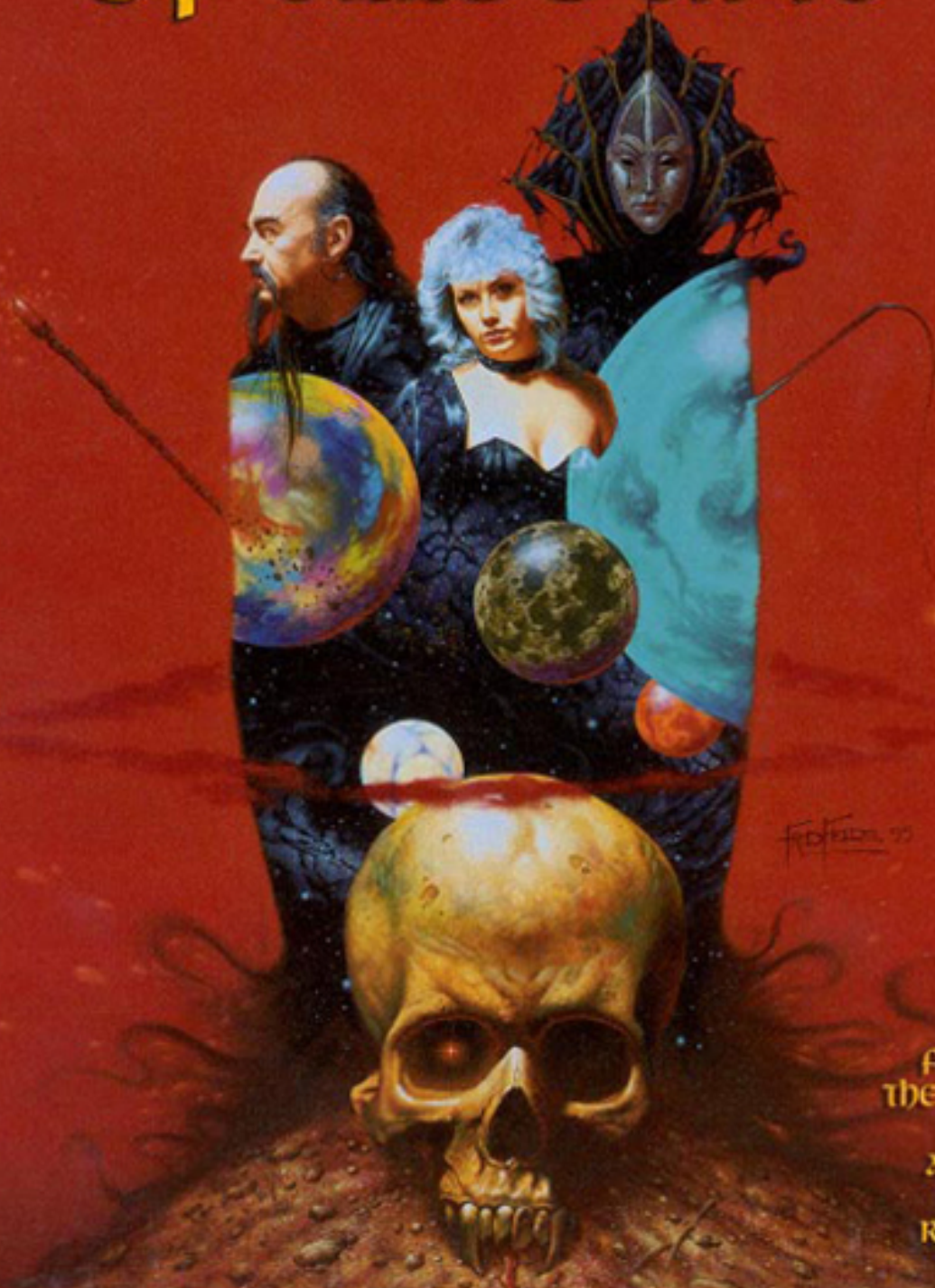


FORGOTTEN REALMS  
Campaign Expansion

# SPELLBOUND



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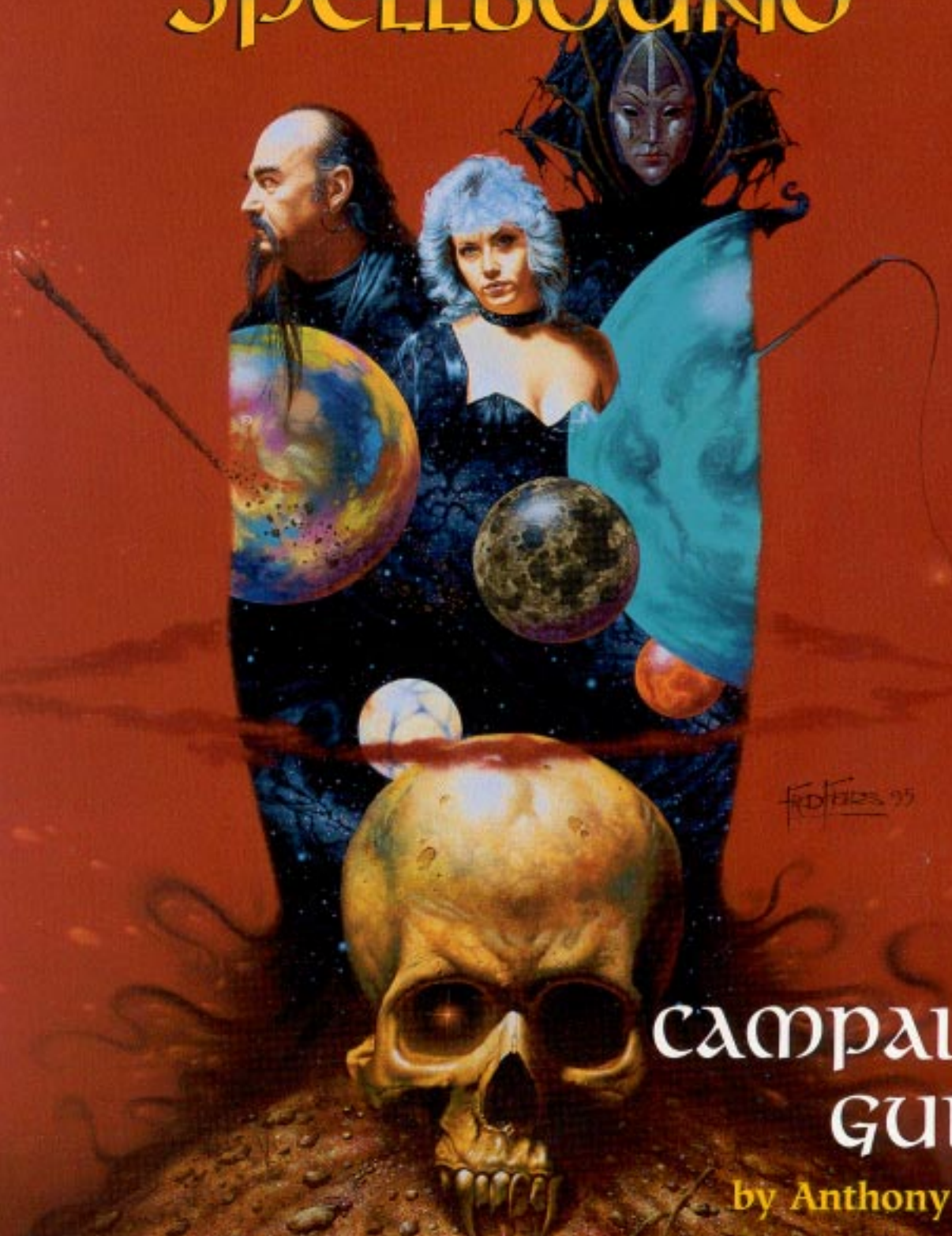
FEATURING  
THE REALMS OF  
THAY  
AGLAROND,  
AND  
RASHEMEN



Advanced  
Dungeons & Dragons®



# Spellbound



CAMPAIGN  
GUIDE

by Anthony Pryor

# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons



## Campaign Guide

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# Prologue



To The High Lady of Silverymoon, Alustriel Silverhand, from the hand of Lhaeo the scribe, in the Year of the Banner.



