of *raiders* consist of twenty-five to two hundred individuals bent on plunder. Some of them also employ mounts or war animals. The brute raider army, for example, includes one hundred brutes and five mammoths; goblin raiders include one hundred of the creatures mounted on worgs.

Cavaliers

A *cavalier* army is a force of one hundred heavily armed and armored warriors on war horses. Most human and elf rulers can field several such units at once.

Draconians

Most *draconian* units contain several types of creatures, though Baaz and Kapak predominate.

Any army that inflicts a wound on a draconian force must attempt an Endurance action or suffer 1 damage point itself, to reflect the various magical effects that occur when draconians die. The action's difficulty is determined by the relative sizes of the armies, just like other combat actions (see page 88).

The draconian army listed is the national army of Teyr. These individually powerful creatures comprise a formidable force. The rulers of Teyr opt for a defensive posture however, reserving their strength to defend their adopted homeland—and to fight alongside the Dark Knights, according to treaty.

Elite draconian units include one hundred creatures, usually evenly divided between Bozaks and Sivaks. These units guard Teyr's borders and occasionally serve as mercenaries or freebooters. Auraks usually command.

Draconian militia consists of mixed units of Baaz and Kapaks. Within Teyr, several militia units stand ready to back up every elite unit. Outside of Teyr, these units usually act as mercenaries or brigands.

Standard Armies

Army Type	Base Power	Average Coordination	Average Physique	Command Score	Final Power
Brute raiders	8,175	6	11	9	8,175
Cavaliers	18,000	9	11	7	22,500
Centaur elite	6,400	8	8	7	8,000
Centaur militia	4,900	7	7	6	4,900
Draconian army	258,000	8	6	9	322,500
Draconian elite	12,120	11	11	9	12,120
Draconian militia	4,800	8	6	7	3,600
Dwarf elite	4,800	6	8	8	6,000
Dwarf militia	2,400	4	6	6	2,400
Elf Elite	4,800	8	6	9	6,000
Elf griffin riders	18,150	15	13	9	22,687
Elf militia	2,400	6	4	7	2,400
Gnome elite	5,700	8	3	6	7,125
Gnome militia	2,100	7	3	5	2,100
Gnoll raiders	4,550	5	7	6	4,550
Goblin army	315,430	5	5	6	394,287
Goblin raiders	9,600	7	7	6	9,600
Goblin horde	14,528	5	6	6	14,528
Hill giant raiders	11,400	6	38	5	11,400
Hobgoblin raiders	14,000	12	7	6	14,000
Human elite	4,900	7	7	8	6,125
Human militia	2,500	5	5	7	2,500
Kobold raiders	2,550	3	3	6	2,550
Knights of Solamnia					
Mounted patrol	18,600	9	11	8	23,250
Dragon raiders	20,670	9	13	8	25,837
Pegasus riders	240,000	13	11	8	30,000
Foot patrol	4,200	6	7	8	5,250
Small garrison	22,800	7	10	8	28,500
Large garrison	83,910	8	10	8	104,887
Solanthus garrison	167,820	8	10	9	209,775
Gunthar garrison	251,730	8	10	9	314,662
Field army	213,120	10	11	9	266,400
Knights of Takhisis					
Mounted patrol	18,600	9	11	8	23,250
Dragon riders	20,670	9	13	8	25,837
Foot patrol	4,200	6	7	8	5,250
Small garrison	22,800	7	10	8	28,500
Large garrison	64,460	7	11	8	85,575
Palanthus garrison	136,920	7	11	8	171,150
Neraka garrison	162,950	8	15	9	203,687
Field army	213,120	7	11	8	266,400
Minotaur raiders	4,000	4	10	6	4,000
Ogre raiders	3,250	5	13	7	3,250
Troll raiders	7,200	6	24	8	7,200
Undead horde	9,120	6	5	8	9,120



Elite

An *elite* force consists of about a hundred exceptional individuals usually of the same race. An elite unit of elves, for example, consists strictly of elf heroes and characters. These armies serve as royal bodyguards and garrisons for important locales. They tend to be tightly organized and well led.

Militia

Militia forces are made up of one hundred typical members of a particular race. They represent groups of common citizens called together for war. An older, experienced warrior usually serves as the commander.

Hordes

All *horde* armies contain a mixture of creatures, though one type usually predominates. A goblin horde, for example, contains mostly goblins, but also a smattering of worgs, hobgoblins, ogres, and hill giants. Hordes tend to be loosely organized but led by some ambitious individual.

Knights of Solamnia

Most *Solamnic Knight* units consist primarily of armored warriors mounted on war horses.

Foot patrols contain no mounted troops and usually number about one hundred strong. They frequently serve as sentries, guards, or constables.

Mounted patrols contain one hundred Knights astride war horses. They're usually put to work guarding borders and roads.

Pegasus and dragon rider units resemble large mounted patrols but include a small detachment (ten dragon riders or twenty-five pegasus riders) replacing some of the horsemen. These forces serve as scouts, shock troops, and reserves.

Garrison units contain a mixture of mounted and foot Knights, plus detachments of elves and dwarves. Larger garrisons also include dragon and pegasus riders.

A field army includes one thousand Knights, most mounted on war horses. The force also contains dragon and pegasus riders, plus detachments of elves, dwarves, and centaurs from the auxiliary.

Knights of Takhisis

The various *Dark Knight* units resemble those of Solamnics but usually employ brutes and draconians instead of elves, dwarves, centaurs, and pegasus riders. Various monster armies form the Minions of Dark, independent troops allied to the Knights of Takhisis.

Combining the Armies

Because most of the units shown on the standard army table are fairly small, Narrators or players may wish to combine several armies into a larger force. To do so, a player just adds up their final power numbers, using the best command score in the combined group and the average Coordination and average Physique of the most numerous group.

For example, a combined army made up of a mounted patrol of Knights of Takhisis, two groups of brute raiders, and a group of draconian militia would have an average Physique of 11, an average Coordination of 6, a command score of 9 and a final power of 43,200.

For a more accurate estimate of this army's battlefield abilities, see Appendix Three.

Mass Combat Resolution

Once players have selected their armies, they can begin the battle. The order of action is as follows:

1. Determine initial range (first hour of battle only).
2. Determine surprise (first hour of battle only).
3. Attempt range maneuvers.
4. Resolve combat actions.
5. Check for routs (final hour of battle only).

Step One: Determine Initial Range

The initial range between the opposing armies depends on the terrain and the circumstances that brought about the meeting between the forces, just as with single combat (see Chapter Four of the *Book of the Fifth Age*).

Step Two: Determine Surprise

The heroes' army (and the attacking one, if both sides contain heroes) performs actions to see whether it is surprised.

This action works just as it does in individual combat (see Chapter Four of the *Book of the Fifth Age*), except that the players use the commander's Presence score as the action ability.

As for all Perception actions, the Suit of Orbs is trump.

Step Three: Range Maneuvers

Just as in personal combat, either or both sides can attempt to maneuver the combat range before the battle begins. In mass combat, the commander's Presence score becomes the action ability. In addition, the army with the higher average Coordination adds the difference between the two scores to its action score.

For example, closing range in single combat usually requires an *average Agility [Agility]* action. If Commander Nika decides to order her force of Solamnnc Knights to close with an army of goblins, however, she attempts an *average Presence (Agility)* action. The opposition score is the goblin army's average Coordination (5). As the Knights have a superior average Coordination score (9), Nika's action score receives a bonus of +4.

Cards from the Suit of Shields are trump for range maneuvers.



Step Four: Combat Actions

Mass combat uses the same attack and counterattack procedure as single combat.

Attacking

To launch a mass combat attack, a commander uses Presence as the action ability. The opposition ability becomes the defending army's average Physique score (for melee combat) or average Coordination score (for missile or artillery combat). The difficulty varies according to final power of the attacking army relative to the defending army, as follows:

- ✪ **Easy (4):** If the attacking army's power is more than twenty-five percent stronger than the defender's (power ratio * of 1.25 or more), the action is *easy*.
- ✪ **Average (8):** If the attacking army's power is within twenty-five percent of the defender's (power ratio * of less than 1.25 but more than .75), the action is *average*. This is the difficulty most battles will use.
- ✪ **Challenging (12):** If the attacking army's power is between twenty-five and fifty percent weaker than the defender's (power ratio * of at least .75 but more than .5), the action becomes *challenging*.
- ✪ **Daunting (16):** If the attacking army's power is between fifty and seventy-five percent weaker than the defender's (power ratio * of at least .5 but more .25), the action is *daunting*.
- ✪ **Desperate (20):** If the attacking army's power is seventy-five to ninety percent weaker than the defender's (power of at least .25 but more than .1), the action is *desperate*.
- ✪ **Automatic failure:** If the attacker has less than one-tenth the power of its foe (power ratio * of .1 or less), no mass combat is possible—the defender automatically defeats the attacking army. Narrators could handle such an encounter better through role-playing than mass combat, leaving the larger battle in the background.

* Divide the attacker's final power by the defender's final power to get the *power ratio*. Outmanned forces have a more difficult time attacking and defending.

Defending

When the heroes' side is the defender rather than the attacker, the army's average Physique score (for melee battles) or average Coordination score (for missile and artillery range battles) becomes the action ability to evade enemy counterattacks. The opposing commander resists this action with his Presence score. The action's difficulty varies according to the relative final power of the two armies, as above.

Note: The range between the armies has no effect on the attack difficulty, as it does in personal combat.

Army Wounding

If an attack (or counterattack) succeeds, the defending army suffers injury, just as a hero would in individual battle. This wound is equal to the attacking army's average Physique score (for melee battles) or average Coordination score (for missile and artillery range battles), plus its commander's Presence score. An army wound forces the commander to discard card from his Command Hand, just as a player discards them from his Hand of Fate when his hero is struck in combat.

Heroes attached to the army—not commanders—sustain the same number of damage points as their army suffered. This injury represents the active role heroes play on the battlefield. Armor and shield bonuses reduce the damage, as they would for any normal attack.

Players and Narrators should remember that mass combat proceeds by the hour, giving wounded heroes plenty of time to heal magically between combat exchanges, unless they engage in other activities.

A hero serving as an army's commander does not resolve personal wounds until the battle concludes (see "Ending the Battle," next page). After all, a commander's fate lies with his army.

Attack Modifiers

The situational modifiers in Chapter Three apply to mass combat as well as single combat. An army hidden in the woods, for example, is harder to hit with missile attacks than is one out in the open.

Step Five: Ending the Battle

When a hero's Command Hand runs out of cards, his army is defeated. A defeated army is routed off the field unless the commander opens the range. The player acting for the commander draws a new Hand of Fate and plays a card for this action, as a last-ditch personal attempt to save his army. If the action fails, the card used is not replaced; players should treat the loss as a normal wound.

The losing army is routed automatically if the damage points left over after its commander has discarded his last card exceed the army's average Physique score.

When a hero's army proves victorious, the commander must keep the enemy from routing by preventing the defeated commander from opening the range. A victorious commander cannot play cards from his own hand to cause a rout.

Routed armies suffer increased casualties, as noted below.

Casualties

After the battle, each army must check for casualties. Each army attempts an Endurance action with a random draw (according to the rules in Chapter Three of the *Book of the Fifth Age*), using its average Physique. For the victorious army, the action is *easy*, while the defeated army finds it *daunting*.

The actual casualties depend on the action's result. A victorious army suffers ten percent casualties if the action succeeds, twenty percent if it fails, and thirty percent casualties if a mishap occurs. The defeated army incurs the same results, except it suffers *fifty* percent casualties in the event of a mishap. A routed army suffers twenty percent of its original total as additional casualties, no matter what the result of the Endurance action.

About one-third of the winning army's casualties die in battle, with the remainder badly injured and unsuited for campaigning for about a month, barring magical healing. A mishap at the Endurance action for the victorious army means that ten percent extra casualties are taken prisoner,

spirited away from the field by fleeing elements of the defeated army.

In the defeated army, half the casualties lose their lives in the battle, while a quarter of them are wounded as above, but escape the field. The remaining twenty-five percent become prisoners—half are wounded and half are not.

Commanders' and Heroes' Fates

After a battle, commanders and heroes also must determine their fate through Endurance actions.

The Victors

The victorious commander's action is an *easy* random draw; if it succeeds, the commander has escaped unharmed. If it fails, the commander suffers a wound equal to one hit by the enemy army (average Physique/Coordination + opposing commander's Presence). Armor and shield bonuses reduce the damage. A mishap forces the victor to draw another card—its suit determines his fate:

- ♠ **Dragons:** The commander dies.
- ♣ **Swords:** The commander is knocked unconscious, as through he lost all his cards in individual combat.
- ♦ **Shields:** The commander suffers two wounds, each equal to one hit by the enemy army.
- ♥ **Crowns:** The commander is captured by the enemy army.

Narrators can decide how to interpret other suits based on the circumstances in their individual games.

Heroes in victorious armies must attempt this Endurance action, too, each playing a card from his own Hand of Fate instead of making a random draw. (This option applies even for the hero who commanded the winning army.) Mishap conditions apply, as above.

The Defeated

The commander of the defeated army—and any attached heroes—must attempt an *average* Endurance action. The heroes use cards from their Hands of Fate, while the commander makes a random draw. The results are as outlined above.



APPENDIX ONE

Adventurous Warrior

Ability Scores AG or DX 5 min. EN or ST 5 min. (other score in each pair is 4 min.)	Ability Codes AG or DX "A" ST or EN "A" (all Physical codes "C" min.)	Other Req's Any race with acceptable scores and codes; wealth 7 max.	Advantages Trump bonus for dealings with common folk; can acquire role during play.	Disadvantages Unique quirk or cause.
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Archer

Ability Scores DX 5 min. PE 5 min.	Ability Codes AG "C" max. DX "A" RE "C" max. SP "C" max.	Other Req's Human, centaur, elf, or half-elf.	Advantages Trump bonus for specialty weapon; can acquire role during play.	Disadvantages -3 action penalty for ST attack actions at melee or personal range.
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Barbarian Warrior

Ability Scores Physical scores all 5 min. PE 5 min. SP 5 min.	Ability Codes DX "B" min. RE "D" max. PE "B" min. SP "B" min.	Other Req's Human, Klar, Neidar, centaur, or Kagonesti; wealth 6 max.	Advantages Trump bonus for home terrain actions and attacks with tribal weapon.	Disadvantages -3 action penalty in city; no trump bonus to PE or PR actions in city; cannot acquire role during play.
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Ability Scores EN 5 min. ST 6 min. SP 5 min. PR 6 min.	Ability Codes Varies by race	Other Req's Human, half-elf, Hylar, Qualinesti, or Silvanesti; demeanor 5 max.; wealth 5 min.	Advantages Trump bonus to close range; can acquire role during play.	Disadvantages No trump bonus to gain surprise; owes 40-60 days' service.
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Knight of the Lily

Ability Scores EN 6 min. ST 6 min. SP 5 min. DR 5 min.	Ability Codes EN "A" ST "A" RE "C" max. SP "C" max.	Other Req's Human or half-elf; demeanor 5 max.; nature 4 min.	Advantages Trump bonus to close range, in melee attacks vs. Legionnaires, and for mounted melee attacks; advancement.	Disadvantages Death if fails to advance; no trump bonus to resist mysticism; owes 40-60 days' service; cannot acquire role during play.
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Knight of Solammia

Ability Scores EN 6 min. ST 6 min. SP 6 min. PR 6 min.	Ability Codes EN "A" ST "A" RE "C" max. SP "C" max.	Other Req's Human or half-elf; demeanor 4 max.; nature 5 max.; wealth 3 min.	Advantages Trump bonus to close range, in melee attacks vs. Dark Knights and Legionnaires, and for mounted melee attacks; also by order; advancement.	Disadvantages No trump bonus to gain surprise; PR falls 1 point if fails to advance; must make an action to refuse a fight or retreat; owes 40-60 days' service; donates wealth; cannot acquire role during play.
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Legionnaire Warrior

Ability Scores AG 5 min. DX 5 min. EN 6 min. ST 6 min. PE 5 min. SP 4 min. PR 5 min.	Ability Codes AG "C" min. DX "C" min. EN "C" min. ST "C" min. DX or ST "A" RE "C" max. PE "B" min. SP "C" max.	Other Req's Any race with acceptable scores and codes; wealth 5 max.; demeanor 6 max.; nature 6 max.	Advantages Trump bonus to deal with common folk and in combat with Dark Knights; use PR to acquire goods in city; can acquire role during play; apprentices.	Disadvantages Death if captured by a Dark Knight; no trump bonus to deal with Dark Knights or Solammics; apprentices.
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ROLES QUICK REFERENCE

Mariner

Ability Scores
AG 5 min.
EN 4 min.
RE 5 min.
PE 5 min.

Ability Codes
DX "B" min.
EN "B" max.
ST "B" max.

Other Req's
Human, half-elf, elf, or minotaur; demeanor and nature may differ by no more than 2

Advantages
Trump bonus for actions at sea or related to ships.

Disadvantages
-3 ST or AG action penalty in land combat; cannot acquire role during play without sea background.

Mercenary Warrior

Ability Scores
All Physical scores 4 min.
DX or ST 5 min.
EN 6 min.
SP 6 max.

Ability Codes
All Physical codes "C" min.
DX or ST "A"
RE "B" max.
SP "C" max.

Other Req's
Any race with acceptable scores and codes.

Advantages
Action to gain trump bonus in battle; can acquire role during play.

Disadvantages
No trump bonus for PR actions except to resist mysticism.

Rider

Ability Scores
AC 5 min.
DX 5 min.
EN 6 min.
ST 6 min.
PE 5 min.

Ability Codes
DX or ST "A"
(other code in the pair is "B" min.)
EN "B" max.
RE "D" max.
SP "B" max.

Other Req's
Barbarian human only; wealth 3 max.

Advantages
Trump bonus for mounted maneuvers and attacks; begins play with light horse.

Disadvantages
-3 ST and AG action penalty when fighting on foot; cannot acquire role during play.

Rogue Knight

Ability Scores
EN 6 min.
ST 6 min.
SP 5 min.
PR 5 min. but
PR 8 max.

Ability Codes
EN "A"
ST "A"
RE "C" max.
SP "C" max.

Other Req's
Human or half-elf; demeanor 5 max.; nature 5 max.; wealth 3 max.

Advantages
Trump bonus when fighting Dark Knights, for PR actions to impersonate a Dark Knight, and for mounted melee attacks; can acquire role during play.

Disadvantages
No trump bonus to resist mysticism; death if captured by Dark Knights; must have been a Dark Knight acquire role during

Warrior-Mystic

Ability Scores
AC 5 min.
EN 5 min.
ST 7 min.
SP 7 min.

Ability Codes
EN "C" max.
ST "B" min.
RE "C" max.
SP "B" min.

Other Req's
Human, half-elf, Kagonesti, Hylar, Klar, Neidar, or Daewar; 1 required sphere

Advantages
Trump bonus for combat spells and unarmed attacks; can acquire role during play.

Disadvantages
Forbidden spheres; no trump bonus for attacks at far missile range.

Warrior-Sorcerer

Ability Scores
AG 5 min.
EN 5 min.
ST 7 min.
RE 7 min.

Ability Codes
DX "C" max.
ST "B" min.
RE "B" min.
SP "C" max.

Other Req's
Human, half-elf, Silvanesti, or Qualinesti; 1 required school

Advantages
Trump bonus for combat spells; can acquire role during play.

Disadvantages
Forbidden schools; no trump bonus for thrown/missile weapons; no shield allowed.

Yeoman

Ability Scores
AC 5 min.
DX 5 min.
EN 6 min.
ST 6 min.
PE 5 min.

Ability Codes
DX or ST "A"
(other code is "B" min.)
EN "C" max.
RE "B" max.
PE "B" min.
SP "B" max.

Other Req's
Human, Neidar, elf, or half-elf; nature 3 max.; wealth 5 max.

Advantages
Trump bonus to gain or avoid surprise outdoors and for RE and PE actions to follow a path or trail.

Disadvantages
-3 action penalty when indoors or underground; cannot acquire role during play.



APPENDIX TWO

As described in Chapter Two, the Knights of Solamnia have members assigned to posts across much of Ansalon. Basic information on the best known circles of Solamnic Knights appears in this appendix. Each circle's entry includes a brief description of its Senior Knight, its wealth score, and a note about the local situation. The Solamnics establish circles only in settled areas, and there are none south of Haven or east of Lemish.

Castle Eastwatch (Wealth 5)

Castle Eastwatch was the Knights' outpost where Sturm Brightblade and Sir Derek Crowngard brought the Dragon Orb recovered from the Ice-all during the War of the Lance. Currently, this circle's garrison keeps watch over the White Dragon and stands ready to aid Silvamori and Qualimori should the need arise.

Riva Silverblade: *Human elder female, impulsive demeanor, Champion.*

Location: West coast of Southern Ergoth, Gellidus's realm.

Castle Uth Wistan (Wealth 9)

The Knights stationed at the Order's headquarters—Castle Uth Wistan and nearby White-stone Glade—form the Grand Circle. The Uth Wistan family still owns the castle proper, but a series of extensions and outer works have sprung up around the ancient fortress to provide administrative space.

Liam Ehrling: *Human elder male, commanding demeanor, Hero 2*.