Several months ago you contacted Elminster, requesting that he create for the Harpers a detailed report of the nations in the region commonly known as the Unapproachable East: Aglarond, Rashemen, and most prominently Thay, home of the evil Red Wizards. The Old Mage promptly assigned the task to me, claiming himself "too busy with—well, you know—to compile reports and such nonsense," and instantly fled to wherever he goes when he wishes to avoid work. Be that as it may, we are all concerned about the disturbing rumors coming from the region, and I immediately began preparing this report.

Since that time, I have engaged the assistance of several of our more prominent and important allies in the Realms and asked them to provide us much information as they could. These reports, combined with the results of my own research into the region, form the basis for the accompanying document.

The nations of Aglarond and Rashemen, being somewhat isolated from the rest of Faerûn, would have little impact on the economy and politics of the Realms save for one like factor: They form the first line of defense—both geographically and magically—against the legions of Thay.

Aglarond's presence creates a barrier between Thay and the Sea of Fallen Stars, preventing the Red Wizards from exercising their will on the Inner Sea nations. Were it not for the shielding of its magical wood and the tireless efforts of its ruler and most prominent citizen, your sister the Simbul, that peaceful land would no doubt be in the hands of the Red Wizards. I had hoped to gather information on Aglarond from the Simbul herself, but she was absent when I attempted to contact her. The ranger Talyssa Strongbow and her friend, the wild elf druidess Aerilya, are responsible for particulars on this land.

Guarding the Realms to the north is Rashemen, the Land of the Berserkers. This land is a frequent target of Thayan (not Thayvian, despite popular usage) invasions, which its warriors and witches meet with indomitable spirit and might. The dwarf warrior Sigurd of Earthfast provided me with details on this ancient and mysterious nation.

Information on Thay was gathered by the gnomish bard Heino, who recently led his troupe of singers, dancers, and acrobats there for what they all relate was a miserable, not to mention dangerous, tour. Undoubtedly one of the most dangerous and evil lands in all Faerûn, Thay has tried time and again to conquer the rest of the Realms. Recent occurrences have alerted the Harpers and others to momentous events brewing in that nation. Once all the pieces have been considered, it is obvious that the Harpers' old enemy, the lich Szass Tam, is fundamentally involved.

Hopefully, the efforts of my informants, coupled with my own modest researches, will provide you and our fellow Harpers with the answers to some of the mysteries surrounding Thay and its neighbors. I can only hope that it is not too late to avert the storm that we all agree is brewing in the Unapproachable East.

Your humble servant,

Lhaeo





# I: Thay



*Do not speak of Thay, I beg you. Do not speak of this place, which I pray to forget, though its horrors sear my memory like white-hot metal.*

*Do my words have any meaning to you, who have never looked upon the corrupt depths of Thay? Have you gazed upon the Runes of Chaos, beheld the thing which sits enthroned upon Thakorsil's Seat, held the Death Moon Orb in your trembling hands, wielded Nyskar's Nightblades, entered the Devouring Portal and walked the Paths of the Doomed, or sat at the left hand of Szass Tam during the Ritual of Twin Burnings?*

*I have done all these things – each day I pray for forgiveness, and each night at sunset I pray for deliverance from the evils that stalk me. I pray, but I fear that no gods will listen.*

*–Nathor, Thayan refugee, three days before his disappearance*

## Overview of Thay

To the common folk of Faerûn, Thay is a land to be spoken of only in whispers. It is a land of magic and evil, the two being so completely intertwined that to say something is “of Thay” is to expect it to be a malevolent magical creation, made only to hurt or kill. The Red Wizards are considered by many to be the epitome of corruption, more dangerous than a flight of dragons and more treacherous than the Zhentarim.

Most of Thay is located atop the heavily settled, lush Thayan Plateau, accessible only at a few well-guarded locations. The nation is otherwise surrounded by high cliff walls known as the First Escarpment, which have proved virtually impregnable to large military forces.

The central volcanic peaks of Thaymount sit atop the inner fortress of the Second Escarpment (another series of cliffs). From the mountains pour the three major rivers of Thay – Eltar, Umber, and Lapendrar.