Location: Southwestern Sancrist Isle, realm of Gunthar.

Gwynned (Wealth 6)

The Knights have made Gwynned into a fortified port town with a large garrison capable of defending against a siege of almost any length. This force can move quickly by land or sea to any trouble spot along the coasts of western Ansalon. Sir Creigh Markward is quite young to head such a key circle; his Knights are very proud of him.

Creigh Markward: *Human young adult male, motivated demeanor, Master.*

Location: Southwestern portion of Northern Ergoth, realm of Ergoth.

Hargoth (Wealth 3)

The circle in Hargoth operates clandestinely to support Knights in Palanthas by gathering information, shipping supplies, and providing an escape route for those in danger of capture. Hargoth has no actual outpost, just several temporary dockside hideouts. Robinia Rauxnuur and those under her command move frequently. They know every inch of Hargoth's waterfront, as well as secret overland routes to Palanthas.

Robinia Rauxnuur: *Human young adult female, cautious demeanor, Champion.*

Location: Northern Coastlund, realm of Khellendros.

Haven (Wealth 5)

Rumor has it that Sir Ancell Brightblade, leader of the circle in Haven, is the illegitimate son of Sturm Brightblade, a Hero of the Lance. In fact, Ancell's grandfather was Sturm's cousin—Ancell is much too young to be Sturm's child. The Knight endures gossip about his family with good humor, however. His circle has built a small castle, from which the Knights watch the Qualinesti border and guard the road to Solace.

Ancell Brightblade: *Human adult male, calm demeanor, Champion.*

Location: Just north of Qualinesti, realm of Abanasina.

Lemish (Wealth 4)

The Knights established an outpost in Lemish shortly after the Council of Last Heroes. The city had previously been occupied by several wings of Knights of Takhisis. While the common folk definitely prefer the Solamnics, a substantial minority advocates complete independence from Solamnia. The garrison and fortifications here form the Knights' main defense against invasion from the goblins of Throt to the east.

Genia Castlemore: *Human adult female, cantankerous demeanor, Champion.*

Location: East of Kaolyn, west of Throt, realm of Solamnia.

Merwick (Wealth 3)

A small castle in the port of Merwick helps the Knights at Castle Eastwatch patrol the strait between the isle of Cristyne and Southern Ergoth. The garrison stands ready to support Castle Eastwatch if Gellidus or his minions attack. The Knights of Merwick also help the Kagonesti fend off attacks from the giants and ogres living in the mountains. The Senior Knight serves as the Knighthood's chief diplomat to the Kagonesti elf exiles living on Cristyne.

GINERVRA NORTHWELL: *Human adult female, compassionate demeanor, Adventurer.*

Location: East coast of the isle of Cristyne, realm of Gunthar.

North Keep (Wealth 3)

The Solamnic circle at North Keep is the hereditary demesne of the Mantilla family. Owen Mantilla—while not yet the warrior his father, Gustave, was—has a cheerful and open manner that makes him far more popular than his sire. (Nordmaar's capital is also called North Keep.)

Owen Mantilla: *Human middle-aged adult male, gregarious demeanor, Adventurer.*

Location: North coast of the New Sea, realm of Abanasina.

Palanthas (Wealth 4)

The circle at Palanthas is the largest, most active clandestine Solamnic group. Acting on information supplied by Palin and Usha Majere, the Knights have carefully insinuated themselves into

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every aspect of the occupied city's life. Sir Eben Colfax, its commander, poses as a wealthy socialite who could care less about who controls Palanthis, so long as the city is spared destruction. The Knights use the city's sewer system to move about secretly—much to the chagrin of local thieves—and have either disrupted or co-opted most of the underground network the Knights of Takhisis once maintained in the city.

Eben Colfax: *Human adult male, courageous demeanor, Master.*

Location: On the Bay of Branchala, realm of Khellendros.

Qualimori (Wealth 2)

The Knights have maintained a small outpost in the elf city of Qualimori ever since the close of the War of the Lance to keep up diplomatic ties and help protect refugees moving between Qualinesti and Southern Ergoth. With the occupation of Qualinesti by Beryllintranox and her Dark Knight agents, relations between the elves and the Solamnics have grown strained. The garrison's chief duties are assisting the elves with defense and keeping an eye on Gellidus.

Buiron Orne: *Human adult male, demanding demeanor, Adventurer.*

Location: On Thunder Bay in Southern Ergoth, realm of Gellidus.

Ravenshadow's Keep (Wealth 4)

The Knighthood's mountain fortress of Ravenshadow's Keep guards the Kaolyn dwarves' underground city of Garnet. Patrols from the Keep guard all the key mountain passes to keep them clear in the event of an invasion. The Knights and the local dwarves also organize caravans that keep steel, silver, and copper flowing from Garnet to Solamnia and Abanasinia. Couriers mounted on pegasi maintain regular contact with Solanthus and Lemish.

Heall Molton: *Human middle-aged male, reserved demeanor, Champion.*

Location: Garnet Mountains west of Lemish, realm of Solamnia.

Sanction (Wealth 4)

The clandestine circle at Sanction is the Order's easternmost outpost, established during the War of the Lance, when Whitestone forces occupied the city. As the Solamnic Knights ceded Sanction to the Dark Knights at the Council of Last Heroes, they are not to interfere when the Knights of Takhisis take the city. Several years ago, however, a group of hot-headed young Knights joined a group of equally impetuous Legionnaires and attempted a raid on the Dark Knight army surrounding the city. All the raiders were killed, and the Grand Master was forced to declare that the Knights had disobeyed their orders. Since then, the Knights have returned to Sanction secretly, ostensibly to keep watch on the dark paladins.

Karine Thasally: *Half-elf young adult female, confident demeanor, Champion.*

Location: In the Khalkist Mountains on the eastern shore of the New Sea.

Schallsea (Wealth 5)

The Knights have charged Camilla Woledge, a self-made adventurer who won her spurs during the Dragon Purge, with the defense of Schallsea and the safety of Goldmoon and the Citadel of Light. She has taken to her duties with relish.

Camilla Woledge: *Human adult female, stubborn demeanor, Master.*

Location: Port on Schallsea's western shore.

Silvamori (Wealth 2)

The Knights founded their Silvamori circle after the War of the Lance to foster goodwill and cooperation with the Silvanesti. The elves, however, have never been anything but aloof and coldly polite to them. The garrison keeps a lookout for any hostile moves from Gellidus and tries to stay out of the elves' way as much as possible.

Terrye Pontuwurt: *Human adult female, merciful demeanor, Adventurer.*

Location: On Thunder Bay in Southern Ergoth, realm of Gellidus.

Solace (Wealth 4)

The Solamnics consider Solace a city of great importance, as it is the childhood home of Sturm Brightblade—one of the most renowned Knights in recent memory—and the site of the Tomb of the Last Heroes. The Knights of Solace guard the Tomb around the clock and assist the city watch with defense and security. Undoubtedly, they also monitor the activity at the Legion of Steel headquarters, also located in Solace. Brawls between rowdy young Legionnaires and quick-tempered young Knights once were fairly frequent, but today the Knighthood takes care to post only seasoned, level-headed Knights to this circle.

Clive Oere: *Human adult male, serious demeanor, Champion.*

Location: In the Sentinel Peaks north of Haven, realm of Abanasinia.

Solanthus (Wealth 9)

The circle at Solanthus is second in importance only to the Grand Circle at Castle Uth Wistan. However, the Knights remain painfully aware that Solanthus, the capital of Solamnia, has fallen to enemies twice: once during the War of the Lance and again to Lord Ariakan. Vowing not to let the capital fall again, they raised new fortifications that rival any on Ansalon. Solanthus is the base for the Knighthood's defenses on mainland Ansalon, and this circle's Senior Knight—a Warrior Lord—commands Solamnia's defense.

Matelda Bretel: *Human elder female, imperial demeanor, Hero.*

Location: North of Garnet range in Heartlund, realm of Solamnia.




APPENDIX THREE

When a player or Narrator doesn't want to use the standard armies in Chapter Five, he can create custom armies. All he needs is paper and pencil, though a calculator will help speed the process and reduce arithmetic errors.

Base Power


To figure a new army's Base Power, first determine how many creatures are in the army and type of creatures they are. Then multiply the Coordination and Physique scores of every individual creature in the army and add all the values together. (To find a hero's Coordination, figure the average of his Agility and Dexterity ability scores; Physique is the average of a hero's Endurance and Strength.) Round all fractions down after multiplying.


For example, say Zuzaan, a Knight of Takhisis, is a hero and army commander.


 **Zuzaan:** *Human female adult, brutal demeanor, Master.*

AG 6C, DX 5C, EN 7A, ST 8A, RE 5C, PE 7A, SP 6C, PR 7A.

Zuzaan would contribute 41 points to her army's base power:

 AG 6 + DX 5 = 11 + 2 = 5.5 Coordination.

 EN 7 + ST 8 = 15 + 2 = 7.5 Physique.

 6 Co 5.5 x PH 7.5 = 41.25, rounded down to 41.

If Zuzaan led the army of Dark Knights, brutes, and draconians used as an example in Chapter Five, the base power calculations would be as follows:

Creatures	Scores	Calculations	=	Total
Zuzaan	Co 5.5, PH 7.5	$5 \times 8 \times 1$	=	41
Zuzaan's war horse	Co 9, PH 16	$9 \times 16 \times 1$	=	144
100 Dark Knights	Co 6, PH 7	$6 \times 7 \times 100$	=	4,200
100 war horses	Co 9, PH 16	$9 \times 16 \times 100$	=	14,400
200 brutes	Co 6, PH 11	$6 \times 11 \times 200$	=	13,200
10 mammoths	Co 6, PH 45	$6 \times 45 \times 10$	=	2,700
50 Baaz draconians	Co 8, PH 6	$8 \times 6 \times 50$	=	2,400
50 Kapak draconians	Co 8, PH 6	$8 \times 6 \times 50$	=	<u>2,400</u>
				39,485 Base power

Average Coordination

To determine an army's Average Coordination, add up the Coordination scores of all the creatures in it *who are maneuvering* and divide by the number of creatures. Only individuals actually involved in movement contribute their values; troops riding mounts into battle are not included in the calculation, only their mounts are. Round all fractions of .5 or less down, round fractions of more than .5 up.

The calculation for Zuzaan's sample army would be as follows:

Creatures	Scores	Calculations	Total
Zuzaan's war horse	Co 9	9×1	9
100 war horses	Co 9	9×100	900
200 brutes	Co 6	6×200	1,200
10 mammoths	Co 6	6×10	60
50 Baaz draconians	Co 8	8×50	400
<u>50</u> Kapak draconians	Co 8	8×50	<u>400</u>
Total 411			2,969 Co scores

Then, find the average (total Coordination divided by number of creatures):

$2,969 \div 411 = 7.22$, rounded down to 7.

Average Coordination 7.

CREATING AN ARMY

Average Physique

To determine an army's average Physique scores of all the creatures in it and divide by the number of creatures. Round all fractions of .5 or less down, and round fractions of more than .5 up.

The calculation for the sample army would be as follows:

Creatures	Scores	Calculations	Total
Zuzaan	PH 7.5	7.5×1 (rounded) =	7
Zuzaan's war horse	PH 16	16×1 =	16
100 Dark Knights	PH 7	7×100 =	700
100 war horses	PH 16	16×100 =	1,600
200 brutes	PH 11	11×200 =	2,200
10 mammoths	PH 45	45×10 =	450
50 Baaz draconians	PH 6	6×50 =	300
50 Kapak draconians	PH 18	18×50 =	<u>900</u>
Total 512			6,173 PH scores

Then, find the average (total Physique divided by number of creatures):

$$6,173 \div 512 = 12.06, \text{ rounded down to } 12.$$

Average Physique 12.

Command Score

As noted in Chapter Five, an army's command score is equal to its commander's Presence score. The sample army's commander, Zuzaan, has a Presence score of 7, giving the army a command score of 7 as well.

Command Hand

Chapter Five explains that the player of the army commander discards his hero's Hand of Fate at the start of a mass combat and draws a Command Hand equal in size to his normal Hand of Fate. Due to her reputation of Master, Zuzaan earns her player a Command Hand of six cards to resolve the actions of her army.

Final Power

As described in Chapter Five, the army commander's Presence code modifies the army's base power. Because Zuzaan has a Presence code of "A," her army receives a bonus of one-quarter its base power. In this case, multiplying the base power by 1.25 yields the final power rating (round all fractions down):

$$\text{Base power } 39,485 \times \text{resence modifier } 1.25 = 49,356.25, \text{ rounded down to } 49,356.$$

Final power (no fortification) 48,168.

An army's base power is also adjusted if it enjoys the benefits of a fortification. If Zuzaan's army occupied a fortified city, it would gain a bonus of 10,000 points to its base power (see the description on page 84).

$$49,356 + 10,000 = 59,356.$$

Final power (with fortification) 59,356.



NEW WEAPONS

	Weapon	Type	Class	Dmg	Special Race	Other	
Short Range	Bear claws †	Personal	VL	+1	None	N/A	
	Garrote †	Personal	VL	+1	None	N/A	
	Belaying pin †	Melee *	VL	+1	Sea barbarian	N/A	
	Death's tooth kala †	Melee	VL	+2	None	N/A	
	Mallet †	Melee *	VL	+2	Kagonesti	N/A	
	War pipe †	Melee	VL	+2	Mtn. barbarian	N/A	
	Weighted sash †	Melee	VL	+2	None	N/A	
	Whippik †	Melee ***	VL	+2	Kender	N/A	
	Fang †	Melee	L	+2	Sea barbarian	N/A	
	Caff †	Melee	L	+3	Dwarf	N/A	
	Soris †	Melee	L	+3	Elf	N/A	
	Teeth chain †	Melee	L	+3	None	N/A	
	Hookshaft ‡	Melee	M	+4	None	N/A	
	Hoopak ‡	Melee ***	M	+4	Kender	N/A	
	War club †	Melee	M	+4	Kagonesti	N/A	
	Gnome pick †	Melee	M	+5	Gnome	N/A	
	Sabre †	Melee	M	+5	Sea barbarian	N/A	
	Crook blade †	Melee	H	+6	None	N/A	
	Frostreaver ‡	Melee	VH	+8	Ice barbarian	N/A	
	Tessto †	Melee	VH	+9	Minotaur	N/A	
	Missile Range	Lasso †	Thrown	VL	—	None	N/A
		Ice flask †	Thrown	VL	+1	Ice barbarian	N/A
		Bolas †	Thrown **	L	+2	None	N/A
		Throwing stick †	Thrown	L	+2	Plains barbarian	Also thrown at far missile range
		Ice grenade †	Thrown	L	+2	Ice barbarian	N/A
		Throwing stone †	Thrown	L	+2	Ice barbarian	N/A
Throwing blades †		Thrown	L	+3	None	N/A	
Oil flask †		Thrown	L	+3	None	N/A	
Pellet bow ‡		Missile	L	+2	Mtn. barbarian	N/A	
Ice crossbow ‡		Missile	M	+4	Ice barbarian	N/A	
Singing bow ‡		Missile	VH	+9	Centaur	N/A	
Mounted		Light lance †	Mounted	H	+9	None	N/A
		Heavy lance †	Mounted	VH	+10	None	N/A
		Aerial lance †	Mounted	VH	+11	None	N/A
Improv.	Cup/Mug †	Melee *	VL	+0 (+2)	None	PH 5	
	Bottle †	Melee *	VL	+1	None	PH 6	
	Lantern †	Throw **	VL	+1	None	PH 6	
	Torch †	Melee *	VL	+1 (+4)	None	PH 8	
	Platter/Tray †	Melee *	L	+3	None	PH 21 °	
	Tankard/ Jug †	Melee *	L	+3	None	PH 9	
	Poker/Candlestick †	Melee *	L	+4	None	PH 36 ¥	
	Stool †	Melee *	M	+4	None	PH 16	
	Skillet †	Melee *	M	+2	None	PH 25 ¥	
	Table leg †	Melee *	M	+4	None	PH 12	
	Chair ‡	Melee *	H	+5	None	PH 15	
	Table ‡	Melee	H	+5	None	PH 18	
	Bucket/Keg ‡	Melee	H	+5	None	PH 20	
	Bench ‡	Melee	VH	+6	None	PH 18	
	Small strongbox ‡	Melee	VH	+7	None	PH 42	
	Chandelier ‡	Melee	—	+10	None	PH 15	
	Bookcase ‡	Melee	—	+15	None	PH 20	
	Shields	Buckler †	Melee *	VL	—	None	ATT. BONUS 1
		Kite †	Melee *	L	+1	None	ATT. BONUS 2
		Target †	Melee	M	+2	None	ATT. BONUS 3
Horse †		Melee	H	+3	None	ATT. BONUS 4	
Tower †		Melee	VH	+4	None	ATT. BONUS 5	

† Requires only one hand to use. ‡ Requires two hands; no shield allowed. * Also can be thrown.

** Also usable in melee combat. *** Also can hurl missiles. ¥ Suffers no damage when used against unarmored opponents. ° Suffers no damage when used as a weapon, breaks only when attacker suffers a mishap.





FIFTH AGE

HEROES OF STEEL

BOOK
TWO





THE RISING STORM

Dragons of a New Age, Part One



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Author's Foreword



The Rising Storm is the first DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE™ adventure of a five-part series called *Dragons of a New Age*. This story arc takes place concurrently with the events in the first series of FIFTH AGE novels. Of course, these adventures do not parallel the novels' plotlines perfectly—your heroes undoubtedly will choose different paths than the Heroes of the Heart do in the novels. In addition, some scenes from the books must be omitted due to space concerns and to enhance playability. However, in true DRAGONLANCE tradition, the *Dragons of a New Age* adventures give you the chance to role-play the characters from these books or have your heroes interact with these figures while pursuing their own paths through the story.

This adventure, best suited to a party of four to six heroes of approximately Adventurer reputation, links with the novel *The Dawning of a New Age* by Jean Rabe and draws from the material about warrior heroes presented in *Night and Day*. Players may select the novel's main characters, described in this adventure's Prologue, as their heroes or create new ones. They also can choose heroes from the character cards included in the FIFTH AGE box set or continue playing with the ones they created for the adventure, *Heroes of a New Age*, included in the FIFTH AGE boxed set.

Adventure Synopsis

The heroes begin their quest in Solace, where people from all over Abanasinia have gathered to celebrate the Festival of the Heroes, a holiday commemorating the end of the Chaos War thirty-one years ago. In Act One, *The Call*, the heroes receive a vision from Goldmoon, the First Master of Mysticism, who has broadcast a mental message to everyone with the will to fight Evil. To answer the call, they must journey to the island of Schallsea, where Goldmoon tells them something wicked is afoot near Palanthis, the capital of the Blue Dragon's realm.

A journey to Palanthis in Act Two, *The Mission*, provides challenges for the heroes as they attempt to skirt the realm of the White Dragon or evade the suspicions of Dark Knights along the way. In Act Three, *The Revelation*, the heroes learn that Dark Knights and brutes have been kidnapping scores of people—if they're not careful, they might be next! Investigating the disappearances leads them to abandoned village-turned-prison camp, where they might free some captives and gain a clue to the sinister goings-on. Before their mission ends, they also tangle with a frightening new type of monster—the dragonspawn.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Glen Williams", located in the bottom right corner of the page.

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PROLOGUE

The gods are gone, and the threat of the dragons is greater than ever before. And you're looking for a cause, Dhamon Grimwulf, though you may not realize it.... It seems a cause has found you."

*-Goldmoon's words to a hero,
The Dawning of a New Age*

The unique challenges of the Fifth Age of Krynn call to a set of heroes born in the Age of Mortals, new companions willing to journey into danger unknown to safeguard Ansalon. Though Fate may have thrown them together, they soon come to care about each other, bound by their shared struggles against the Evil of the Great Dragons.

These are the Heroes of the Heart.

Heroes of the Heart

The personalities in this Prologue represent not only warriors but also users of magic and a couple of sneaky types as well. Many appear on cards of the Fate Deck, and all are featured in the FIFTH AGE novel *The Dawning of a New Age*. Players can use these characters as their heroes for the series of adventures that begins with *The Rising Storm*. Or they can serve as allies to the heroes that players have already created or will create for this adventure.



The best choices for heroes in this adventure are Blister, Dhamon, Feril, and Rig. Other personalities can augment the party, for larger playing groups.

Regardless of whether these personalities become the heroes for this adventure or sideline characters that interact with the heroes, Narrators should familiarize themselves with them before beginning to play *The Rising Storm*.



PROLOGUE

Blister Nimblefingers

Description	Female kender (afflicted)		
Demeanor	Cautious (4 )		
Nature	Resourceful (2 )		
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 4, Hand 4)		
Social status	Tradesman (Wealth 4)		
Agility	SD	Reason	5C
Dexterity	7B	Perception	6A
Endurance	5D	Spirit	4C
Strength	4C	Presence	6B
Melee weapon	Bear claws (+1)		
Missile weapon	Bolas (+2)		
Armor	Leather (-2)		
Shield	None		

“About thirty years ago, I struck out from my home in Kendermore on an important mission for the Hero of the Lance Riverwind—I was the one who warned the Knights of Solamnia of the coming of Malystrixx, the Red Dragon!

“Of course, I’ve never been back to Kendermore—there’s not much worth seeing there these days, except Malys. I’ve never seen a red dragon, let alone one big enough to destroy my whole country.

“I’ve spent most of my life in Hyllo with other kender who managed to escape Malystrixx. But now that I’m approaching middle age, I’ve decided to venture out into the world again. I’d forgotten just how much there is to see!

“Anyway, I’m not like what most people expect when they meet a kender. Oh sure, I’d like to see what’s inside every wrapped parcel, behind every locked door, or inside each padlocked chest. But I’ve got discipline. I almost never go poking my nose into someplace unless there’s a really good reason to do so.


“When my curiosity overrides my common sense—umm, I mean when I have to confront the unknown—I’m careful. I’ll prod a suspected trap from a safe distance with a spear, or maybe I’ll

just throw a rock at it. I can snag pouches and other small objects with a fishing line. I have a spyglass I use to peer into campsites. I like to be careful, just like Uncle Tas did: He always knew *exactly* what he was doing.

“I wear gloves nearly all the time because when I was a girl I was foolish and let a trap spray acid all over my hands. (That’s how I got my nickname, Blister. Before that, everyone called me Verae.) Now, my hands don’t work quite right. I can’t always grasp a weapon properly, and tine work, like picking locks, really hurts. Of course, if my companions need me (and who doesn’t need a kender now and then?), I ignore the pain and get the job done.

“I have a friend, Raph, who is more of a traditional kender. I’ve made it my job to keep him alive at least long enough to see his next birthday.”

Game Information

As an afflicted kender, any card Blister (4 ) plays is trump if it involves stealth or graceful, careful movement. The kender carries an assortment of gloves and tools to help her with simple tasks. She has a studded pair that serve as weapons, a pair covered with beeswax to help her pick things up, and a pair fitted with picks to help with fine work.

She also carries a magical net-well, she *thinks* it’s magic. If Blister closes to personal range, she can automatically trap a creature smaller than a cat inside the net. To capture larger creatures, she must attempt an *average Agility (Agility)* action. The net can hold a creature as large as a horse.

This kender has acute senses of hearing and eyesight.

Appearance

Blister has graying blond hair and a ruddy complexion. Her hands and fingers resemble a bird’s feet: thin, twisted, and scaly from her injury.



Dhamon Grimwulf

Description	Male human (civilized), rogue knight role		
Demeanor	Independent (5 †)		
Nature	Brave (1 ♣)		
Reputation	Champion (Quests 7, Hand 5)		
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3)		
Agility	8A	Reason	7D
Dexterity	6C	Perception	6B
Endurance	7A	Spirit	5C
Strength	8A	Presence	7A
Melee weapon	Long sword of renown (+11)		
Missile weapon	Crossbow (+5)		
Armor	Chain mail of distinction (-5)		
Shield	Target (-3)		

"When I was twelve, I caused quite a stir in my hometown by joining the Dark Knights. I came from a noble but poor family that had never been popular; it pleased me to see the shock in the faces of my neighbors when I rode out of town carrying the Knights' banner.

"After several years of training, I became a full member of the Order. My pride swelled when I became a dragon rider, paired with the blue dragon, Gale.

"During an attack on the city of Sanction about five years ago, I became separated from Gale, but fought on. I looked for a worthy foe, and my eye settled on a Solamnnc Knight. Knowing that a victory over another Knight would win me even more glory, I pressed the attack, pausing only to salute the older man. The Knight gravely returned my salute, and we exchanged blows. The old fellow was good with a sword, but I was stronger. I pounded the Knight to his knees and demanded his surrender. That was a mistake: I had left him an opening, and his counterattack nearly killed me. As I felt my life draining away, I prayed that Her Dark Majesty would give me the strength to land one final blow to slay this accursed Knight. Only blackness answered.

"I was taken prisoner and brought to Solamnna, where my opponent tended me himself. Surprisingly enough, I came to admire the man. While I recovered from my battle injuries, I listened eagerly to his stories about Huma, Sturm Brightblade, and other famous Solamnncs. His tales and his kind manner toward me made me realize slowly that, although the Dark Knights had taught me honor, they had never taught me compassion. In nightmares I began to see the faces of every man I had ever killed. It made me shudder to realize that, while I was battling for glory, they had been fighting to defend their homes.

"When I became well, I resolved to leave the Knights of Takhisis. I realized they had taken advantage of a bitter youth, twisting my anger to their own ends. I had barely made my decision when my fellow Dark Knights came to my 'rescue.'

"I shouldn't have been surprised that they tracked me down, but I didn't want to be rescued. In fact, I joined my captor-turned-mentor in defending his home.

"Only I survived that battle. When I buried the dead, I buried my old armor and weapons, too—and my old life.

"My one option, as I saw it, was to become a sellsword. True, the mercenary life isn't honorable. But it's a better one than I deserve."

Game Information

As a rogue knight, Dhamon (5 †) receives a trump bonus when fighting Knights of Takhisis or trying to impersonate a Dark Knight. When fighting from a mount, he also can play any card as trump. However, he never receives a trump bonus to resist mysticism, thanks to the grueling "training" his old Order put him through as a youth. If the Knights of Takhisis ever capture Dhamon, they will kill him.

This rogue knight has acute eyesight.

Appearance

Lean, muscular Dhamon turns the heads of many young ladies. This young man ties his long, wheat-blond hair back in a pony tail and wears old, plain clothes.

Ferilleeagh Dawnspringer

Description	Female Kagonesti elf
Demeanor	Curious (2 ☾)
Nature	Wild (6 ☾)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 6, Hand 4)
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3)
Agility 6D	Reason 7A (49)
Dexterity 6B	Perception 5A
Endurance 4D	Spirit 6A (36)
Strength 7B	Presence 6C
Melee weapon	Broad sword (+6)
Missile weapon	Long bow (+6)
Armor	Leather (-2)
Shield	Kite (-2)

"I'm usually not one to take sides in an argument. Even among my own people, the wild and independent Kagonesti, I've always been a loner. I enjoy solitude, and I admire—even envy—wild creatures. They live free of the constraints of society. Animals have pure motives: They are never treacherous and kill only for food, taking just what they need. And, for all their purity, animals also know how to enjoy simple pleasures. Overall, I would prefer a solitary life in the wilderness with them to just about anything else.

"Now, however, I've gotten myself involved with one of the greatest struggles ever to face Krynn: the battle between mortals and the Great Dragons. I know how to pick enemies, don't I?

"I love the wilderness and would sacrifice anything to save it—even my life, fighting those affronts to nature, the Great Dragons. The White Dragon, Gellidus, has transformed my home isle of Southern Ergoth into a vast glacier: All it took was the touch of Frost to turn a land of temperate plains and forests into a polar desert. I have nothing against polar deserts, but I want them to stay where they belong: at the poles!

"Other colored dragons have wreaked

similar havoc in the territories they have claimed. Where are the metallic dragons? Why aren't they playing their role in maintaining the balance on Krynn? Everyone in Ansalon wants these questions answered. I have made it my job to seek those answers—and a way to thwart the chromatic dragons' schemes.

"I try not to let my grim task keep me from enjoying the wonders I see around me, however. There is beauty almost everywhere you look, from the simple grace of a butterfly to the crisp geometry of a dwarven building. Whenever I find myself somewhere I haven't been before, I can't help stopping to drink in all the sights, sounds, and smells."

Game Information

As an elf, Feril (6 ☾) is skilled with a sword and perceptive in woodland settings. Any card she plays to resolve

an attack with a sword or to resolve a Perception action in a forest environment becomes automatic trump. However, like others of her race, Feril can seem haughty to non-elves. Therefore, she never enjoys a trump bonus to resolve a Presence action involving a non-elf. (Cards played to resist magic are an exception.)

As a Kagonesti shaman, Feril can employ three schools of sorcery: pyromancy, geomancy, and aeromancy. She also can cast spells from three mystic spheres: animism, alteration, and healing. Her two acute senses are sight and hearing.

Appearance

Feril is beautiful, tanned, and wildly exotic. Her brown hair falls in waves to her shoulders, like a lion's mane. Even though she has not recently been among her people, the Kagonesti, she proudly wears the strange and colorful tattoos of this race of wild elves. Feril bears a tattoo of an orange and yellow oak leaf on one cheek and another of a red lightning bolt across her forehead.



Rig Mer-Krel

Description	Human male (barbarian), mariner role
Demeanor	Roguish (7 🍀)
Nature	Clever (5 🍀)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 5, Hand 4)
Social status	Guildsman (Wealth 5)
Agility	8C
Dexterity	6A
Endurance	9C
Strength	7C
Reason	5D
Perception	5A
Spirit	4C
Presence	4B
Melee weapon	Sabre of renown (+9)
Missile weapon	Fang (+2)
Armor	Padded silk (-1)
Shield	None

"Rig is just a nickname, but it suits me. I picked it up as a kid doing odd jobs on the docks in Sea Reach. I've been a sailor ever since I celebrated my twelfth birthday by stowing away on a ship. The home I left was not a happy one, but I joined a much larger family—the brotherhood of sailors. Now I'm in my mid-twenties and the helmsman on the *Wind Chaser*, which runs between New Ports in Abanasinia and the island of Schallsea.

"Steering this overgrown ferry in the relatively calm waters of the New Sea doesn't entirely suit my tastes—I'd much rather sail the open sea—but at least it's a job that involves seamanship. I'm at my best when I have salt water in sight.

"About two years ago, I was second mate on a pirate ship. We'd board other ships, steal them, and put the crews ashore. It was a lucrative business until our captain became overcautious. He began avoiding vessels that might be armed, and he started limiting our stays in port because he was afraid the authorities would recognize us. The lack of

action and the lack of loot made the crew restless.

"I should have quit then, but I agreed to be part of a mutiny. I was to be first mate after we had seized the ship and beached the captain. I liked the captain, but I, too, was bored, and I didn't see much difference between stealing the captain's ship and what we'd been doing all along.

"The mutiny was bloodless, but when we rowed the captain ashore, the crew killed him—on orders from the new captain, they said. I never got over seeing a man I had once admired lying dead in the sand; it made me wonder what had happened to all those other sailors we had 'put ashore.'

"I jumped ship at the first opportunity. Shاون, a bright-eyed lass I had taken under my wing, tagged along. I'll go back to the sea some day, but not as a pirate. Perhaps I'll become a smuggler—I wouldn't mind depriving a dragon overlord of a few steel in taxes."



Game Information

As a mariner, Rig (7 🍀) enjoys a trump bonus for any action he attempts involving combat at sea or an act of seamanship. When engaged in land combat, however, he suffers a -3 action penalty.

Rig is always ready for a fight. Besides his two primary weapons, he wears several concealed weapons: a weighted sash that looks like normal clothing, two daggers in his boots, and two more hidden under his shirt. He wears a fancy hat with a garrote tucked into the headband and conceals razor-sharp blades in the soles of his boots. He even wears a dagger-shaped earring that doubles as a lockpick.

Rig enjoys acute eyesight and taste—no one will ever get a poisoned meal past him.

Appearance

Tall and muscular Rig has brown skin and short, dark hair that mark him as an Ergothian. He favors bright, flashy clothes.

Jasper Fireforge

Description	Male Neidar dwarf
Demeanor	Decisive (3 ♣)
Nature	Honest (2 ♥)
Reputation	Champion (Quests 7, Hand 5)
Social status	Gentry (Wealth 6)
Agility	6B
Dexterity	5C
Endurance	7B
Strength	7A
Reason	6D
Perception	5B
Spirit	8A (64)
Presence	7B

Melee weapon Battle axe of fame (+12)

Missile weapon Crossbow (+5)

Armor Scale armor of renown (-8)

Shield Horse shield of distinction (-6)

"I'm Flint Fireforge's nephew. That's right: Flint Fireforge, Hero of the Lance, was my uncle. It seems that fate has cast the Fireorges as saviors of Krynn, or at least of Ansalon. Now it's my time to be a hero, and I'll do my best to fill the role Fate has cast for me.

"I've inherited my uncle's tolerance for other races, particularly elves and kender. Don't laugh—Uncle Flint's best friends were Tanis Half-Elven and Tasslehoff Burrfoot. I know elves are a bit full of themselves, so I just let them walk around with their noses in the air. Why should I let myself be offended by their behavior? I also don't understand why other people get so upset when kender are around—can't they appreciate a kender's quick wit? I'll admit that I seem to 'lose' things more often when there's a kender nearby, but that's never a problem, because the kender always find my things for me. It would be rude to call a kender a thief or demand my property back: Harsh words are for enemies, not friends.

"That's a truth I learned from Goldmoon, First Master of Mysticism. I'm a student of hers at the Citadel of Light on Schallsea. Not only is she my spiritual instructor, she's a personal friend of



mine. She even saved my life once, back during the Dragon Purge, before anyone even knew what mysticism was. I just might be the first person in Ansalon ever to benefit from mystic healing.

"The world is lucky to have Goldmoon around—she's brought the gift of healing back to a world that has lost it twice now. The power of her spirit has made her an ageless beauty, at least to my eyes (I understand that less enlightened folk see her differently). Goldmoon is a wonderful teacher, and I never tire of working under her guidance. I could happily spend all my days studying with her, but, she has reminded me that I have more important work to do and ought not spend all my time at the Citadel."

Game Information

As a dwarf, Jasper (2 ♥) enjoys resistance to poisons and sorcery in the form of a trump bonus to any actions to counter a poison or block a sorcerer's attack.

Jasper can employ three spheres of mysticism: healing, mentalism, and sensitivity. In addition, he has an acute sense of smell.

Appearance

Though well into his middle age, Jasper has a jovial nature that makes him seem much younger. He keeps his reddish-brown hair and beard neatly trimmed befits a dwarf of his station.

Shaon of Istar

Description	Female human (barbarian), barbarian warrior role
Demeanor	Hedonistic (2 ➔)
Nature	Rash (6 ➔)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 4, Hand 4)
Social Status	Commoner (Wealth 3)

Agility	6A	Reason	5D
Dexterity	5A	Perception	5B
Endurance	5C	Spirit	5B
Strength	6C	Presence	4C

Melee weapon	Sabre (+5)
Missile Weapon	Arbalest (+9)
Armor	Leather (-2)
Shield	Tower (-5)

“Since the time of the first Cataclysm, my people have sailed the seas, living on our ships (that’s how my ancestors were saved from destruction when the land of Istar sank beneath the waves). A few years ago, I decided to explore the world outside my own clan, so I signed on as a common sailor on a series of ships.

“I’ve joined treasure hunters plumb-ing the still waters of the Blood Sea of Istar, gone searching for the fabled Dragon Isles, and seen the distant Ice-wall. By far my most exciting experi-ences, though, arose during my stint as a pirate. I joined a group of scalawags prowling the north coast of Ansalon, capturing smaller ships. We’d beach the crews, then sell the ships and cargoes. It was a good life.

“I suppose I might have enjoyed things a little less if the ship’s second mate, Rig, hadn’t become my men-tor, of sorts. Not that I needed any help learning to be a sailor, but a pirate’s life can be rough if you don’t choose the right friends.

“I liked that inde-pendent, carefree life. Even now, I live each day

as though it could be my last. Why bother planning for the future? It’s foolish— death can overtake any man or woman in the blink of an eye. So I spend my money as I get it and enjoy myself whenever I can. I’ve never lost a fight, and I never run from one. Maybe that’s because at sea there’s nowhere to run. Your blade is the only thing that stands between you and a watery death. You either fight to win or you feed the sharks.

“Unfortunately, my life feels a little short on excitement right now. About two years ago, the pirates on my ship all pretty much agreed that our captain had gone soft, so we mutinied. We took over the vessel without shedding any blood, and Rig and some of the crew put the captain ashore. For some strange reason, though, Rig jumped ship at our next port. He’d just been promoted to first mate, too. I guess he didn’t like the job.

“I was curious about where Rig was headed, so I went with him. I don’t much like going ashore, but I’ve found that any-place can be tolerable when I’m in Rig’s company. The big galoot won’t tell me so, but I know he loves me just as I love him.

“We’ve settled down for awhile in a place called New Ports on the eastern coast of Abanasinia. We crew a vessel fer-rying passengers to the island of Schallsea, where there’s some kind of big temple. It’s a reasonable job, but pretty boring. At least we spend most of our time on the water.”

Game Information

As a sea barbarian, any card Shaon plays is trump if it involves an attack with the sabre (or other nautical weapons listed in Chapter Four of *Night and Day*) or maneuvering or surviving at sea. Shaon suffers a -3 action penalty to all actions when visiting any city but Sea Reach on her home island of Saifhum.

Appearance

Shaon possesses an ever-present, infectious grin. She has dusky skin and brilliantly white teeth and keeps her dark hair short and curly.



Raph Tanglemap

Description	Male true kender
Demeanor	Careless (1 $\frac{1}{4}$)
Nature	Impulsive (1 $\frac{1}{2}$)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 4, Hand 4)
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3)

Agility	9D	Reason	4C
Dexterity	7B	Perception	6A
Endurance	5D	Spirit	4C
Strength	5C	Presence	3B

Melee weapon	Hoopak (+4)
Missile weapon	Dagger (+2)
Armor	Leather (-2)
Shield	None

“People seem to get pretty mad at me when I’m around. I don’t mean to be annoying or anything, it’s just that I find anything just beyond my reach infinitely more interesting than what’s within my grasp.

“My friend Blister fusses over me a lot and says I’m all fingers and pockets. I like the sound of that. She’s also always saying stuff to me like, ‘Be careful,’ ‘Keep out of there,’ and even, ‘No!’ I don’t care so much for that. She fusses over me an *awful* lot.

“I have to admit, though, that things like overturned carts, angry peddlers, broken furniture, spilled ale, and such seem to pop up a lot more often around me than other folks. I guess you could say I’m a typical kender.

“My home is in Hylo, but I’ve left it to see the world. Wanderlust, Blister says. So far, I’ve seen tidal waves (but no sea monsters yet), a glacier (where one isn’t supposed to be), the vallenwoods of Solace (I’ve even climbed ‘em!), Darken Wood (but no unicorns), and oh, lots more. I haven’t even been traveling very long, and I’m eager to see and do all I can every day.

“See, there are many, many things I haven’t come across yet, like a real dragon (even a small one would do for starters), a ghost (I think I saw a zombie or something in Darken Wood), a



giant... Gee, I guess the list of what I

It’s even longer than the list of what I *have* seen. Sitting round making lists really isn’t much fun. Actually it’s boring after awhile. I hate being bored. Fortunately, I usually can find something else to do. No matter where I go, it seems I can always find a locked door to open (it’s nice of people to give me little challenges like that) or something else to get into. Life is good.

“I can’t say that I like angry people very much, though, and the world seems just *full* of people who get angry way too easily.

“Hmm... I wonder what it would be like to get *really* angry?”

Game Information

As a true kender, Raph receives a trump bonus for actions involving sleight-of-hand. Like most kender, he has a collection of pouches stuffed with odds and ends he’s picked up. When a pouch gets full, Raph simply drops a few things and finds something new to carry around.

In addition to acute eyesight, Raph has an excellent sense of smell.

Appearance

Raph Tanglemap, young by kender standards, looks something like a bright-eyed little human boy. However, a closer look reveals an adult’s lean face and body. His reddish hair is loose and unkempt, which gives him his name.





ACT ONE

Scene One: The Celebration

The heroes have come to the city of Solace for the annual Festival of the Heroes, a weeklong fair commemorating the end of the Chaos War thirty-one years ago. The celebration culminates with a twilight procession past the Tomb of the Last Heroes, a black marble edifice where many heroes of the Chaos War have been laid to rest, including Tanis Half-Elven and Steel Brightblade. It is also a monument to the kender hero Tasslehoff Burrfoot.

The crowd at the fair is thick with kender who have come to pay their respects at the Tomb and to immerse themselves in the excitement of the fair.

Overview

In this scene, the heroes have the opportunity to display their skills in archery, wrestling, magic—even a joust.

Getting Started

Many famous characters live in Solace, most notably the Majere family. Although the master sorcerer Palin Majere is not in town now, the heroes might meet Tika and Caramon serving patrons at the Inn of the Last Home. Therefore, the Narrator should have their character cards from the FIFTH AGE boxed set handy.

First Impressions

It is late spring in Solace and evening approaches. The mood is festive, though plenty of guards stand duty, watching for trouble. After all, this city has seen its share of woes since the Chaos War, from invading armies to dragon battles. The citizens are happy but prepared for anything.

Solace is bustling on this warm spring late afternoon. It's the last day of the Festival of the Heroes, and the city has been the site of a lively fair for the past week. The striped tents of traveling minstrels and

peddlers dot the fresh grass beneath the stately vallenwoods. The air is full of delicious smells and the sounds of merriment.

The citizens of Solace are out in force today, taking in the pleasures of the fair before the performers and merchants pack up and move on. Housewives haggle with merchants over bolts of cloth from Palanthas, wide-eyed farm boys gawk at dancing girls (when they think their local sweethearts aren't looking), and adventurers such as yourselves stop to examine weaponry from dwarf smiths or lounge near the paddock where an archery contest and joust will take place before sundown.

Bright-eyed children, curious as kender, stop to admire your equipment. In fact, some of them are kender.