Most of Thay has been thoroughly tamed, cultivated, and settled by the Red Wizards and their subjects. The bulk of the plateau is covered with slave plantations, villages, and small fortresses known as tax stations. Commerce and travel in Thay centers along two great highways: the north-south High Road, and the east-west artery called the Eastern Way.

But Thay is known more for its inhabitants than its geography. The Red Wizards are a threat to all of Faerûn, held back by the Simbul and Rashemen and their own disorganization. Those who know Thay realize that it is the Red Wizards' own lack of a coherent structure and their refusal to combine forces that keeps them from conquering the rest of Toril.

The nation is divided into 11 political regions known as tharchs. The rulers of the tharchs – the tharchions and tharchionesses – are selected by the zulkirs, the council of eight powerful Red Wizards who truly rule the land. Within a tharch, the tharchion or tharchioness has absolute power only so long as his or her will does not conflict with that of the zulkirs. In Thay, the zulkirs rule supreme.





## History

**W**hen I queried Elminster on the history of this dread nation, he handed me a book and told me the following:

*"With all due humility, I must recommend this book, A History of Thay and an Overview of its Society and Politics, penned by myself. Being known as one of the most humble, modest, and self-deprecating mages in the Realms, I hesitate to engage in excessive self-promotion, but the fact is that other books on the topic, whose names I hesitate to mention out of concern for the reputations of their authors, are full of speculation, rumor, and outright fabrication. Mine alone is the result of solid research and investigation, and provides the most complete and accurate picture of Thay and its people. I say this without a trace of arrogance or overconfidence, but unfortunately, facts are facts."*

*Despite his tendency for over-exaggeration, he is, in fact, correct. Don't tell him I said so.*

— Lhaeo

Modern Thay was founded over four centuries ago by renegade wizards from the empire of Mulhorand. These spellcasters, called the Red Wizards, began as a secret society dedicated to winning independence from the empire and creating a magical realm apart from the god-kings' theocracy. In 922, under the leadership of the Red Wizard (and later zulkir) Ythazz Buvaar, they felt secure enough to raise an army and sack the imperial capital of Delhumide. Mulhorand responded by sending an enormous but ineptly led army to crush the rebellion.

The two forces met in the Battle of Thazalhar. Though grossly outnumbered, the Red Wizards smashed the god-kings' troops with the assistance of an enormously powerful, mysterious extradimensional creature. The god-kings of Mulhorand continued to lay claim to Thay but took little further action against the Red Wizards. Today, Thay is still included as an imperial province on maps published in Mulhorand, but everyone outside the empire considers this nothing short of laughable.

From the start the new nation prospered, driven by its slave economy and the considerable fertility of the land. Despite a costly military defeat in 934 when a loose alliance of Red Wizards attempted to annex Rashemen, Thay's economy thrived. Within less than a century, however, the ranks of Red Wizards had grown too large for them to efficiently rule the land. Important decisions

became bogged down in endless debate, wizard strove against wizard, and civil conflicts raged throughout Thay.

Eventually, the Red Wizards settled on the current political system. While not extremely efficient, it solved most of the wizards' problems and kept civil disorder to a minimum. The wizards would select eight representatives, one for each of the schools of magic. These representatives, called zulkirs, would then choose the rulers of the individual Thayan provinces, or tharchs. Tharchions and tharchionesses were awarded absolute power in their given province but were always beholden to the zulkirs, who could remove them at will.

Some dissident Red Wizards objected to the new system and marshalled their forces to take Thay for themselves. But rather than combining their resources, these individuals all worked at cross purposes; most imagined seizing the sole rulership of Thay for themselves. By 1074, the last of the renegades was defeated. Punishment for the rebels was slow and terrible; in fact, some still exist as decaying undead creatures serving the descendants of the Red Wizards who defeated them.

Despite the establishment of a political system, the conflicts between Red Wizards continued, with the zulkirs acting as agents for the cabals of wizards who elected them and the tharchions in turn acting on behalf of their zulkir patrons. Open conflict came to be regarded as crass; most fights between Red Wizards are carried out by individuals or their representatives, or are played out in the political arena only.