The Story Begins

Unwary heroes are almost certain to lose a few small things, with all the kender around (see "Actions"). Of course, if the heroes make trouble, they may arouse the suspicions of the watchful city guard.

Anyone wishing to get involved in the fair has several opportunities to do so. Any hero can join the archery contest, and Knights and Legionnaires with trained war horses can enter the joust, too. Heroes looking for other competitions can find a wrestling match, a spell-casting display, and a greased pig contest.

Some characters stage impromptu performances: juggling, magic, feats of strength, and the like. On a makeshift stage beneath a vallenwood, some comic performers reenact the Battle of the Rift.

Atmosphere

Anyone who has ever attended a carnival or fair knows how to play this scene. Solace is crowded and noisy. Merchants shout or sing loudly and eagerly as they try to call attention to their wares:

“Step right up, my friends, and try out a knife or dagger as sharp as a dragon's claw! These beauties are made from dwarven steel—none better on Krynn!”

- ☛ “A trinket sir? I have rings and all kinds of things to charm a lady’s heart. C’mon—a dashing fellow like you must have a lady to impress!”
- ☛ “Flatbreads! Get your flatbreads here! Fresh from the oven and stuffed with your favorite goodies!”

Actions

Every hero must make an *average Perception* action during the afternoon. (For those who were keeping an eye on the kender, the action is easy.) A hero who fails this action has “lost” some coin to the local kender: He suffers a -1 penalty to his next wealth action. A mishap might mean he has lost something particularly valuable.

Heroes who enter any of the competitions at the festival must make three successful actions or be forced out. Jousting or wrestling requires *average Strength* actions. To stay in the archery competition, heroes must make an *average Dexterity* action each round. The greased pig contest requires three *average Agility* actions.

Heroes suffering a mishap in any of these competitions have injured themselves, suffering a wound equal to the value of the card they just played.

Anyone who makes it through three rounds of a competition can attempt two more actions, one *challenging* and one *daunting*, to continue. If both these succeed, the hero enters the final round and must make a *desperate* action to win. A victorious hero receives a garland of flowers and a purse of coins from Solace’s mayor. He may then enjoy a +3 action bonus to a single wealth action of his choice.

The Narrator should help heroes entering contests role-play their attempts based on the outcome of their actions. Heroes have time to participate in only two contests or performances.

Heroes staging their own impromptu performances must make *average Presence* actions to get the crowd’s attention, then attempt the following action to impress the assembly with their performance:

☛ Impress the Crowd

Difficulty: Challenging (12)
Action ability: Varies
Opposition ability: None

Comments: Once a hero has an audience, he must attempt an action to impress the crowd. Singing or reciting poetry, for example, requires another *Presence* action, and juggling a *Dexterity* action. Sorcerers and mystics can impress the crowd with their displays of magic by successfully casting a spell, then making a *Presence* action with a +1 action bonus for every spell point spent.

Successfully impressing the crowd yields enough coin to give the hero a +1 bonus to any single wealth action. Mishap: During his unimpressive performance, a kender steals something from the hero, causing a -1 wealth action penalty until he retrieves the item.

Characters

The information below for Solace locals also can represent merchants or contest judges. Guards will appear in groups of eight to arrest anyone that becomes disruptive during this scene.

☛ **Solace locals:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).

☛ **Guards:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Novices.* Co 7, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +6 (long bow), Def -4 (scale).

Outcome

The festival ends at dusk, when virtually everyone in Solace quiets down for a procession to the Tomb of the Last Heroes.

- ☛ Joining the procession or trying to avoid it takes the heroes to Scene Two.
- ☛ Heroes who get into a fight at the fair are thrown in jail. The adventure continues with Scene Three.
- ☛ If the group decides to leave Solace, the story moves on to Scene Four.



Scene Two:

The Vision

As the festival ends, the heroes see that the crowds expect everyone to join the solemn procession paying respects at the Tomb of the Last Heroes.

Overview

This scene is intended to get the party started down the road to a heroic quest by offering one or more of the group a vision at the Last Heroes' Tomb. If the heroes refuse to visit the Tomb, however, they find that the cheerful and friendly residents of Solace can get unpleasant.

Getting Started

The Narrator should have Goldmoon's character card available to show the players when the heroes receive their vision. In addition, he may want to refer back to the Prologue for descriptions of Blister and Dhamon, who appear in this scene (if not in play as heroes).

First Impressions

A hush has fallen over the damp spring evening, as residents and visitors begin the procession. The mood in town has shifted abruptly from mirth to solemnity.

In the hours before the procession, no lights burn in Solace.

Sundown has brought a chill to Solace, and you catch a hint of rain on the cold mountain breeze that rustles the budding leaves on the vallynwoods. The festival's bustle and merriment seems to have departed with the sun. Many people are still abroad, but the afternoon's laughter has fled, replaced by whispered conversations, murmured prayers, and silent reflection. A wintry hush has fallen over Solace like a blanket of new snow.

As the sky darkens, the stars seem to quietly hide behind the looming clouds. Every window in Solace is unlit. For a moment, the town seems as silent and black as a cave.

Abruptly, a bonfire of pine logs crackles to life before you, sending sparks dancing skyward like a swarm of orange fireflies. Soon, candles flicker to life all around town. A silent young man approaches you and hands you unlit candles. Nearby, other visitors are accepting and lighting candles, filling the town with trembling light.

The Story Continues

When all of Solace is alight with candles, the people form a single line and troop reverently the short distance to the Tomb of the Last Heroes, a grand structure of black marble in the center of an open field. At the time of its building, the Tomb lay some distance outside of Solace, but the city's growth in recent decades has brought it within the town limits. However, this field, where the Last Heroes appeared after the Chaos War, remains untouched by the sprawl of Solace.

Many people stop to lay offerings before the tomb, including a blond kender woman wearing gloves who looks tearfully up at the hoopak inscribed over the door to the Tomb. The heroes also might see a blond young man with a warrior's build reverently kneel before the Tomb and place a sword in the grass. He remains before the Tomb for several minutes before moving on, staring at the monument as though transfixed.

When the heroes proceed up to the Tomb, at least one of them sees the image of a shimmering door appear over the Tomb's real door. Through it steps a diaphanous and hauntingly beautiful woman with silvery golden hair. The hero experiencing the vision cannot tell if the door actually opened or if the woman really stepped through the glowing portal.

"A quest awaits you, hero," the ghostly woman says. "Come to the Silver Stair on Schallsea, and all will be made clear."

The woman is Goldmoon, First Master of Mysticism. If the hero speaks to her, she simply urges him to come to Schallsea and meet with her.

Goldmoon is most likely to contact heroes who have assumed the rogue knight role, as they are susceptible to mysticism. Otherwise, the hero who belongs to the quietest player sees the vision. If there are no quiet players, the hero with either the highest Spirit score or whose nature is derived from the card with the lowest value sees the vision.

Should the heroes fail to join the procession, a few locals go out of their way to point out that it is customary for all citizens and visitors to travel to the Tomb at the festival's end. If the heroes don't take the hint, several brash local youths, emboldened by too much celebrating, seek out the party and try to start a brawl. A fight brings the city guard after a few minutes to arrest everyone involved.

If the heroes face down the youths but still refuse to visit the Tomb, the toughs leave, only to reappear later in a group of six. They spend several minutes insulting and threatening the heroes, then they attack, grabbing anything that happens to be available to use as weapons (see Chapter Four of *Night and Day* for details on improvised weapons). Again, the guards arrive in a few minutes to arrest the lot.

The guards really don't want to arrest anyone tonight, but they know their duty. They hunt down everyone involved in a fight and take them to jail, even if the brawl has ended by the time they arrived. There are plenty of witnesses on hand to point accusing fingers at heroes who try to evade arrest.

If a hero avoids a fight by convincing the youths to back off, he receives Goldmoon's vision that night in a dream, as described above.

Atmosphere

A Narrator cannot overplay this scene's solemnity and reverence. If possible, he should dim the lights before starting the scene, or play by candlelight. Using a gentle whisper should prompt the players to speak quietly as well. As Solace begins

to light up for the procession, the Narrator can brighten the room again and resume his normal speaking voice.

Actions

If the local youths confront the group, heroes' leader can force them to back down with a successful *average Presence* (*Presence*) action.

Characters

The following characters may become involved in this scene.

- ☛ **Solace locals:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- ☛ **Guards:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Novices.* Co 7, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +6 (long bow), Def 4 (scale).
- ☛ **Three (or six) youths:** *Young adult humans, aggressive demeanors, Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 4, Es 4, Dmg +1 (or by weapon), Def 0 (Common clothing).



Outcome

Unless the heroes have been jailed, they are free to leave Solace whenever they like. With the festival over, the town becomes a fairly dull place, though groups of kender still come to visit the tomb of "Uncle Tas" and see what sort of trouble they can get into (such as examining the heroes' possessions).

If the heroes have received Goldmoon's vision, their next move is to find passage to Schallsea. Anyone in Solace can tell them that a reliable vessel runs to that island from New Ports to the southeast.

- ☛ If the heroes opt to travel to Schallsea via New Ports, the adventure continues with Scene Five.
- ☛ Should they choose to head toward Schallsea via any other route, or decide upon a different destination entirely, they can jump to Scene Four.
- ☛ If the heroes have landed in jail, the adventure proceeds to Scene Three.



Scene Three: In Jail

If the heroes lost their heads and got into a fight at the fair, they wound up in jail—unless they fled immediately (Scene Four).

Once imprisoned, they can either stay in jail until released the next morning or try to escape. Unless the heroes behave violently or stupidly, they should emerge from the experience unscathed.

Overview

This scene offers the party an alternate opportunity to receive a call to heroism. It also introduces two important characters: Jasper and Raph. (The Narrator may substitute equivalent characters if these two personalities are heroes in the party.)

Getting Started

Narrators should refer to the Prologue's descriptions of Raph and Jasper if they are not already with the party. Goldmoon's character card also may be needed.

First Impressions

Every year during the fair, the Knights of Solamnia in Solace convert one of their barracks into a temporary holding area or rowdies and inebriates. Like most buildings in Solace, the barracks rests high in the branches of a vallenwood. The Knights keep the prisoners for the city guard in a room about thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide. Small cots allow prisoners to sleep off whatever indiscretion has led them here. If a prisoner proves dangerous, the Knights keep him in another room chained hand and foot.

After the brawl, a team of burly Knights in plate armor relieves you of your weapons, armor, and equipment and hauls you up a long staircase to a small but sturdy-looking building perched in one of Solace's famous vallenwood trees. You must be sixty feet off the ground.

Inside waits a windowless room with log walls. The chamber is about twice as long as it is wide, and about twenty cots line the walls. A motley collection of snor-

ing drunks, bright kender, and sullen tavern brawlers rest on the bunks. The locals you fought are here, too.

The Knights slam the room's only door shut behind you, and you hear a bar drop into place. A small hatch in the door snaps open, and your jailer warns you to behave while you're here. When the hatch snaps shut, the room is plunged into darkness.

The Story Continues

As the heroes grope around in the dark for an empty bunk, a candle flares to life, held by a pesky kender named Raph. The town guards arrested the mop-headed kender after he filched a few items from some merchants at the fair.

"Hi!" he says. "Isn't this a nice jail? Did you know that Solace doesn't usually need a jail? I think the Knights use this as a storeroom except during the festival. Those men over there don't seem to like you very much. Did you do something to them? I'm really glad you're here; almost everyone's asleep now, and I was getting bored. I thought maybe I'd try to escape, just for something to do. That probably would make that Knight mad, and he's no fun when he's mad—he just yells. Maybe we should talk instead? What did you do today that got you in here? I borrowed something—just to look at, mind you. You don't look like borrowers. Did you get into a fight? Was it fun?"

At the moment, the kender can't clearly remember what he "borrowed," but he knows it looked interesting, whatever it was. Then he starts babbling on about all the things he's seen at the fair. If the heroes don't shut him up (see "Actions"), he relates a tale about a young warrior who saw some sort of vision at the Tomb of the Last Heroes. The kender claims he heard the man talking to someone who wasn't really there. Raph would have followed him, but the guards showed up just then and dragged him off to jail.

Everyone arrested for brawling at the fair has been locked in this same room. The Knights expect any former adversaries to behave civilly now.

The heroes can try to escape if they wish. However, if they were arrested for brawling, the characters they fought attack them as soon as they try anything. The heroes will have to subdue these foes or convince them not to interfere before attempting an escape.

A Knight keeps watch over the prisoners through the peephole in the door. He also listens carefully for any noise that might indicate trouble brewing. At the first sign of any kind of trouble from the prisoners, he summons a mystic to put them to sleep. After casting the spell, the mystic enters the room with eight Knights to see what was the matter.

If the heroes pass the night quietly, one (Narrator's choice) dreams of Goldmoon imploring him to come to Schallsea, as described for the vision in Scene Two.

In the morning, the heroes are released from jail, assuming their crime was fairly minor. The commander of the local Knights admonishes them to behave in the future and requires them to pay a fine before they leave, as well as cover any damages their misconduct may have caused.

If the heroes committed a serious crime, a dwarf mystic named Jasper comes to visit them in the morning (or another mystic from the Citadel of Light, if Jasper has joined the group as a hero). This dwarf has seen one of the heroes in a vision and convinces the Knights to release them all into his custody-provided he agrees to accompany them to Schallsea to meet Goldmoon.

Atmosphere

Heroes who land in jail because of fighting or the like have placed themselves in a silly situation, and the Narrator should play it up. Perhaps the other prisoners snore like rusty saws. The kender doesn't snore, but he natters on incessantly, wanting to know everything about the heroes and asking them an endless stream of questions. If the heroes were arrested for brawling, their foes glower at them from across the room, making sophomoric comments the whole time.

Actions

Shutting up the kender or getting the local toughs to leave them alone requires the heroes to make a successful *challenging Presence (Presence)* action.

Breaking down the door is a *desperate Strength* action, and smashing a hole in one of the walls is an *impossible Strength* action. Resisting the mystic's sleep spell is an *average Spirit (Presence)* action.

Paying the fine in the morning is an easy *wealth* action, but it becomes *average* if the heroes made trouble at the jail or caused property damage earlier. Those who can't pay must wait for Jasper to save them.

Characters

Besides Raph and Jasper, the characters in scene include:

- ❖ **Knights:** Human adults, various demeanors, *Adventurers*. Co 5, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +5 (sabre), Def -10 (plate/tower).
- ❖ **Solace locals:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble*, Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- ❖ **Mystic:** *Half-elf adult female, insightful de-meanor, Novice*. Co 5, Ph 6, In 5, Es 8 (64), Dmg +5 (scimitar), Def -5 (plate), also mysticism (mentalism, healing, sensitivity).

Outcome

Once the heroes leave jail, they are free to depart Solace. They can take an east road, into northern Abanasinia or the Plains farther east or they can try the south road, which forks not far outside of Solace: One branch continues south toward Qualinesti and the town of New Ports, and the other branch circles north and west around the haunted Darken Wood.

- ❖ Should the heroes decide upon a route other than the path to New Ports, the story continues with Scene Four.
- ❖ If the heroes decide upon the road New Ports, the adventure moves on to Scene Five. (If one or more of them must remain in Jasper's custody, the dwarf insists on traveling to New Ports to take passage to Schallsea.)



Scene Four: The Wilderness

Narrators should begin this scene if the heroes have departed Solace; it assumes they did not take the road south toward the town of New Ports.

Overview

Though Abanasinia is a free realm, the countryside is not entirely safe—groups of bandits or beasts sometimes attack travelers. One such band of independent draconians sets an ambush for the heroes.

Getting Started

Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* offers the Narrator some important background on draconians.

First Impressions

The heroes left Solace three or four days ago and have entered a deserted stretch of country crisscrossed with streams. Well-maintained bridges allow the group to move steadily along. They haven't met another traveler or seen any sign of habitation for the past day.

Wet spring weather has returned after several days of bright sunshine. The cool, fresh breeze today sends clumps of thick, dark clouds scooting across the colorless sky. Light but cold rain has drenched you several times but the showers have been brief and the ground remains fairly dry. You've crossed several small, fast-moving streams—thankfully, the bridges have proven sturdy so far.

The Story Continues

As the heroes walk along, some of them might spot a flying creature just at the corner of their vision. It disappears into the clouds too quickly for anyone to identify it, even a hero with acute eyesight.

About an hour later, your path takes you down into a small dell. The valley looks

green, lush and inviting, just like a dozen others you've seen today—except for the vultures. The carrion birds circle low over a stone bridge across a fast-running brook lined with birch thickets.

The heroes encounter this scene at a distance of far missile range from the bridge. If they stop to study their surroundings, they see the bodies of several men and horses scattered about.

Earlier in the day, a band of draconians here waylaid a group of pilgrims headed home from the Festival of the Heroes in Solace. Displeased with the loot they took from them, the dragon-men decided to lie in wait for some wealthier travelers to pass.

The draconian leader, a Sivak, spotted the heroes earlier as he flew over the area. Flying back to the draconian encampment, the Sivak ordered its followers to ambush the heroes at the same bridge where they attacked the pilgrims.

The Battle

Four Baaz draconians lurk in the thicket on the far side of the stream, intending to hold their attack until the heroes approach the bridge and begin examining the pilgrims' bodies. When the heroes start looking around, the Baaz open fire with their bows at near missile range from the cover of the thicket. This partial cover means all heroes suffer a -2 action penalty for missile attacks against them.

Up to this time, the Sivak has lain among the corpses, using its shape-shifting power to pose as a surviving pilgrim left for dead. However, when the other draconians fire, it leaps to its feet with a shrill cry and attacks while the missile fire distracts the heroes.

The Sivak fights, blocking the stone bridge, until it has suffered 12 damage points; then it leaps off the bridge or tries to fly away. The remaining draconians keep firing until the Sivak dies or flees, either of which causes them to scatter and flee themselves.

Once the party of heroes has defeated these draconians, they can track them back to their encampment, where several of the hapless pilgrims lie bound and

guarded by two more Baaz draconians. These guards, and any draconians that survived the ambush, make a last stand in their camp.

If the heroes seem unwilling to approach the bridge, or if they try to detour around it, the Sivak takes wing and blocks them while the four Baaz charge the group from behind.

Should the heroes capture a draconian, they can interrogate it and learn the location of the camp. If pressed, the captive tells the party about the two guards and the prisoners.

Atmosphere

In his opening descriptions of this scene, the Narrator should play up the stark contrast between the pleasant spring setting and the corpses, with the vultures circling overhead. Playing a tape of a flowing brook might help set the initial mood, making it easier to catch the players off guard with the scene of carnage.

Actions

A successful average Perception action allows the heroes to notice the flying creature at the start of the scene.

If they pause at far missile range from the stone bridge to study the corpses, an easy Perception action reveals that one of the “bodies” is actually alive and writhing on the ground (the Sivak pretending to be a wounded pilgrim).

Should the heroes approach the bridge without taking any special precautions, the draconians ambush them (refer to the rules for surprise in Chapter Four of the Book of the Fifth Age). If the heroes act wary, however, they have the normal chance to avoid being surprised. As the draconians know the heroes are coming, they cannot be surprised.

If the Sivak tries to flee, the heroes can stop it from taking flight by keeping it from opening the combat range. However, once the creature successfully move to near missile range (or leaps off the bridge), all its further attempts to open the range succeed, unless the heroes can fly.

Interrogating a captured draconian

requires an *easy Presence (Spirit)* action but reveals only the location of their base camp. The heroes can follow the creatures’ trail back to their camp with an *average Perception* action.

Characters

The prisoners the heroes may find at the camp are wounded and very hungry.

- ☞ **Six Baaz:** *Draconians, lawless demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 8, Ph 6, In 6, Es 7, Dmg +4 Def -3, also missile weapons (horse bow/+4), glides, turns to stone on its death.
- ☞ **One Sivak:** *Draconian, treacherous demeanor, Adventurer.* Co 10, Ph 12, In Es 7, Dmg +12, Def -5, also can fly, shapechange, explodes on its death.
- ☞ **Eight captive pilgrims:** *Various races and demeanors, Rabble.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).

Outcome

When the heroes rescue the prisoners, they beg to be escorted back to Solace so they might alert the local guard to the draconian menace ambushing travelers.

In any case, once the heroes defeat draconians, every hero who delivered killing blow to a draconian receives a vision from Goldmoon. While these visions resemble the one described in Scene Two, the master mystic also congratulates the heroes on their victory and hints that more undiscovered dangers lie ahead.

If the heroes heed the vision, they can return to Solace and go on to New Ports or they can go to one of Abanasinia’s other ports. In either case, the adventure continues with Scene Five.





Scene Five: The Wind Chaser

The heroes have reached a port and can start looking for passage to Schallsea.

Overview

If the heroes decided to go to New Ports, they have a quick and pleasant trip despite some wet weather. Both the Legion of Steel and the Knights of Solamnia patrol the well-maintained road from Solace, keeping the route clear of monsters and bandits.

Those who took another route (Scene Four) found the latter half of their long journey quite soggy—and traveling cross-country in rainy weather is seldom pleasant.

In either case, the heroes' main task once they reach town is locating a ship.

Getting Started

Narrators should review the character descriptions of Rig and Shaon (if they have not become heroes), as the group may be seeking passage on their vessel, the *Wind Chaser*. The other personalities from the may be aboard as well.

First Impressions

The Narrator should read the following text aloud to start the scene:

The port is alive with the calls of gulls and the sing-song chants of vendors hawking their wares—all pleasant sounds after your trek through the countryside. The rain-fresh air carries the invigorating tang of salt, and a thicket of masts down on the waterfront promises a quick passage to the island of Schallsea.

The Story Continues

If Rig has joined the group as a hero, he can get me entire party passage on the *Wind Chaser*, provided they can pay the fare—the vessel's owner takes a dim view of freeloaders. Rig enjoys this special influence only in New Ports.

Without him on hand to arrange passage, the heroes will have to visit the waterfront and inquire about ships bound for Schallsea. They can either search the docks or visit local inns and taverns.

Atmosphere

The port is crowded, noisy, and none too clean. Whenever the heroes wander about the town, they see cargo being moved through the streets and groups of swaggering sailors. Gulls fly overhead and occasionally walk underfoot. The heroes can hear bawdy songs, housewives haggling with fishmongers, and children at play. They can smell the sea, fresh bread, old fish, and pine tar. If they don't watch where they step, they might sink into the muddy streets or slip on debris—everything from fish heads to horse dung litters the ground and the docks.

Actions

Heroes in New Ports with Rig's help can locate the *Wind Chaser* and bargain for passage automatically.

Booking Passage

If the heroes are in New Ports without Rig, or if the group has traveled to another port, one hero must succeed at an *average Reason* action to locate a suitable ship. Groups in New Ports encounter the *Wind Chaser*, while others meet Owen Kiriki, a half-elf merchant captain planning a vogue.

In either case, the heroes can buy passage individually or as a group. Buying individual passage is automatic for heroes with wealth scores of 4 or higher, and an *easy wealth* action for everyone else. One hero may buy passage for the whole group with a successful *challenging wealth* action. Should any wealth action fail, the hero(es) must haggle with the captain for a lower fare: an *easy Presence (Presence)* action. If the action succeeds, the heroes can attempt another wealth action to book passage, this time with a +1 action bonus. They can repeat this

haggling process as often as they need to.

The standard fare to the island of Schallsea covers passage to the main port. It costs more to book passage farther up the coast to the Silver Stair—everyone must attempt an *easy wealth* action at a -2 penalty.

Failing to Book Passage

It's possible that the group might fail to locate a ship or to buy passage.

In New Ports

In New Ports, the group can simply wait a week for another ferry to come along. During the delay, each hero must make an *easy wealth* action to cover expenses. If that action fails, the hero can find a way to make ends meet with an *average Reason* action. Heroes who fail this action lose a piece of their equipment (Narrator's choice), assumed sold for cash, traded, or stolen.

If any of the heroes suffers a mishap while trying to locate a ship or paying expenses, the unfortunate group meets Locke Farros, a dishonest merchant headed for Sanction—though he *tells* them he's bound for Schallsea. Locke readily offers them free passage to the island if they agree to help his crew guard his ship against the threat of pirates. He leaves the heroes alone if they refuse his offer, however.

In Other Ports

Heroes not in New Ports who fail to locate a ship or book passage unfortunately encounter Owen Locke even without a mishap.

Refusing the scoundrel's offer of passage provokes him—he wastes no time using his extensive local connections to have their food drugged. At their next meal, each hero must succeed in an *average Endurance* action or pass out for four hours. Locke's contacts at the inn where the heroes were dining allow him and his toughs to capture them and drag them aboard his ship.

If the heroes resist Locke, they meet the half-elf merchant Owen Kiriki after a week's delay and can book passage.

Characters

Rig Mer-Krel and Shaon are members of the *Wind Chaser's* crew in New Ports. If they have not already joined the group as heroes, these two characters pass the time chatting with the group.

If the heroes went directly from Solace to New Ports and boarded the ferry without delay, Dhamon, Blister, Raph, and Jasper also are aboard. The quarter is on the way to see Goldmoon, just as the heroes are. Dhamon and Jasper do not appear talkative, but the two kender chat endlessly about things they've seen and done and about mystical visions.

Other characteristics in this scene may include Locke's thugs, who help their employer try to subdue the heroes if they object to being shanghaied to Sanction.

- ♣ **Locke Farros:** *Human male adult, dishonest demeanor, Adventurer.* Co 5, Ph 4, In 7 (49), Es 7, Dmg +5 (sabre), Def -4 (scale), also sorcery (aeromancy, hydro-mancy, cryomancy).
- ♣ **Four thugs:** *Human adults, unimaginative demeanors, Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 4 Es 5, Dmg +6 (crook blade), Def -6 (chain/target).
- ♣ **Capt. Owen Kiriki:** *Male adult half-elf, purposeful demeanor, Adventurer.* Co 6 Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def -2 (leather).

Outcome

The voyage to Schallsea takes about fi days from New Ports, but slightly less time from a northern port.

Heroes serving aboard Locke's ship have an eleven-day trip across the New Sea to Sanction. Attentive heroes will notice that the ship isn't going the right direction for Schallsea by about their fourth day at sea.

If the heroes wind up in Sanction, they'll either have to persuade or force Locke to take them to Schallsea, or the have to wait a month for another ship.

This scene concludes Act One. Once the group is actually on its way to Schallsea, the adventure can continue with Scene One of Act Two.



ACT TWO

Scene One: Schallsea

The heroes' quest truly begins when they meet Goldmoon in this scene.

Overview

The group's ship has anchored in the port of Schallsea (it may or may not be continuing farther north, to the Silver Stair). After the local authorities inspect the vessel, the heroes can travel to the Citadel of Light, where Goldmoon tells them of a new danger awakening on Ansalon.

Getting Started

Narrators should have Goldmoon's character card ready, as well as the sections on Schallsea (Chapter Two) and the Citadel of Light (Chapter Three) from *Dusk or Dawn* in the FIFTH AGE boxed set.

First Impressions

Your ship has anchored in a snug harbor surrounded by verdant hills rising steeply from the water. Earthy scents of foliage and tilled fields mingle with the salt in the air.

The cobblestone streets of the town of Schallsea rise from the docks and snake crookedly though a mass of small stone buildings that cling to the slopes like barnacles on a rock. A sturdy fort overlooks the harbor from atop the hill.

As you take in the scene, a boat approaches. A uniformed man stands in the prow, while four armored Knights pull at the oars. "Ahoy!" calls the man. "Harbor authority coming aboard for inspection!"

The Story Continues

The inspection is routine: The heroes need only answer a few questions about their visit. If they have somehow managed to come here aboard Locke's ship, the Knights will gladly take the crew into custody upon hearing about the heroes' kidnapping.

If Dhamon, Jasper, and company are with the group, they stay aboard the vessel—they have arranged to be dropped farther up the coast, closer to the Citadel. The heroes must go with them if they are under Jasper's supervision. They also stay aboard if they paid the extra fare to go up the coast. Otherwise, Rig (or another captain) puts them ashore here.

Once the party goes ashore at the port, a mystic approaches them and asks if he can be of any assistance; he can either direct them to the Silver Stair or lead them there. If the party goes up the coast, Jasper may be on hand to guide them.

When the party reaches the Citadel of Light, Ansalon's major spiritual center, the Narrator should read the text below:

A grand series of crystal domes rises before you. The light glints blindingly off the crystalline structure, and two fountains send up jets of sparkling water that echo the glittering curves of the domes.

Goldmoon stands at the entry of the central dome to meet them—she knew they were coming. Her appearance varies, depending on the viewer's spiritual strength (see "Actions"). Without being introduced, the First Master of Mysticism greets each hero by name and tells them she is glad they have come. She then takes them into a private chamber for an audience, where she offers the following information and instructions:

- ☞ "I have called out to heroes searching for a cause and to heroes who have not yet found their destinies. Some do not hear my call directly, but curiosity leads them to me eventually."
- ☞ "I fear a new danger threatens Krynn."
- ☞ "Even now, Palin Majere and other sorcerers watch over northern Ansalon from the Lonely Refuge, but they may be unaware of certain dire happenings."
- ☞ "A journey north to Palanthalas would reveal much, I am sure, to help both the sorcerers and myself."
- ☞ "Travel to Palanthalas then, my heroes, and take what you learn there to those waiting at Lonely Refuge."

THE MISSION

Goldmoon knows neither the nature of the unseen danger nor the sorcerers' exact activities at the Lonely Refuge. However, she promises to alert him to the group's coming.

Then she solemnly presents them with a wooden box holding a faded pennant. The slightly tattered bit of cloth used to grace the true dragonlance of Sturm Brightblade, Goldmoon tells them. She and the other surviving Heroes of the Lance have saved the pieces of this powerful artifact for just such a perilous day as this. Palin has one of his parents' sections of the lance—its haft—at the Lonely Refuge, she explains, adding that this lance may be the only weapon able to protect them from the the Blue Dragon.

Finally, Goldmoon can answer questions about Palanthas and its surroundings and offer the heroes a map of the area, including the Refuge (see this adventure's poster map and Khellendros's section in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn*).

Atmosphere

Narrators should move the group quickly through the scene's opening—the real action begins not in the port of Schallsea but when the heroes meet Goldmoon.

Goldmoon's variable appearance provides an interesting facet to this scene. After the heroes attend their Spirit actions (at right), the Narrator should take each player aside privately and explain what his hero sees when he looks at her.

If the players do not ask many questions, the Narrator can have Goldmoon offer a short speech, using the quotes in "The Story Continues" section.

Actions

An aura of peace surrounds Goldmoon during this scene. Any hero wanting to attempt a violent or harmful action must first make a *desperate Presence* action. Failing this action means the hero has forgotten what he was going to do.

Upon meeting Goldmoon, each hero

must attempt the action below to determine how he perceives her appearance.

➤ Look upon Goldmoon

Difficulty:	Average (8)
Action ability:	Spirit
Opposition ability:	None

Comments: Each hero's action score suffers a penalty equal to the value of the card he used to derive his nature. For example, the Dhamon character described in the Prologue used the One of Helms for nature, so he needs an action score of least 9 to succeed, rather than just 8.


Heroes who succeed at this action see Goldmoon as she truly is: the radiant and ageless beauty she appeared to be in the vision described in Scene Two of Act One.


Those who fail, on the other hand, see her as an aged but well-preserved woman with sparkling eyes and a brilliant smile that seems too young for her body.


Mishap: Goldmoon looks like a withered husk of a woman, so thin and wizened it's a wonder she's alive.

Characters

Four Knights accompany the inspector at the beginning of the scene; ten more serve as guards at the Citadel of Light.

 **Inspector:** Half-elf male adult, methodical demeanor, Rabble. Co 6, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +2 (self bow), Def -2 (feather).

 **Knights:** *Humans of various ages and demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 6, Ph 6, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +8 (two-handed sword), Def -10 (plate/tower).

 **Mystic:** *Human young adult male, open-minded demeanor, Novice.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 5, Es 8 (64), Dmg +5 (mitre), Def 0 (common clothing), also mysticism (mentalism, sensitivity, healing).

Outcome

After speaking with Goldmoon, the heroes depart the island, as described in Scene Two. (Declining her offer brings this quest to an early end.)



Scene Two: Which Way to Palanthis?

When the scene opens, the heroes are set to head from Schallsea to Palanthis. But first they must decide whether to go by sea (a feat potentially more difficult than it sounds) or by the slower overland route.

Overview

The heroes have returned to the port of Schallsea—the only place on the island to board a ship to the mainland. If the group debarked right at the Citadel’s private dock earlier, they must now go back to the port, as vessels normally do not stop for passengers at the Silver Stair.

Getting Started

Chapter Three of the *Book of the Fifth Age* offers some background on traveling in Ansalon.

First Impressions

You once again find yourselves among the steep, cobbled streets of the port of Schallsea. The town is charming and picturesque. The buildings boast tidy exteriors decorated with quaint blue shutters, and streets are almost impossibly neat.

The locals seem friendly enough, but life is quiet. The population appears to consist of hard-working villagers who fish or farm, a continuous stream of pilgrims and mystics on their way to or from the Citadel of Light, a few resident mystics, and a large cadre of stern-faced Knights of Solamnia. For a busy port, Schallsea doesn’t offer much comfort or entertainment. Besides, you’ve got a job to do now.

The Story Continues

There are several ships in the harbor, including the *Wind Chaser*, so getting off the island shouldn’t be too difficult.

If the heroes wish to book passage directly to Palanthis, they’re in for a disappointment. Nobody sails that route. The Straits of Alongi between Coastlund

and Southern Ergoth are whipped up constantly by the Gale, a tempest created where the glacial air mass around Frost’s realm meets the temperate surrounding winds. Few mariners would attempt to cross the Gale. Beyond this strait, blue dragons patrol the sea, demanding tribute for the dragon overlord Khellendros and sinking some ships just for fun.

However, the heroes do have several different options:

- They can find passage back to New Ports or to a harbor in northern Abanasinia, where they might locate a ship bound for Palanthis.
- They can sail from Schallsea to any Southlund port and travel overland to Palanthis from there.
- Alternately, the group could sail as far east as the Gale will permit, then dock and travel overland to a safe port, where they can resume their sea journey.

The safest quick route would take the heroes from Schallsea to the port of Hamilton in Southlund. From there, they could travel overland to Caergoth, avoiding the Gale, then board a ship to Palanthis.

If Rig and Shaon are with the group, they cannot help much—the *Wind Chaser* is not their own, and it is scheduled to return to New Ports. In any case, it isn’t seaworthy enough to venture beyond the New Sea.

Atmosphere

The port of Schallsea is downright boring for adventurers. Narrators can convey the mood by playing polka music or the like.

If the heroes ask for passage to Palanthis, the people are amused by their ignorance. Imitating these locals, the Narrator might laugh out loud as he matter-of-factly lists their options, like a parent or teacher reminding a child of an obvious fact.

Actions

Finding passage off Schallsea is automatic: The heroes can take the *Wind Chaser* back to New Ports immediately. Catching a ship elsewhere requires one week to one month (Narrator’s choice).

Heroes need not attempt wealth actions while waiting, as the citizens of Schallsea are very generous to travelers. However, they still must pay a ship's captain for passage off the island. Buying individual passage to any port requires an *easy wealth* action, while booking the whole group aboard ship becomes *average*.

If the party members wish to sail all the way to Palanthis, they must go to the mainland (either Abanasinia or Southlund), where there is more sea traffic. Once in port, one hero must make a successful *challenging Reason* action to locate a ship willing to brave the Gale. If he succeeds, heroes can buy passage for a single person with an *average wealth* action or for the entire group with a *desperate* one. (They can haggle for a lower fare as described in Scene Five of Act One.) However, if the hero failed in his Reason action, the group can find no ship bound for Palanthis; the heroes might try to buy a ship instead. A mishap means that no vessel to Palanthis is available for hire or purchase, forcing the party to go at least partway overland.

Characters

Rig and Shaon accompany heroes who take the *Wind Chaser* back to New Ports; those below can take them elsewhere.

- ❖ **Ship's captain:** *Human adult female, authoritative demeanor, Adventurer.* Co 6, Ph 6, In 7, Es 6, Dmg +3 (teeth chain), Def -2 (leather).
- ❖ **Eight crewmembers:** *Various races and demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def -1 (padded silk).

Outcome

From here, the adventure can head in a number of directions.

- ❖ Heroes wanting to buy their own ship take the adventure to Scene Three.
- ❖ If they decide to travel overland for any part of the trip to Palanthis, the Narrator should turn to Scene Four.
- ❖ If the heroes book passage on a ship bound straight for Palanthis, the story continues with Scene Five.





Scene Three: Buying a Ship

If the heroes wish to travel from the mainland directly to Palanthis by sea and fail to book passage on a vessel bound there, they must buy a ship of their own.

Overview

The heroes have arrived at a mainland port very similar to others they have seen so far. They can locate a ship for sale simply by asking around on the waterfront.

Getting Started

This scene requires no additional references or visual aids.

First Impressions

To start the scene, the Narrator can read players the paragraphs below:

Once again you find yourselves strolling about a seaport. You've become so familiar with seaside life lately, you hardly notice the flocks of gulls squabbling over scraps of fish, the steady lapping of the waves against the docks, or the scent of salt and old seaweed in the air.

Vessels of all kinds crowd the harbor: fishing boats, merchantmen—even a few yachts and warships.

The Story Continues

Surely one of the many vessels docked here must be for sale. The action begins when the heroes start making inquiries. Most ship owners seem understandably unwilling to part with their vessels. After several failed purchase attempts, some kind soul directs the party to the shop of Duff Esme, a crusty old shipwright who always has a collection of vessels for sale or hire. Heroes who begin the scene by looking for a shipwright or boatyard locate Duff right away.

Duff seems happy to sell the group a vessel, but his good cheer fades when he learns the heroes want to sail all the way

to Palanthis. In fact, he tries to talk them out of going:

“Have you ever seen what the Gale does to a ship? Sails shredded like they was made from wet paper, masts snapped like matchsticks, and every seam in even the best hull split open like some giant took an axe to the boat! And there's icebergs to contend with as well! Foolish lubbers! Even if you make it through the Straits of Algoni, you'll have to put into Caergoth for repairs.”

If the heroes stand firm in their decision, Duff shakes his head resignedly and says:

“Ah well, a soon-to-be-dead man's steel is as good as any!”

With that, he leads the party on a trek through his crowded dockyard. The heroes spend several minutes ducking spars and climbing over piles of old rigging before Duff shows them a dilapidated yacht.

“She's not much to look at now,” Duff says, “but she sails sweet and strong. It'll take me and m' boys a month to get her ready for the trip to Palanthis. That's a good thing, though, because you're gonna need time to hire a crew—and maybe a captain—and buy supplies. I'll make you a list of the things you'll need.”

The party should hire a captain and at least three skilled sailors, although any sea barbarian or mariner heroes can serve as crew or captain.

If the heroes have returned to New Ports, they can try to hire Rig and Shaon to crew their ship (if they have not joined the group already). Rig does not care to leave his job and risk the trip to Palanthis for mere money—though he does ask to see the color of their steel. Rig will sign on with the heroes gladly, however, if they offer to turn their ship over to him at the end of their quest. Shaon follows Rig's lead.

Should the party require additional crew, or if Rig and Shaon are not available, the heroes must poke around the inns and taverns on the waterfront until they find suitable candidates for the job. Most

sailors in the port are relaxing between voyages and don't really want to talk about work right now, though plenty of eager local youngsters want to go to sea.

With Rig, Shaon, or Duff helping to select crew, the heroes can avoid hiring inept people. One potential employee that catches their is a towering half-ogre with a red-maned wolf named Fury for a companion. The half-ogre is Groller Dagmar; Duff has seen him working at the docks and considers him capable. Rig once served on the same ship as Groller and would be happy to sail with him again. Unfortunately, Groller is deaf—the heroes must find a way to communicate with him before they can hire him (see “Actions”).

Buying supplies calls for no special efforts from the heroes beyond shelling out the required steel (see “Actions”).

Atmosphere

Most characters the heroes meet in this scene think the group is intruding—either getting in the way of work or bothering them during some well-deserved time off.

To convey this sentiment, the Narrator should act distracted and impatient when the heroes speak to a sailor. Sprinkling the conversation with seafarer's jargon the players don't understand would be even better.

Duff, in contrast, seems delighted to see the heroes and will talk their ears off. He is prone to using nautical jargon too.

If the heroes meet Groller, most conversation will have to take place through gestures. Narrators should make the players actually perform these gestures during their initial meeting with the half-ogre.

Actions

Buying a ship from Duff requires a *desperate wealth* action. If the wealth action fails, the heroes can haggle (as described in Scene Five of Act One).

Locating crew is automatic if the heroes persuade Duff or Rig to assist them with an *easy Presence (Presence)* action. Otherwise one hero must succeed in an *average Reason* action to locate the kind of person they need for the job. Failing the action means the group finds some young

greenhorns instead. If the heroes suffer a mishap while searching for crew, the locals become annoyed and start a brawl with them, attacking to subdue them.

The group can get Groller to join the crew if they establish communication. Trying to exchange a short message with him (twenty-five words or less) calls for a hero to make a successful *average Perception* action; a mishap results in some miscommunication. Anyone with a Spirit code of at least “B” can establish an empathic link with Groller with a successful *challenging Spirit* action. Each eligible hero can attempt this action only once, though. A link allows short communication without a Perception action, but only when the hero and Groller can see each other.

Characters

The heroes may interact with the characters below during this scene, in addition to Rig and Shaon.

- 👤 **Ship's captains:** *Various races and demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 6, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def -2 (leather).
- 👤 **Sailors:** *Various races and demeanors, venturers.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (teeth chain), Def -1 (padded silk).
- 👤 **Duff Esme:** *Human elder male, cantankerous demeanor, Adventurer.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 7, Dmg +2 (dagger), Def 0 (common clothing).
- 👤 **Groller Dagmar:** *Half-ogre male adult, simple demeanor, Adventurer, 6* 🎲. Co 6, Ph 9, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +6 (flail), Def -2 (leather), also deaf but has acute senses of hearing and eyesight.
- 👤 **Fury:** *Red-maned wolf male.* Co 9, Ph 9, In 8, Es 8, Dmg +5, Def -3.
- 👤 **Greenhorns:** *Various races and demeanors, Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 4, Es 4, Dmg +2 (daggers), Def 0 (common clothing).