Thay (or at least the Imperialist faction of the Red Wizards) has long dreamed of a vast empire comprising all of eastern Faerûn. Over the centuries, Thay has initiated many invasions into neighboring lands, beginning in 934 with the first invasion of Rashemen. That offensive was smashed by the magical might of the Witches of Rashemen, a group which rivals the Red Wizards in power, if not in number. The Thayans constantly attempted other invasions and elaborate sorcerous schemes, such as alliances with such unstable and evil forces as the drow and the tanar'ri, subversion of foreign governments by assassination and bribery, vast armies of undead or extraplanar creatures, and the creation of natural disasters such as storms and earthquakes. Though many of these schemes have met with initial success, all have collapsed in the end due to





competition and internecine bickering between participating Red Wizards.

Typical of such schemes was the invasion of Aglarond that began in 1201. That attack consisted of a joint plan devised by the newly elected Zulkir of Invocation Narvonna Kren (founder of the Kren dynasty), Zulkir of Illusion Nymor Thrul, and Szass Tam, Zulkir of Necromancy—the commander of vast undead forces and already a lich. The plan involved an elaborate feint attack by Tam’s zombies along the Watchwall while Thrul and Kren’s legions infiltrated the Yuirwood to attack the Aglarondans from behind.

This unlikely alliance had problems from the beginning. Thrul and Tam, as representatives from opposing magical schools, took an instant dislike to each other. Narvonna Kren, still uncertain in her new role as zulkir, attempted to navigate a moderate perilous course between them.

Initially all went well, and the Aglarondan army of the Gray Sisters (see “History” in the Aglarond chapter) were drawn to the Watchwall by the feint while an army of gnolls, orcs, humans, and assorted mercenaries crept undetected into the Yuirwood, magically concealed by Nymor Thrul’s illusions. Their attack overwhelmed the minimal Aglarondan forces in the region and advanced unhindered.

But while Tam’s undead forces kept the Aglarondans along the Watchwall busy, the flanking force, which had depended upon speed and stealth, became bogged down in the Yuirwood. Its ill-disciplined troops were stopping to raid and pillage and were also slowed by the hit-and-run tactics of Aglarondan foresters. Within days, the element of surprise was lost. The Sisters marshalled their forces to the Yuirwood to fight an extended delaying action against the oncoming Thayans.

Though concerted effort and reinforcement of the flanking force might still have won Thay a decisive victory, the three Thayan conspirators instead fell to bickering, with Szass Tam accusing Nymor Thrul’s warriors of cowardice and incompetence and Thrul claiming that Tam was secretly responsible for his legion’s troubles. In a furious exchange, Tam murdered Thrul with a *suffocate* spell (*Tome of Magic*). Thrul’s army immediately fell back in confusion, leaving Narvonna Kren’s forces unsupported in the Yuirwood. By this time, the Gray Sisters were able to send fresh troops into the for-

est. Tam’s undead proved too weak to breach the Watchwall and were entirely defeated, while Kren’s legion was slowly driven back and finally forced to quit the Yuirwood.

Chaos followed as several prominent Red Wizards competed for the Zulkirship of Illusion. Szass Tam withdrew to his manse in disgust. Narvonna Kren, the only one of the three conspirators to come out of the fiasco with her reputation intact, continued to build influence and help bolster her new dynasty.

Schemes of this nature fill Thayan history. Time after time, plans of increasing complexity have been overturned by the chaotic nature of Thayan government and society. Only within the last few decades have Thayan territorial ambitions had any success, and even those triumphs have been limited.

In 1357, Hargrid Tenslayer, tharchion of Lapendrar, combined forces with the zulkirs of Evocation and Conjururation and undertook one of the most ambitious schemes of conquest in Thayan history. Although Kossuth, tyrant of the fire elementals, was worshiped throughout Thay, the triumvirate chose to bypass him in their quest for extraplanar aid and instead approached Fyzzar, a lord of the salamanders, and Sultan Marrake of the efreeti. The Thayans proposed a massive military campaign against the coastal cities of Thasselen, Murbant, Escalant, Taskaunt, Lasdur, and Tilbrand. In return for the elementals’ aid in helping the Thayans rid themselves of troublesome competition from the coast once and for all, the triumvirate agreed to create a permanent *gate* to the Elemental Plane of Fire, setting the entire coast ablaze and giving the salamanders and efreeti a permanent toehold on Faerûn.