Outcome

This scene ends in one of two ways:

- 👤 If the heroes fail to buy a ship or decide to take Duff's advice they must use the overland route to Palanthas described in Scene Four.
- 👤 If they buy a ship and crew it, the story continues with Scene Five.



Scene Four: Going Overland

After a short sea voyage from Schallsea or Abanasinia, the heroes have landed in Southlund, southern Solannia. From here, they can travel north all the way to Palanthas or head to the port of Caergoth to catch another ship.

Overview

Once the party reaches port, the heroes can move on whenever they like. Travel through Southlund is fairly safe and easy, though the heroes pick up a report of some recent attacks by brutes.

In this scene, the heroes come across some fellow travelers who just aren't getting along. Two gnomes have lost a wheel from their cart. Their stalled vehicle blocks the road, much to the annoyance of an impatient human merchant wanting to pass with his coach.

The heroes can help clear the road and resolve the dispute, or they can simply pass by, leaving the hapless travelers to their fates.

Getting Started

The Narrator can refresh his memory of gnomes by reviewing that section in Chapter Two of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

First Impressions

After a few days' travel, the Narrator can read the players this text:

You have left the port behind only to journey over yet another sea—the grasslands of Southlund. A vast expanse of fragrant grain stretches to the horizon, with an occasional hill rising like an island above the fields.

The road has a surface of smooth clay, packed hard from heavy use, though it shows deep ruts in a few low spots. You mostly have the road to yourselves, but you pass a fellow traveler now and then. Most give you a friendly nod and move along, intent on their own business. But

now you seem to have encountered a few people who aren't headed anywhere anytime soon.

The road has taken a sharp turn to the right to avoid a marshy spot, and a brightly painted wagon sits in the center of the bend. It leans forward and right, its left rear wheel hanging in the air.

To the disabled wagon's right, off the road, a grand coach lists crazily to one side like a sinking ship. Six magnificent horses augmented by a pair of mules pull mightily at the coach—or at least they would be pulling, if the mules weren't sitting on their haunches. A pair of gnomes dressed in dirty smocks and leather breeches tugs mightily at the mules' halters, murmuring encouragingly to them, but the animals refuse to move. A quartet of annoyed-looking guards stand ankle deep in the muck behind the coach, ready to push if the animals ever get moving.

Looking over the whole scene from the road is a red-faced human clad in spotless finery, including a broad-rimmed hat with an emerald green plume. The man gives your group a baleful look, then calls out, "Hop to it lads, we've got company!"

At the sound of the man's voice, the gnomes turn from their beasts and wave cheerfully, an action that seems to annoy the red-faced man, "You gnomes have no regard for business!" he cries. "Do you have any idea how much money I'm losing while you stand there trying to reason with a pair of stupid mules?"

The taller of the gnomes pauses a moment, his face taking on an expression of reflection. "Actually, the intellect of mules has been a topic of some interest recently. It's a fascinating query, if you...."

He trails off at the sight of the human's visage, contorted with rage as he sputters—evidently at a loss for the proper invective.

The Story Continues

The disabled wagon belongs to the two thinker gnomes, Murti and Wahly, on their way to Solanthus to sell some tin ware. They were rolling right along when their wagon struck a deep rut and broke a wheel.

As the gnomes examined their vehicle, a fast-moving coach rumbled up to the bend, headed south. Its sole passenger, a human merchant named Albrec, ordered his driver (one of the guards) to steer around the stranded wagon. The coach



promptly got stuck. Being helpful, friendly people, the gnomes immediately offered to hitch their mules to the coach to pull it out. The mules, however, refuse to move—they can sense that the coach will fall over if disturbed.

The heroes can just move right on by the stranded vehicles if they wish, though if they have mounts the frustrated Albrec offers to buy one so he can get to Port O' Call to conclude some business. Albrec also seems worried about being caught out on the road at night, because he's heard rumors about bands of blue-painted brutes lurking nearby. The merchant has no details, but frets nevertheless.

If the heroes decide to stop and help, Albrec stands around, cursing and criticizing. He'll become especially angry if the coach tips over.

Anyone who inspects the coach sees a spare wheel attached to the back that could fit the wagon.

Atmosphere

Narrators should play this scene for laughs. The mules are the only creatures involved that actually have any sense. Albrec is overcome with rage and tends to shake his fists and shout a lot. The two gnomes remain completely unconcerned, though one of them might suggest to Albrec that maybe he could lift the coach free or fix the broken wheel if he just shouted a little louder.

Actions

The mules do not respond to any amount of coaxing or prodding unless the current

circumstances change.

They'll get up on their own and walk away if unhitched from the coach. If the heroes help right the leaning coach, the gnomes can then coax the beasts to pull it. A successful sensitivity or animism spell from a mystic

would allow the heroes to speak to the mules and find out what's wrong, while a sorcerer's divination spell would let the hero foresee the coach falling over.

Righting the coach requires a successful *average Reason* action by one hero, followed by a successful *challenging Presence* action to convince Albrec and his guards that the hero's plan will work. Getting Albrec to shut up and pitch in to help proves an *average Presence (Presence)* action, as is convincing the merchant to give or barter the gnomes his spare wheel. If the heroes threaten Albrec, his guards leap to his defense.

Characters

This scene involves the following characters as well as the heroes:

- ❖ **Murti and Wahly:** *Thinker gnome adult males, practical demeanor, Rabble.* Co 7, Ph 4, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +2 (baton), Def -2 (leather).
- ❖ **Albrec:** *Human adult male, egomaniacal demeanor Novice.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 4, Es 4, Dmg +4 (cudgel), Def -4 (scale).
- ❖ **Four guards:** *Human young adult males, reserved demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 6, Ph 6, In 4, Es 4, Dmg +7 (long sword), Def -6 (chain/target).

Outcome

When the heroes finish puttering with the vehicles, the adventure continues with:

- ❖ Scene Six, if the group is heading for Caergoth to catch a ship north; or
- ❖ Act Three, Scene Two, if the group is bound for Palanthas by road.



Scene Five:

The Gale

Now that the heroes have their own ship, they can sail to Palanthalas. Saying they encounter some bad weather before they arrive, however, is an understatement.

Overview

This scene's main difficulty lies in dealing with the Gale, a cold tempest blowing from the magically frigid interior of the White Dragon's realm.

Getting Started

Chapter Three of the *Book of the Fifth Age* presents some details on traveling by sea.

First Impressions

The shortest sea route to Palanthalas requires about a month of travel, including a stay in Caergoth for repairs. This journey takes the ship west out of the New Sea, then north through the Straits of Algoni, which separate Solamnia and the realm of Khellendros from the Ergoths. (The heroes could try a longer, southern route, but the strait separating Qualinesti from Southern Ergoth has Gale weather about as bad as the northern one.)

You enjoy ideal conditions for the first week of your voyage. A steady east wind carries you swiftly along the shore of Southlund, and soon you enter the deep, cool waters of the Straits of Algoni.

The wind and water seem more violent here than in the New Sea. A few icebergs appear on the western horizon, and an icy westerly blast churns the sea into a mass of whitecaps that crash over the bow.

As the helmsman begins to tack into the wind, it's time for you to make a decision. Should you turn north and head directly toward Palanthalas and brave the infamous Gale you were warned about, or should you head south, doubling your traveling time to Palanthalas and maybe still getting hit by the Gale?

The Story Continues

No matter which option the heroes choose, they encounter the full force of the Gale. (Sometimes the weather on the southern route is a bit better, but the heroes run into a storm.) However, if the heroes take sensible precautions—such as keeping below deck when they're not needed to operate the ship and using safety lines when they venture on deck—they should ride out the Gale safely.

The Gale tosses the ship for three days. Each day, the group faces a new problem:

- ❖ **Day one:** The ship pitches and rolls in heavy winds, which might make the helmsman lose control. Heroes who did not secure themselves could fall overboard or be tossed around below deck.
- ❖ **Day two:** The ship begins leaking badly. Heroes below deck are the first to notice and must find a way to communicate this information to the deck crew. In any case, some heroes must come on deck to help man the pumps.
- ❖ **Day three:** A wave sweeps a sailor wearing a safety line overboard. (If the heroes picked up any green crewmen in Scene Three, one of them falls overboard without a safety line.)

Atmosphere

The Gale fills the heroes' world with constant noise and motion. Narrators might consider playing a recording of wind and rain, or other loud background sounds. It is difficult to hear anyone speak above the storm's noise and the ship's creaking—players and Narrators alike might have to shout. Rocking back and forth while describing the scene to players simulates the pitching and rolling of the ship.

Actions

When the Gale hits, the action below determines if the heroes can control the ship.

➤ Maintain the Helm

Difficulty:	Challenging (12)
Action ability:	Agility
Opposition ability:	None

Comments: A hero acting as the captain should attempt this action. If a character serves as captain, however, the party leader plays a card for him, using the character's Agility score as the action ability. (The action receives a trump bonus if the captain character is a veteran.)

If the action fails, the ship rolls and pitches uncontrollably for a moment. All the heroes must attempt *average Agility* actions. The consequences of failure depend on where they are. Those on deck fall overboard, while those below deck suffer 10 damage points from falls and collisions with loose cargo. A mishap knocks a hero unconscious for two hours, in addition to the normal results of failure.

Although the helmsman eventually regains control, failing this action on the first day of the Gale means the vessel remains unsteady throughout the storm, forcing the captain to repeat the action each of the next two days.

Mishap: The ship capsizes and sinks, forcing everyone on board to make *challenging Agility* actions. Unconscious heroes sink with the ship unless rescued. Any equipment the heroes are not carrying personally gets lost in the wreck.

When the heroes discover the leak on the second day, they must alert the captain to the danger. Climbing out on deck requires an *average Agility* action to keep from being swept overboard. (An *easy Dexterity* action lets a hero tie a safety line around himself.) Shouting through the hatch requires an *average Presence* action. Once the captain understands the danger, he needs at least two heroes to help man the pumps. Heroes emerging on deck must attempt *average Agility* actions to stay aboard, then *average Endurance* actions to pump well. If the latter action fails, other heroes must replace exhausted ones at the pumps. A mishap means a freak wave has swept the exhausted hero overboard.

When anyone falls off the ship, heroes involved in the rescue must make *average Agility* actions or be washed overboard themselves. The actual rescue is a simple matter for victims wearing a safety line: Any hero can haul a victim back aboard with an *average Strength* action. If the unfortunate

has no lifeline, the rescuer must first toss him a rope with an average *Dexterity* action. Unconscious heroes can't catch ropes. If the victim doesn't catch the rope, the ship leaves him behind; someone must leap overboard and swim to the rescue.

Swimming in the Gale requires a *challenging Strength* action. If it fails, the rescuer needs rescuing, too. The ship has a dinghy, but lowering it takes too long to help in these rough waters. Any delay and the victim is lost. Wearing armor imposes a penalty to swimming or rescue attempts equal to the armor's defense rating.

Characters

Anyone on board could become a major player in this scene.

- ☞ **Ship's captain:** *Race, age, gender, and demeanor established in Scene Three, Adventurer.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 6, Es 5, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def -2 (leather).
- ☞ **Sailor:** *Various races and demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +3 (teeth chain), Def -1 (padded silk).
- ☞ **Greenhorns:** *Various races and demeanors, Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 4, Es 4, Dmg +2 daggers), Def 0 (common clothing).

Outcome

Should the heroes' vessel sink, the group washes ashore in the ship's dinghy.

- ☞ If the heroes tried the direct, northern route, they come ashore in Southlund and can continue their journey overland with Scene Four.
- ☞ If they took the southern route, they land in Qualinesti, where a band of the Green Dragon's draconians (see Act One, Scene Four) tries to capture them. These draconians have laid no ambush, but the heroes suffer a -1 penalty to all their ability scores, due to their ordeal at sea. Once they deal with the draconians, rebel elves help them escape to Abanasinia. The heroes must then start off for Palanthas all over again, as in Scene Two.
- ☞ Should the heroes' ship have miraculously survived the Gale, they must put into port for repairs in Scene Six (if they took the direct route) or Scene Seven (if they sailed south).



Scene Six: A Dark Knight in Caergoth

The party has reached the port of Caergoth, either by sea or by land. Here, heroes who braved the Gale can get repairs and supplies for their vessel; other heroes can buy passage to Palanthas from here.

Overview

The heroes will need to spend about a week here if they wish to obtain sea passage to Palanthas. Quite a few ships ply the route between Caergoth and the former Solamnic capital, but not many care to advertise the fact. Heroes who came here with a ship learn that it will take ten days to repair and resupply it.

Going about their business in town, the heroes spy an itinerant sorcerer performing odd tricks and selling “magical” wares. The fellow has drawn a small crowd, but a grim-faced Knight of Takhsis elbows his way through the onlookers and demands to be served first. Should the heroes intervene, they might be able to outbid the Knight for some enchanted oil the sorcerer is selling.

Heroes who never leave their ship or the docks can skip this scene and move on to Scene Seven.

Getting Started

Narrators can refer back to Scenes Two or Three for appropriate descriptions of a port town’s waterfront area.

First Impressions

Once the heroes have wandered into town, the Narrator should read the text below aloud to players:

The streets of Caergoth seem as lively and as full of hucksters as the festival back in Solace. A lanky man with a bald pate and red and yellow robes catches your eye. You can vaguely remember seeing this man’s prestidigitations in Solace. He seems to have drawn a crowd by performing a series of tricks with a few coins.

The bald man concludes his show by inviting an onlooker to grab a coin. The man picks up the coin gingerly, and it bursts into flames—much to the man’s chagrin and the crowd’s delight. “A trick taught to me by the great Raistlin himself,” the bald man says as he pockets the coin. “Now, friends, perhaps my magical talents can help you in a more material way. Some rare herbs to ease a cough? A charm to make a knife slice true? A divination, perhaps? What’s your pleasure?”

The crowd around the stall starts to thin now that the show is over—but not fast enough, apparently, for a burly man clad in blackened plate armor. “Enough silliness!” the man growls, elbowing his way through the onlookers. “You have something for me, yes, sorcerer?” The man pushes the last few customers aside with one sweep of a powerful arm, and the common folk back away.

“Arrogant Dark Knights,” one woman mutters. “Wish Chaos had taken ‘em all.”

The Story Continues

If the heroes walk away, the scene is over. However, those who stay and watch witness a brief argument between the Knight and the sorcerer. The Knight appears angry at being forced to wait while the sorcerer performed, and the sorcerer is annoyed because the dark paladin chased all his other customers away.

Eventually, the sorcerer produces three small bottles, and the two begin haggling over a price. If the heroes inquire about the bottles, the Knight orders them away, but the sorcerer explains that they contain bottled dragon’s breath. Despite the Knight’s protests, the sorcerer would be happy to sell them to the heroes—that is, assuming they can outbid the Knight.

The Knight blusters with fury at the suggestion, but the sorcerer explains with a glare that he has just lost a great deal of business. The turn of events doesn’t suit the Knight at all—he storms away after the deal is concluded, no matter who winds up purchasing the bottles. “I’ll remember all of you,” he vows.

Once the Knight leaves, the sorcerer will gladly perform a spell or three for the

heroes' benefit. He can sell them any combination of spellcasting totaling 32 sorcery points or less, but no single spell with a difficulty of higher than 14.

The bottles of "dragon breath" actually contain a volatile enchanted oil. If opened, they burst into flame, inflicting 15 damage points on everyone within melee range. One can throw the bottles like oil flasks, inflicting 15 damage points on all targets within melee range of the impact point.

Atmosphere

Narrators should begin this scene with a light-hearted tone. The sorcerer really hams it up, and the crowd loves it. This is a perfect opportunity to show off with any sleight-of-hand or card tricks. Once the Knight appears, however, the scene takes on a darker tone.

Actions

To bid against the Dark Knight for the bottles, a hero must succeed in an *average Presence (Presence)* action, followed by an

average wealth (Presence) action. A mishap so enrages the Knight that he attacks.

Buying a spell from the sorcerer calls for an *easy wealth* action, with the spell's difficulty applied as a penalty to the action score.

Characters

The figures below play a role in this scene:

- ♣ **Dark Knight:** *Human adult male, domineering demeanor, Adventurer.* Co 7, Ph 8, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +8 (two-handed sword), Def -5 (plate).
- ♣ **Sorcerer:** *Human adult male, charismatic demeanor, Novice.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 8 (64), Es 6, Dmg +4 (hookshaft), Def -1 (padded silk), also sorcery (enchantment, spectramancy, divination).

Outcome

The heroes have a couple possible paths:

- ♣ Deciding to hurry their departure from Caergoth after meeting the Knight takes them to Act Three, Scene One.
- ♣ Any other action moves the adventure along to Scene Seven.



Scene Seven: Lady in Distress

This scene takes place in Caergoth if Scene Six led the heroes there. However, it occurs in either Silvamori or Qualimori if the heroes weathered the Gale by sailing the southern route through the Straits of Algoni; repairing and resupplying their vessel takes a stay of about three weeks in either of these Southern Ergoth cities.

Overview

Before the heroes' ship is ready and they can leave the port, they witness an argument between a group of Dark Knights and a Kagonesti elf. Heroes who intervene can gain an ally—plus they get a rousing cheer from the commoners nearby if they defeat or embarrass the Knights.

Getting Started

This scene introduces the character Feril, whose description appears in the Prologue.

First Impressions

This scene begins on the docks, where the heroes can hear the argument—either near their ship or in an area they happen to wander into during their stay in town.

The Kagonesti elf described below is Feril; the Knights overheard her denouncing the activities of the dragon overlords and took offense.

Narrators should alter the text as appropriate if Feril has joined the group as a hero. In that case, the Knights approach her unexpectedly; the youngest one remembers hearing one of her tirades about the Great Dragons and wants to know whether she's slain any yet.

The stench of overheated pitch briefly overwhelms your other senses as you go about your business at the waterfront today. The acrid smell comes from a workman's pot left unattended. It seems that most activity in this part of the docks has come to a temporary halt. The locals have put aside their tasks to watch a con-

frontation between an elf woman and a group of armored Knights.

The elf is a lithe beauty with colorful tattoos adorning her tanned skin. The Knights wear blackened armor decorated with skulls and lilies.

"So, wench," says the youngest Knight. "You hate dragons? I'm sure they're all quivering in fear! Dragons represent power, you fool. To defy them is to die!"

The elf places her hands defiantly on her hips. "Better to die swiftly at a dragon's claws than die slowly, from the inside out, after living too long in a dragon's shadow!"

The statement brings a cheer from the onlookers. "Atta girl!" says one. "Give them lizard lovers a piece of your mind!"

"There's plenty of space inside their heads for one!" snickers another.

"Who said that?" growls an older Knight, glaring about. No onlooker replies.

The older Knight begins to lead his comrades away, leaving the elf woman to stare at them in stony silence. Just as it seems the confrontation has ended, the young Knight you first heard speaking pauses to look grimly into the woman's eyes. Abruptly, he clouts the unarmed elf on the jaw, knocking her to the dock.

The Story Continues

If, upon witnessing this scene, the heroes do nothing, a few sailors and dock workers move forward to confront the armored bullies.

While the other Knights brandish their weapons to keep the crowd at bay, the older one demands the youth's sword. After confiscating the weapon, he leads all his men away from the dock; the locals let them go.

The Battle

Should the heroes go to the elf's aid, the crowd falls back—the onlookers sympathize with Feril, but stop short of battling armored Knights with their tools and improvised weapons.

The Knights draw their weapons. The older one apparently does not wish to fight, but the other nine will cross swords with the heroes gladly. If combat breaks

out, only one Knight responds to each hero's attack.

The leader resignedly lets the fighting continue until someone (a hero or character) is killed or rendered unconscious—then he orders his men to withdraw. Feril urges the heroes to let the Knights go. If the heroes press the attack, all the Knights fight to the death.

Feril thanks any heroes who intervene on her behalf, offering to heal their wounds. The Kagonesti currently seeks to organize a mission against Gellidus, the White Dragon, but a persuasive hero could convince her to join the party instead.

Atmosphere

The confrontation between Feril and the Knights should play out like a playground fight. The young Knight is as loud and brash as any schoolyard bully. Most of his comrades look on approvingly. Only the leader displays any kind of manners—he knows that Knights of Takhisis never behaved so dishonorably thirty years ago, under the leadership of Lord Ariakan.

Actions

In addition to various normal combat actions, the heroes might try to convince Feril to join them, an *average Presence* (*Presence*) action.

Characters

In addition to Feril and the heroes, the following characters appear in this scene:

- ☛ **Ten Dark Knights:** *Human males of varied age and demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 8, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +8 (two-handed sword), Def -5 (plate).
- ☛ **Locals:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +2 (improvised weapons), Def 0 (common clothing).

Outcome

This scene concludes Act Two. Once the heroes have finished interacting with Feril and the Knights, the adventure continues with Scene One of Act Three.



ACT THREE

Scene One: Palanthas

Upon arriving in Palanthas, the group must pass an inspection to enter the city through the port or by road.

Overview

Once inside the city, the heroes can investigate, but learn very little beyond some disturbing rumors about wagonloads of prisoners vanishing into the desert and residents of Palanthas disappearing after arrests for trivial violations of local law.

Getting Started

The section describing the realm of Khelendros in Chapter Two of *Dusk or Dawn* offers some details on the city of Palanthas.

First Impressions

Palanthas is the former capital of Solamnia, now under control of the Blue Dragon and his human agents—including a cadre of Dark Knights. Though it has seen better days, it remains a thriving trade center.

You've heard that Palanthas was once the greatest city on Ansalon, and one of the most beautiful. Today, it still seems worthy of both titles, at least from a distance. The city's immaculate buildings and lofty towers seem as majestic and serene as Solace's vallenwoods.

If the heroes arrive by ship, a harbor master's boat meets them when they enter port in the Bay of Branchala. The procedure resembles the opening of Act Two, Scene One, with less polite officials. In fact, the harbor authorities ignore the heroes—they're only interested in the ship. However, as soon as the heroes go ashore, Dark Knight sentries on the docks question and search them (see below). Rig and Shaon stay aboard the ship, if they have joined the group, as does Groller.

Once the party leaves the ship, or if the heroes approach the city openly by land, they can observe a few more details—until a squad of Dark Knights stops them for an inspection and questioning:

The city shows little sign that one of the most fearsome dragons on Krynn is its overlord, but hints are there nevertheless. People and vehicles crowd the approaches to the city, but something seems absent: The atmosphere lacks any sense of joy or energy. Locals plod along at a measured pace, pausing now and then to cast furtive glances over their shoulders. Ahead, a squad of Knights in blackened armor stops everyone who passes. They dismiss most people with curt nods, but they seem to question and search others, particularly travelers such as yourselves.

Should the party try to sneak into the city, they appear to succeed. Chances are that the Knights do notice them, but do not approach immediately—they prefer to watch the heroes to see what they do.

The Story Continues

The Knights ask the heroes their names and then business in Palanthas, then search their belongings. Even if they find something they consider suspicious, they do nothing overt. They prefer to have the heroes followed, to see whether they have allies in the city. The characters from the Prologue don't know anyone in Palanthas, but other heroes might: If they're not careful, they could endanger their friends.

During this search, the Knights aren't really looking for anything in particular. They're here mainly to remind everyone that Palanthas is an occupied city. However, if the heroes purchased any "bottled dragon breath" in Scene Six of the last act, the Knights confiscate it. Should the heroes object, the Knights offer them a receipt for the bottles, assuring them they can pick up the items on their departure.

Assuming the heroes don't start a fight, they can enter the city. Even Knights

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of Solamnia wearing full armor can get in (though certainly they'll be followed).

Once inside Palanthis, the heroes can go pretty much where they please. All the city's temples are closed, and only a shiny round patch of inky blackness remains in the heart of the Shoikan Grove, where the Tower of High Sorcery once stood. There seems to be activity around the Great Library of the Ages, as Aesthetics continue working to replenish the historical collection that mysteriously disappeared at the dawn of the Fifth Age.

Most Palanthisians would rather not be seen talking to strangers, but heroes with gentle tongues or open purses can discover the following local sentiments:

- ☞ "Life in Palanthis is good, even if the taxes are too high."
- ☞ "The Blue Dragon is a taskmaster and a skinflint, but he leaves us alone."
- ☞ "We haven't heard about Evil walking the land—you'd best worry about the brute press gangs. Teams of them have been grabbing people off the street and marching them away somewhere out east for work detail. You know they've got to be under orders from the Knights."
- ☞ "Always watch out for the Knights. They've never been exactly sympathetic when it come to rules and such. And now, if they catch you at something, they give you to the brutes."

The general population of Palanthis knows no more than what has been related above. If the group decides to ambush a squad of Dark Knights and question them (a very dangerous maneuver), all they can learn is that Khellendros wants slaves: a lot of them, and right now.

Atmosphere

When speaking for a Knight of Takhisis, the Narrator should make a big show of greeting any Knights of Solamnia in the group. "Welcome to your former capital," he should say mockingly. "We're taking very good care of it for you."

In the city, locals remain constantly wary: They're living in a police state. The movie *1984* portrays the exact atmosphere Narrators should try to convey here.

Actions

Heroes wishing to conceal something during the Knights' search must make an *average Dexterity (Perception)* action. If the action fails, the Knights find the object despite the hero's efforts. A mishap means the Knights catch the hero attempting to conceal the item and confiscate it, no matter what it is.

Getting a commoner to talk to the group requires an *average Presence or wealth* action. In the event of a mishap, the citizen flees from the group in terror, and a squad of Dark Knights appears in visual range down the street (or near missile range, if the group sneaked into the city or aroused suspicion during the entry inspection). The heroes can avoid the Knights if they successfully open the distance between them beyond visual range. If the dark paladins catch up with the group, they attack to subdue.

Characters

The usually travel in squads of ten. A fight breaks out, another group of ten arrives within five minutes:

- ☞ **Dark Knights:** *Human adults, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 8, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +8 (two-handed sword), Def -5 (plate).
- ☞ **Palanthisians:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 5, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).

Outcome

The adventure can take two different routes from here.

- ☞ When the heroes leave the city on their own, the story moves to Scene Two.
- ☞ If they fought the Knights and lost, they are given over to a brute press gang. The Narrator can turn to Scene Four.



Scene Two: Brutes

This scene comes into play after the heroes have left Palanthis for the surrounding countryside or as they approach the city by road from the south. It can occur more than once, depending on how the group decides to travel.

Overview

Khellendros has dispatched teams of brutes to scour his land for the human captives he needs to create a new type of nefarious monster—the dragonspawn. The brutes are most active in the area immediately east of Palanthis, but a few groups have worked their way as far south as Solammnia (hence the rumor about brute raids in Act Two, Scene Four). Whenever the heroes travel overland through the Blue Dragon's territory, they encounter teams of brutes.

Getting Started

Chapter Six in the *Book of the Fifth Age* offers more information on the creatures in this scene and their special abilities.

First Impressions

The text below sets the stage for this scene, which begins after the heroes have journeyed at least a day within Skie's realm:

You're well into the Blue Wastes now. Less than fifty years ago, the arid barrens around you were some of the most productive cropland in Ansalon. Khellendros must be powerful indeed to work such a profound change over an area this large.

The Story Continues

If the heroes have not yet encountered the brutes, they next pass through a small village. Someone has coaxed a crop out of the dry fields, but there are no people in sight. A few oxen grazing in an otherwise empty field seem to be the only creatures present.

A quick look through the village reveals signs of recent habitation, weed-

less gardens withering in the heat, domestic animals wandering around, and cold hearths with fresh ashes. Alert heroes can spot deep ruts from a heavy, wheeled vehicle leading off to the east.

This village has been raided by brutes, ordered by Khellendros to take as many human captives as they can as quickly as they can. They move about the countryside in massive wagons hauled by elephants. When they reach a suitable hunting ground, they stop the wagon and fan out, grabbing any humans they find.

Once the heroes leave the village, they spot a brute team (or part of one) on a hilltop. The brutes immediately try to close range and attack (see "Actions").

A full team contains a wagon, one elephant, and four brutes. Three brutes usually go hunting, leaving one behind to guard the wagon. The Narrator is free to decide whether the heroes encounter a wagon or just the hunters. To randomly determine how many brutes the heroes might meet, Narrators can draw one card from the Fate Deck; the number of brutes depends on the card's suit:

- ♣ **Dragons:** The heroes meet four brutes with a wagon containing a number of captives equal to the value of the card.
- ♠ **Crowns:** The group encounters a parked wagon with one brute guard. The wagon contains a number of captives equal to the value of the card.
- ♣ **Swords:** Three brutes appear, with a number of captives equal to one-third the value of the card, rounded up.
- ♠ **Orbs:** The heroes encounter no brutes at all and can proceed to Scene Three.
- ♣ **Other suits:** The group runs across three brutes with no captives.

Heroes who have played this scene before do not need to enter another village. Instead, they see one in the distance but before they get there a group of brutes (as determined above) confronts them.

The Battle

The parties begin this encounter at artillery range if the prison wagon is present, or at near missile range if the brutes are hunting alone. In either case,



the Blue's minions immediately attempt to close to melee range, to take advantage of their strength in counterattacks against the heroes. Teams with a wagon leave one brute behind to guard the human captives.

These agents of Skie neither retreat nor surrender—they have no desire to face their dragon overlord with news of failure. Should the heroes defeat the brutes, any guard left with the wagon tries to drive off and escape with the prisoners.

Atmosphere

The dusty “Blue Wastes” are not blue, of course; the area carries the name of the Blue Dragon, who created it. To simulate the hot, dry conditions, Narrators could turn up the lights and the heat—even bring in a space heater to make the players sweat a little.

The abandoned village the heroes visit seems desolate and tragic; they might hear a door or shutter creaking and banging in the wind.

Actions

Locating the wagon tracks leading out of the village requires an *average Perception* action. An action score of 20 points or higher also allows a hero to notice the elephant and brute tracks. Otherwise, he can tell only that the vehicle was very large and heavy.

Perhaps the group doesn't realize the village is recently abandoned. If the leader of the party succeeds at an *average Reason* action, he figures that the people could

not have been missing from here for more than a day or two.

Casting a successful divination spell in the village, using sensitivity, or speaking with the stray animals with animism reveals that some hulking creatures came and hauled the villagers away. (The animals say the creatures had a big “wheeled barn” drawn by a huge, long-nosed beast.)

Heroes who capture a brute can use an *average Presence (Presence)* action to force him to reveal where he and his fellows take captives (see Scene Four).

Characters

When hitched to a prison wagon, the elephant suffers a -1 penalty to its Agility (or Coordination) score.

- ❖ **Brutes:** *Hostile nonhumans.* Co 6, Ph 11, In 6, Es 8, Dmg +8, Def -5 , also missile weapons (great bow).
- ❖ **Prisoners:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- ❖ **Elephant:** *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 33, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +8, Def -4 , also trample.

Outcome

The story can take many different paths from this scene.

- ❖ If the group follows the tracks left by the brutes' wagon, the adventure continues with Scene Three. (If the group has already played that scene, the Narrator can turn to Scene Four instead.)
- ❖ Heroes deciding to go to Palanthis should return to Scene One.
- ❖ If the group came to Palanthis by ship and left Rig, Shaon, and Groller behind, they return to discover that brutes raided the ship and hauled those characters away. Play continues with Scene Three if the heroes leave Palanthis to look for their comrades (or with Scene Four if the group has already played Scene Three).
- ❖ Should the brutes defeat the heroes, the Narrator should go to Scene Four.



Scene Three: Spawn

Heroes have a chance to encounter the horrific dragonspawn themselves, either before or after the group visits Palanthis.

Overview

Khellendros has dispatched some of his dragonspawn to help the brutes locate victims. As the heroes explore the area around Palanthis, a trio of spawn disguised as farmers tries to capture them.

Should the heroes capture the spawn instead, they could find themselves in dire circumstances later in the adventure.

Getting Started

Dragonspawn are fully described in the sidebar in this scene.

First Impressions

This scene begins in the late afternoon during the heroes' travels. An unusual creature soaring overhead might catch the heroes' interest (see "Actions"), but it quickly flies away if spotted.

The next morning, the Narrator should read players the paragraphs below:

Your group reaches the crest of a hilltop. The gentle downward slope before you contains a tilled field with a small wood of stunted trees growing at the base. The scent of wet earth tickles your nostrils.

Three figures wrapped in cowls and flowing robes are coming up the hill carrying buckets. When they see you, they drop their buckets and scurry back into the wood like frightened jackrabbits. You've never seen men move so fast. The layers of robes they're wearing don't seem to slow them down much.

Beyond the wood rises the thatched roof of a farmhouse and a barn.

The Story Continues

The figures the heroes spied are not the farmers they appear, but three blue dragonspawn—creatures the likes of which the heroes have never seen. To disguise them-

selves, the spawn have wrapped up in loose robes that resemble desert garb. (Brutes carried away the real farmers days ago.)

One of these spawn spotted the heroes yesterday afternoon as it flew over the desert. That evening, it got together with two comrades and decided they had the best chance of taking the heroes alive by employing some kind of ruse, rather than simply diving out of the sky and cutting loose with their lightning breath.

If the heroes pursue the disguised spawn through the trees, they see the three figures scurry into the house and slam the door behind them. A split second later, all the shutters in the house slam shut, too.

The spawn maintain their nervous farmer act as long as they can. No matter what the heroes do or say, the spawn reply, "Go away and leave us alone, you nasty brutes!" They hope to frustrate the heroes enough to catch them off guard.

The Battle

If the heroes break into the house, the spawn ambush them. On the other hand, if the group starts to leave, the spawn burst out and attempt a surprise counterattack (they won't come out except to assail the group from behind). In this case, the heroes need not attempt to avoid surprise as long as they keep an eye on the house. The heroes cannot surprise these spawn.

Once a fight begins, the spawn won't surrender or retreat. Should one die, one continues fighting while the other tries to open the range. If successful, it uses its lightning breath on the heroes. They can capture a spawn by attacking to subdue or using Blister's net, if she is with them.

The farmhouse's yard contains a chicken coop and a barn. The brutes killed and ate all the chickens, leaving bloody feathers scattered about. The farm's animals broke out of the barn days ago to wander off in search of food and water.

Atmosphere

If the heroes try to reason with these "farmers," the spawn pretend to be suspicious but open-minded, with comments like, "All right, then prove you're not an brute!" followed by, "Yeah, that's just what

Dragonspawn

The newest horror to afflict Krynn in these troubled times is the *dragonspawn*, or simply “spawn.” These magically created creatures are larger than humans. They stand a few inches shy of seven feet tall and weigh about three hundred pounds. They have humanoid bodies with wings, toothy snouts, and clawed appendages. These creatures differ from draconians in that they used to be human, and it shows—behind its reptilian features linger faint vestiges of the creature’s lost humanity.

The Spawning Ceremony

A spawn is formed by infusing a seed from the spirit of a

draconian into the body of a human captive curing a painful ceremony. The

invading essence

eventually corrupts and ejects the victim’s own spirit. However, the exact details of the spawning process remain unknown. Witnesses report that it must be conducted by a Great Dragon and requires the presence of the draconian donating the spirit seed as well as a human captive. Only humans make suitable hosts for the draconian spirit.

The Great Dragon begins the ceremony with a long incantation to draw out a portion of the draconian’s essence and implant it in the victim. The shock can kill the donor draconian, but most survive. (The Narrator must make a successful *average Endurance* action on a random draw for the draconian to live through the process.)

In addition, the dragon has to give something of itself to quicken the spirit seed. The Blue Dragon, Khellendros, purportedly sheds a few tears while performing the magic required. Each color of Great Dragon would create a unique subrace of spawn based on this catalyst.



During the week following the ceremony, the victim slowly becomes corrupted inside and out. His body transforms into that of a winged, reptilian monster whose scaly coloration matches that of the Great Dragon involved in the rite. While this physical metamorphosis is inevitable, an individual can hold the inner transformation at bay: A successful *average Spirit* action allows the victim’s true essence to hang on, fighting to eject the invading spirit (see “Afflicted Heroes” on page 43). However, even strong-willed or good-hearted humans often die in the spawning process, while Evil men more readily embrace it. Failing the action means that the Evil essence grown from the draconian spirit seed ejects the victim’s tortured spirit from its body after a week and takes its place. No one knows what happens to this tragically displaced human spirit.

Spawn Abilities

All spawn can fly like dragons. In addition, their scales match the color of the dragon that created them, and they have a special breath ability identical to dragon breath, except they can use it only at near missile range (see the section on “Dragons” in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* for details on dragon breath). Though immune to dragonawe, spawn cannot inspire it. Like draconians, spawn all manifest an unusual effect related to their draconic nature at their death.

When Khellendros the Blue created the first spawn as a side-effect of experiments he was conducting, he realized

the creatures had great value as minions. The dragon who creates a spawn can see, hear, feel, touch, and taste whatever the creature



experiences. The dragon cannot actually read the spawn’s mind, however, and cannot automatically tell if it still holds a

a brute would say!” The Narrator should adopt a deep, rasping voice for the spawn.

When the heroes finally get a good look at the spawn, the Narrator should do his best to convey the horror of gazing upon the terrifying fusion of human and dragon features. Did these figures used to be people? What inhuman force would create such monstrous hybrids?

If a spawn is slain, the Narrator should play up the effects of its death, described in the sidebar—blue sparks erupt from the creature’s dissolving body, and every hero feels his hair stand on end.

Actions

The afternoon the scene opens, the scout can make a *challenging Perception* action to notice the spawn overhead. If he sees it, he can tell only that it is a flying creature about the size of a man.

Breaking down the farmhouse door requires an *average Strength* action. After a successful *average Perception* action, a hero inspecting the yard finds old tracks made by large humanoids. An action score of 20 or higher identifies them as brute tracks

and also locates a few fresh tracks made by clawed feet. A similar search of the hillside uncovers wagon tracks (if the group was not already following them).

Characters

The dragonspawn in this scene were created by the Blue Dragon, Skie.

- ☛ **Three blue spawn:** *Hostile nonhumans.* Co 8, Ph 12, In 5 (25), Es 8, Dmg +10, Def -5, also dragon breath, sorcery (electromancy), dissolves into an electrically charged cloud at its death.

Outcome

This scene ends with a variety of choices:

- ☛ The heroes can follow (or keep following) the wagon tracks to Scene Four.
- ☛ Should the spawn defeat the heroes, the Narrator also turns to Scene Four.
- ☛ Going to Palanthas from here takes the adventure back to Scene One. If the heroes left Rig, Shaon, and Groller there, they discover that brutes raided the ship and hauled these three away. The story continues with Scene Four if the heroes



shred of the victim's original personality. (He might surmise that something is amiss if the spawn fails to obey an order or undertakes other suspicious activity.) Receiving sensory impressions from these creatures takes all of a dragon's concentration, however, so he cannot spend all his time monitoring them. When concentrating, a Great Dragon can simultaneously receive and process sensory input from a number of spawn equal to its Reason (or Intellect) score. The dragon can always pinpoint the spawn that generated a particular impression.

Skie found draconians quite willing to cooperate with his spawning ceremony, as they viewed the ritual as a chance to procreate. Because the spawn has the personality and memories of the draconian who donated the spirit seed, the creature could be considered the donor's offspring. With so few draconian females in existence, the draconians fear their race might die without the evolution of the spawn.

Like their human predecessors, spawn can reproduce. However, only magically created spawn have a mental link with their dragon creators; second-generation spawn lack that connection, even if they remain in the dragon's service. A spawn's immunity to dragonawe and other powers make it a valuable servant in any case.

Afflicted Heroes

If the human essence refuses to give in to the invading spirit, it has to fight to keep control of its body. Heroes who succeed in a *challenging Spirit* action retain control for the day and can act normally. For that day, he has the spawn's Physical abilities but keeps his own Mental abilities, including sorcery, mysticism, and race/role advantages and disadvantages. A hero must attempt a new action daily.

Failing at the Spirit action means the hero loses control of his body to the dra-

conian spirit for the day; the foreign spirit uses all the spawn's ability scores. If the hero suffers a mishap, the invading essence not only takes control of his body for a day but can use his knowledge and powers freely as well. The spawn retains its own Physical abilities and uses either its own Mental abilities

or the hero's. If the hero uses sorcery, the spawn has two pools of sorcery points: its own and the hero's.

In any case, the hero must struggle continuously to maintain control.

Every time he suffers any stress—attacking, defending, incurring injury, using magic—he must make another *challenging*

Spirit action to retain control. (He never has to attempt more than one such action in any given minute, though.)

An afflicted hero can fly and use the spawn's special breath ability. However, doing so is like inviting the spawn to take control of his body. For each use of the spawn's breath ability and at the beginning of each hour of flight, the hero makes an additional *challenging Spirit* action at a -2 action penalty to maintain control.

Heroes who rescue a partially transformed companion are well advised to keep an eye on their friend and to be wary of sudden attacks or more devious betrayals, due to the hero's unwitting contact with the spawn's Great Dragon creator. A hero who regains control over his body after any temporary loss to the invading essence has no knowledge of what happened while the spawn was in control. Likewise, the foreign spirit is aware of only those events it witnessed itself (unless the hero suffered a mishap).

A mystic can banish a spawn's spirit from a human host using powerful mentalism or spiritualism. Once the spirit has left his body, the hero collapses, remaining only semiconscious for a day. During the next twenty-four hours, the former victim remains helpless as his body slowly reverts to its original form.



Scene Four: The Camp

The heroes have come to this scene either as captives of the brutes or by tracking the prison wagon's trail here. Narrators may have to alter some description, depending on whether the heroes are freely reconnoitering the camp or imprisoned here.

Overview

The brutes take their captives to a ruined village. When they have collected enough prisoners, Khellendros himself flies in and conducts the spawning ritual.

Getting Started

The narrator can refer back to the sidebar in the previous scene for details on spawn.

First Impressions

If the heroes have been captured, they see the scene described below from the vantage point of a prison wagon pulling into camp. The brutes stripped them of their armor, weapons, and equipment hours ago, before shoving them into the wagon.

Otherwise, heroes make the observations described below from the cover of a large outcropping of rock:

You've reached the remains of a village. The six surviving buildings are made of stone, now scorched by fire. Five of them are cottages with sagging thatch roofs, and the last is a small temple with a mostly intact slate roof.

A tree-shaded pool fed by a sluggish stream beckons from one end of the village—the smell of fresh water and green grass seems as sweet as any perfume after your trip across the desert. The crumbled ruin of a tower stands at the other end of the settlement. A narrow, unpaved road that runs past the pool and up to the ruins separates the clump of cottages from the temple.

A prison wagon—essentially a massive steel cage on wheels—waits on the road before the temple. An occasional shout comes from within the vehicle. An ele-

phant stands chained to a tree near the pool, and a tall humanoid with a brutish face and blue-painted skin watches them. Another brute stands near the ruin, and two Knights in dark armor walk a slow circuit around the temple.

While free heroes watch, a second wagon rolls into camp and halts beside the first. Captured heroes are inside that wagon. Everyone can see the following:

The brute near the pool helps the driver unhitch the elephant from the wagon and chain it to a tree beside the other beast. He returns to his post while the driver hands some keys and a bundle of equipment to an approaching Knight. The dark paladin inspects it briefly, then gestures abruptly toward one of the cottages. The brute silently takes the bundle into the indicated building, then vanishes into another cottage. Hooking the keys onto his belt, the Knight resumes his patrol.

The brutes leave captured heroes locked up in their wagon: The Knights want to keep them where they can see them, rather than risk them stirring up the prisoners held in the temple. They refuse to respond to any questions.

If Rig, Shaon, and Groller were taken from the heroes' ship, they are held in the first locked wagon.

The Story Continues

The small temple mentioned earlier houses the prisoners in this village, while the six Dark Knights in charge of the camp live in the biggest cottage. Three Baaz draconians reside in a second cottage, and four brutes occupy two more. The fifth one serves as a storehouse.

Prisoners receive food and water twice a day—just enough to keep them alive. They are not allowed any exercise.

Four Knights and two brutes remain on guard at all times. The Knights keep watch over the temple and patrol the village's perimeter, while the brutes stand sentry on the road, one at each end of town.

This scene remains unchanged until the heroes do something. They begin the

encounter at far missile range from the guards. Watching a while before acting allows them to see two more Knights patrolling the outskirts of the village. All the guards seem bored—they won't notice the heroes until they take overt action.

The Battle

Heroes may attempt to break out of their wagon or attack—or both. The two sleeping brutes emerge from their quarters and join the fray after five minutes, and the two off-duty Knights appear in seven.

Once the heroes attack, there's little they can do except fight, using standard combat actions. At least two heroes wielding fire or making a lot of noise can panic the elephants and force them to bolt through the town, knocking over the wagons and trampling anyone on the road.

The Aftermath

the battle, the Baaz lie low, but the heroes might find them if they defeat all the other guards, then search the village. The draconians know the prisoners were set to be transformed into spawn and can be intimidated into talking.

The brutes, on the other hand, know nothing about their mission and fail to understand the significance of Skie's visits: He just flies in some nights, does *something*, then departs, leaving the camp empty.

The Knights know only that they are here to guard prisoners. Skie dismisses them whenever he's ready to perform a ritual and hires new guards as the village fills up again. The Knights assume the prisoners are food for the dragon.

The prisoners in the temple and wagons can find their own ways home if freed.

Atmosphere

The village looks like any typical enemy encampment from a war movie. The Knights make their rounds in lock step, and the brutes look bored. If the players seem hesitant to act, Narrators should indicate to them that this scene is not going to change: The Knights' booted feet will continue their monotonous tramp until one of the heroes does *something*.

Actions

The heroes have the normal chance to surprise the guards in the camp. If they track the movements of the pair walking the perimeter, they can set up an ambush.

Captured heroes could use a mystic charm spell to prompt the guard with the keys to unlock the wagon (Dark Knights' susceptibility to mysticism makes any card played automatic trump). While the heroes cannot persuade him to open the wagon, they might trick him into opening it with the old "my friend is sick" routine—an *average Presence (Perception)* action.

Prying apart the bars on a wagon requires a *desperate Strength* action and instantly gets the guards' attention. Picking the lock is a *challenging Agility* action.

It takes a *challenging Presence (Spirit)* action to make the elephants break their chains and bolt. (Only one hero can make the attempt before the alarm is sounded.) The heroes can't break the beasts' chains, but could pick the locks on them.

Characters

The camp holds the following characters:

- ☞ **Three Baaz:** *Draconians, sensible demeanor, Adventurers.* Co 8, Ph 6, In 6, Es 7, Dmg +4, Def -3, also glides, turns to stone at its death.
- ☞ **Four brutes:** *Hostile nonhumans.* Co 6, Ph 11, In 6, Es 8, Dmg +8, Def -5, also thrown weapons (hand axe).
- ☞ **Eighteen Prisoners:** *Humans of varied age and demeanor, Unknown and Rabble.* Co 6, Ph 5, In 5, Es 5, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing).
- ☞ **Six Dark Knights:** *Human adults, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Co 7, Ph 8, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +8 (two-handed sword), Def -5 (plate), also missile weapons (crossbow/+5).
- ☞ **Elephant:** *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 33, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +8, Def -4, also trample.

Outcome

When the heroes leave the camp, the Narrator should turn to:

- ☞ Scene Three, if it has not been played; or
- ☞ The Epilogue, if Scene Three has been played (or if the heroes are captured).



 EPILOGUE

The Lonely Refuge

The Lonely Refuge is an enchanted locale created by Majere, a god of Neutrality. In the past, it served as a place of pilgrimage and meditation. Now, Palin Majere makes it his base for spying on Skie's activities.

Palin has yet to discover anything beyond the strange local disappearances. Goldmoon alerted him to the heroes' quest, however, so he uses divination magic to watch for them. He will cast a quick summoning spell to whisk them to the Refuge once they start heading for it—or when they seem in dire need of rescuing.

Overview

The Lonely Refuge lies within a secluded canyon in the wastelands northeast of Palanthas. The map from Goldmoon shows some three hundred fifty miles of desert between it and Palanthas. It could take months to find it, even with the map.

Palin's well-timed summons causes a vision of the Refuge's entrance to appear before them. When the heroes step through it, they walk right into the Refuge and meet Palin and a couple other characters. They learn a puzzling bit of information about the dragon-spawn and have an opportunity to make their report to Goldmoon or leave the Refuge with Palin.

Getting Started

Palin Majere's and Goldmoon's character cards from the FIFTH AGE boxed set will aid in this scene. In addition, Narrators can refer to the "Dragons" section in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* and Dhamon's description in the Prologue.

First Impressions

Once the heroes resolve to head for the Lonely Refuge—or when they get into serious trouble—the Narrator can read players the following text:

A ghostly image appears before you like a mirage—perhaps it is a mirage. As the image becomes more solid, you see a wall of red rock sculpted by desert winds. Other carvers have been at work, too: Someone has inscribed a gigantic figure of a praying mantis in low relief. Directly under the mantis's elongated claws stands a man-sized doorway. A brilliant light shines from beyond the portal, throwing long shadows behind you.

Heroes who ignore the vision of the mantis (a symbol of the god Majere) see it fade after five minutes, only to return again after an hour. If the party ignores it a second time, it fades and returns again immediately. During this third appearance, a vision of Goldmoon walks out of the portal and beckons to the heroes. If the party continues to ignore the image, it does not return for a full day; however, it reappears once each day thereafter until someone enters the portal.

The Story Continues

Walking through the doorway of the vision brings heroes into a brightly lit chamber with rock the same color as the canyon wall. Palin and Ashe—the copper dragon keeper of the Refuge in human form—wait to greet them.

While the master sorcerer eagerly questions the group about what they have seen and done, Ashe heals the injured. The news of the spawn intrigues Palin. If the heroes have captured one of the creatures, the two characters examine it carefully. Palin can tell the spawn is some kind of magical creation with both human and dragon features, but he can't determine its exact origin.

Regardless of whether the heroes brought a spawn to the Refuge, Palin asks his last question about their encounter with the creatures, then leads the party to a chamber that contains a statue of a blindfolded woman holding a basin.

Here the heroes meet a third character, whom Palin introduces as the Master, a tall

EPILOGUE

man in a dark robe. While the heroes look on, Palin fills the basin with water, and the Master casts a spell of divination to see where the spawn came from.

Heroes who watch the water's surface see a fleeting image of a young man, then that of a great blue dragon appear on the surface of the water. The beast seems to fly right at the group, and its image looms larger and larger, until all the heroes can see is one of its baleful eyes staring out of the font. As the eye glowers, the water in basin boils away. Certain heroes may feel that the wyrm was staring directly at him.

The results of the spellcasting puzzle Palin. He's learned all he can about the spawn for now and cannot fathom what the images in the water might mean, though he recognized the image of Skie. In any event, the sorcerer offers to use his magic to let them speak with Goldmoon (see "Outcome"). During this discussion, the Master disappears. Palin explains to anyone who asks that he has gone back to the Tower of High Sorcery at Wayreth, but he answers no other questions about him. Throughout this scene, the Master does not interact with the heroes except to cast the divination spell described above. He pays no attention to any hero who speaks to him. Anyone who touches him feels only a cold void—then the Master disappears, traveling magically to the Tower.

When the heroes show Palin the pennant they received from Goldmoon, he smiles and produces another section of the mighty artifact—the lance's haft. The remaining piece, the blade, awaits them in Palanthis, he says, and invites the heroes to accompany him there. For now, he declines to tell them the blade's location.

A Captive Spawn

If the group has captured a spawn, Palin would like to study it further, with the party's permission, of course. Should the heroes decline to leave the prisoner with



Palin, he offers to lead them to the lance blade in Palanthis. He seems convinced that the spawn represents the forces of Evil about in the land and that they will need the complete lance to combat it.

If the heroes do not turn the spawn over to Palin, they're in grave danger: Because the Blue Dragon created it, Khellendros becomes aware of everything the spawn experiences and can use the creature to track down the heroes.

When they reach a recognizable locale, such as Palanthis or another major city, Khellendros deduces their location and dispatches Gale, a blue dragon, to deal with them. Even if the heroes keep the spawn confined or blindfolded, Skie eventually can surmise where they are.

Narrators should read the following once the heroes, in the company of their captured spawn, have arrived at a locale Skie could recognize:

A feeling of dread washes over you. Unbidden, your eyes swivel upward to see the most terrible sight on Krynn—a dragon diving to the attack!

The air seems charged with electricity and heavy with the scent of fear and sweat—both your own. Your heart leaps into your throat as the titanic blue monster descends upon you like a summer storm.

The dragon wants to release or slay the captive spawn, to protect Skie's secret and keep the heroes from showing it to anyone else. He won't bother chasing the group, but he will kill anyone who stands against him.

If Dhamon is with the group, however, Gale breaks off the attack after his dive. The dragon, the rogue knight's former mount, tries to convince Dhamon to join him, flying off if he refuses.

As a last resort, Palin evades Gale's counterattacks and firmly orders the heroes to link hands. He then casts a spell that whisks the party to the safety. Deducing Gale's intent, he leaves the spawn behind.



Atmosphere

Because this scene literally picks up the heroes from wherever they might be, the Narrator can take advantage of it to help them out of a bind. However, he should see such an overt technique only as a final attempt to keep the game moving. If, for example, the heroes got captured in the previous scene, they should make at least one escape attempt before going to this scene.

Once the heroes get to the Refuge, the scene should move along quickly through Palin's barrage of questions to the climactic vision of the Great Blue.

The heroes' information produces a great deal of excitement in Palin. He and his two companions speak rapidly about various arcane points the heroes don't understand—and no one seems inclined to let them in on the discussion, either. The Master and Ashe act very secretive. In fact, the heroes should leave the Refuge without knowing who they really are.

After the group speaks to Goldmoon (in "Outcome"), Narrators should give players a sense of triumph. Her praise would make any hero want to burst with pride.

If the blue dragon Gale attacks, the heroes face disaster. The Narrator should describe the dragon's scimitarlike claws, lashing tail, and gleaming teeth. Then, he can casually mention that this dragon probably is not half the size of the one the heroes saw in the font at the Lonely Refuge. . . .

Actions

When the dragon's eye appears in the font, every hero present must make an *average Perception* action. Those who fail believe the eye is staring right at them and them alone.

Should the party fall under dragon attack, Gale appears at artillery range and begins his dive. Assuming the heroes survive this initial assault, they can try to open range normally and escape.

Characters

No character details are needed for the Master. As for Ashe, the copper dragon

assumes human form during this scene and functions as any other character.

🔥 **Asperitus (Ashe):** *An adult male copper dragon.* Co 10, Ph 51, In 12 (144), Es 12 (144), Dmg +18, Def -14, also dragon breath, swallow whole, dragonawe, dive attack, mysticism (alteration, sensitivity, healing), sorcery (geomancy).

🔥 **Gale:** *An old male blue dragon.* Co 11, Ph 57, In 14 (196), Es 14 (196), Dmg +25, Def -18, also dragon breath, swallow whole, dragonawe, dive attack, sorcery (electromancy, spectramancy, transmutation), mysticism (channeling).

Outcome

Once the heroes have spoken to Palin, Ashe, and the Master, their quest has neared its end. The group has given them a much clearer idea of what Khellendros is up to, even if they don't yet understand the dragon's motives and goals.

At this time, the Narrator can read the text below to players:

Well, you've banded words with Dark Knights, battled brutes, and discovered a new type of draconic creature—it's been quite a quest! And it's certain that this dragonspawn lies near the heart of the Evil afoot in the realm of Khellendros, the Storm over Krynn. If the Blue Dragon is not stopped, humans all across Ansalon could become a hunted race, to satisfy the Great Dragons' greed for these horrid, reptilian-human offspring.

Heroes may want to communicate with Goldmoon to report what they have learned—Palin can summon her image to appear in the font. The First Master of Mysticism congratulates the heroes on rescuing the captives and assures them that they have uncovered an important revelation. Unfortunately, solving the mystery of the spawn is a job for scholars.

One thing is certain, however: Humans living in dragon-occupied lands are in more danger than ever before. If Khellendros is herding folk like cattle into spawning camps, the other dragon overlords are sure to follow suit. Looking into a way of stopping the abductions would be worthy of another quest for heroes. . . .



DragonTance

FIFTH AGE



Creating Knightly Circles

In the Fifth Age, the two thousand year-old Solamnic Knighthood has spread throughout western Ansalon. The most important of its circles are described in the Appendix to the Night and Day sourcebook. But players and Narrators can invent their own Solamnic circles—and Legion of Steel circles and cells—anywhere in the continent, using the tips and charts here.

In the course of an adventure, a Knight of Solamnia hero may wish to draw funds or obtain equipment from his Order. The charts below can determine the level of resources available from the Knighthood in the area (or from the Legion). They also show the reputation of the circle's (or cell's) commander, for use when Knight heroes seek sponsors for advancement.

To generate a circle in a given community for either Order, the Narrator should first find the size of the community on the table below and note its rating. For example, Palanthis is a large city (9).

Community Size	Community Rating	Community Size	Community Rating
Small village	1	Large town	6
Medium village	2	Small city	7
Large village	3	Medium city	8
Small town	4	Large city	9
Medium town	5		

After finding the initial community rating, the player adds all appropriate modifiers from the next table, below. The first modifier applies to Solamnic circles, the second to Legion circles and cells. For instance, Palanthis is fortified (+1) but held by a dragon (-10 or -5). These qualities give Palanthis a modified community rating of 0 for Solamnics and 5 for the Legion.

Condition	Modifier	Condition	Modifier
Regional capital	+1/+1	Fortified city	+1/+1
National capital	+2/+2	Solamnic/allied realm	+4/-10
Small keep	+1/+1	Dragon realm	-10/-5
Large keep/small castle	+2/+2	Nonhuman realm	No circle (usually)/0
Large castle	+3/+3	Dark Knights present	No circle (usually)/-10

*Dragon-held territories contain only clandestine circles or cells.

After modifying the community rating, the player makes a random draw and adds the value of the card to the rating. Finding the result in the third table, below, offers some facts about the circle or cell: its maximum wealth rating and its senior officer's reputation.

Cards from the Suit of Swords are considered trump for this random draw when determining Solamnic circles; Hearts are trump for Legion circles and cells. If the hero wants to locate a circle in dragon-held territory, drawing a Dragons card means that the local authorities notice something odd about him and question him—at the very least.

Final Rating	Maximum Wealth	Senior Officer's Reputation
4 or less	No circle	None
5-7	3	Adventurer
8-10	4	Champion
11-13	5	Champion
14-16	6	Master
17-20	7	Master
21 or more	8	Hero

Modified community rating plus the face value of the card(s) drawn.

To get a rough estimate of the number of Knights or Legionnaires in a given area, players can multiply the final rating from the first column of the above table by 2.5 (rounding all fractions up). A final rating of 4 or less means the region has no resident Knights or Legionnaires.

Areas with more than 24 members actually hold two or more circles. In such a case, the most senior officer of all the local circles has the reputation shown in the table above, and the other circle commanders have the next lower one. For example, if the final rating is a 21, about 52 Knights or Legionnaires reside in the area—enough for at least two circles. The senior officer has a Hero reputation, and the head of the other circle has a Master reputation. No matter how many local circles or cells an area contains, their collective wealth rating is limited to the figure shown on the table. The two circles from the example together have a wealth rating of 8.

Once players have generated a new circle or cell, the Narrator should record its details for future use.



FIFTH AGE

HEROES OF STEEL ADVANCED ACTIONS

Action	Diff.	Ability	Opp.	Comments
Combined action	—	—	—	Leader performs the action but adds others' scores to action score
Coordinated action	Avg (8)	Pr	Varies	Leader attempts to organize a group for a complex action; success adds half the total of the others' scores to the next action.
Quick march	Varies	En	None	Difficulty depends on how much time the hero wants to save.
Take a shortcut	Varies	Re	None	Difficulty depends on how much time the hero wants to save.
Rescue cave-in victim	Varies	Pe	None	Difficulty depends on rockfall size
Charge	Easy (4)	Ag	Ag	+3 bonus to melee attack but -3 penalty to next defense
Cut or smash	Avg (8)	St or Dx	En or Ag	Opposed only if target item is held or guarded.
Disarm	Chal (12)	St or Dx	En	Success by more than 5 points inflicts normal attack damage, too.
Fast attack	—	—	—	Resolve attack immediately with no defense to the counterattack
Grab	Avg (8)	St	St	Must grapple first to grab small or dangerous things
Grapple	Chal (12)	St	St	Easy action to maintain a grapple
Great blow	—	—	—	Doubles Strength score for attack but with no counterattack defense
Reckless attack	—	—	—	Allows an extra attack but no defense to the counterattack
Rush	Avg (8)	Ag	Ag	Slip past the enemy in combat
Shield slam	Avg (8)	St	En	Use shield as a weapon instead of using it to defend
Tackle	Chal (12)	St	St	Tackled foe gets no counterattack but foe gets a +3 Strength bonus in counterattack if the tackle fails
Avoid being disarmed	Avg (8)	En or Ag	St or Dx	En/St for melee range Ag/Dx for missile or artillery range
Counter a grab	Avg (8)	St	St	Easier if the target object is small or dangerous
Evade a grapple	Avg (8)	St	St	Success allows a normal attack
Hold or delay	Avg (8)	Ag	Ag	Keep a foe from slipping past
Prevent a tackle	Avg (8)	St	St	Success allows a normal attack
Total defense	—	—	—	Sacrifice an attack to double Agility or Endurance for defense
Coordinated attack	Easy (4)	Pr	Pe	Success lets leader attack for the group, drawing an extra card for each attacker's score
Evade a coordinated attack	Chal (12)	Pe	Pr	Defense against a group attack



● City/Town

■ Castle, Ruin,
or Site of Interest

⊙ Capital


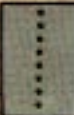



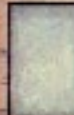






— Road

..... Trail

THE RISING STORM

Tanith

STORM

	Road
	Trail
	Mountains
	Forest
	Swamp
	Glacier
	Desert
	Badlands
	Rocky Desert
	Ocean
	River
	Plains



Northern
Ergoth

Beacon

Hillfall

Gulfport

Tanlyvill

Lancton

Castle
Crimson

Leannon

Ocean Tower

Legump

Lohbitt

Lohbitt

Hyllo

Hargoth

Godnest

Ca

Gar

Rodsmith







Gates of Paladine

Lonely Refuge

Galbluff

SCALE (miles)

—0

—100





Gates of Paladine

Gulbluff

Mitrevale

Daron

Palanthas

Bay of Branchala

Dragon's Citadel

Korval

Winterholm

Coastlund

Gander

Elkhholm

Vingaard Mountains

Lyte

Vingaard River

Vingaard River

Harford

Beam

High Cleric's Tower

Aunlk

Northern Wastes

Maelgoth

Vingaard River

Nighlund

Vingaard Keep

Wirdel

Leonrock

Thelgaard

Brasdel

Solanthus

-100

-200

-300

-400







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DRAGONLANCE

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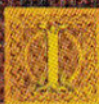
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DRAMATIC SUPPLEMENT

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BY
SKIP WILLIAMS

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