Always greedy, and seeking to expand their power in the face of Kossuth’s supremacy, the elementals agreed and the campaign began. The operation met with great success, with all the major targets of the invasion swiftly conquered or destroyed.

But this time, Thayan ambitions fell apart, not due to internal bickering but as a result of conflict with outside allies. With the major objectives achieved and most of the coast in Thayan hands, the salamanders and efreeti demanded that the permanent *gate* be established immediately.

Not surprisingly, the Thayans had never intended to create the *gate* but to simply banish the elementals back





to their home plane after they had served their purpose. Forced into premature action, the zulkirs strove to compel their former allies to leave the Prime Material Plane. They succeeded only in ousting the efreeti, leaving the salamanders to ravage the Priador.

Faced with disaster, the three conspirators turned to their fellow Red Wizards for aid. Szass Tam, now the most powerful zulkir in Thay, recalled elements of his undead legions (which were at the time engaged in an invasion of Rashemen) and sent them to aid the beleaguered triumvirate.

The struggle for the Priador (which came to be called The Salamander War) lasted over a year, pitting the ferocious salamanders against Thayan humans, gnolls, goblins, and Tam's undead forces. The war (in which Hargrid Tenslayer perished) finally ended when the elemental tyrant Kossuth sent his own elementals at the request of the up-and-coming Red Wizard Aznar Thrul to drive out the salamanders. As a result, worship of Kossuth reached an all-time high in Thay, and the nation's political face was changed forever.

The Thayans were forced to withdraw from Lasdur and Taskaunt, and they controlled Tilbrand in name only but maintained dominion over all the other coastal cities. They were reorganized into the new tharch of the Priador, which included the old tharch of Bezantur. After a brief power struggle, Aznar Thrul became tharchion of the Priador after defeating Mari Agneh, the tharchioness of Bezantur.

Thay had little time to lick its wounds from the Salamander War, for an even greater threat rose up in the east—that of the Tuigan Horde under the leadership of the arrogant Yamun Khahan. Although a small scouting force of Tuigans was defeated by Thayan magic, the Tuigan General Batu Min Ho proved a far worthier foe. On Uktar 15, 1359, Batu Min Ho, at the head of 4,000 Tuigan warriors, met the Thayans at the mouth of Shar's Pass, several miles north of Pyarados. After initial Thayan success the Tuigan gained the upper hand, slaughtering thousands of gnolls and almost completely annihilating the vaunted Griffon Legion.

With the fate of Thay at stake, Szass Tam took matters into his own hands and offered the Tuigan a truce. After extensive negotiation, Tam agreed to provide Thayan assistance to a Tuigan invasion of Rashemen, so long as the horde left Thay in peace.

In the resulting Battle of Ashane, the wild Rashemi and their mysterious witches provided Faerûn with its only decisive victory over the Tuigan before the khahan was finally beaten in the Battles of the Golden Way. Thayan assistance allowed the Tuigan to avoid extermination, and the khahan retreated across Ashanath with the aid of the Red Wizards' spells.

The years since the Tuigan War saw ever more intense competition and power struggles among Red Wizards, along with several more Thayan plots for conquest, few of which even left the planning stages. Many outside observers felt that after centuries of stagnation, Thay was finally on the verge of complete collapse.

Events since then have proved such pundits wrong. Thay has not fallen, though there are rumors of a new conflict within its borders which seems different from the usual struggles among the Red Wizards. Weary of the centuries of pointless bickering, the lich Szass Tam has decided to unite the entire nation under his authority. The exact means by which he plans to do this are uncertain, as are his chances for success. Whatever the final outcome, Tam's new scheme is sure to lead to Thay's greatest internal conflict since the establishment of the zulkirs, a conflict that will either tear the nation apart or make it stronger than ever.

## People and Society

In Thay, there are four societies: the Red Wizards, the nobility, the commoners, and the slaves. The slaves far outnumber the others, and the commoners labor nearly as strenuously as the slaves; the nation is controlled absolutely by the Red Wizards, and they share their authority with no one.

### Rashemi

The common people of Thay are descended from the same racial stock as the inhabitants of nearby Rashemen, but they differ greatly in history and culture. They are tough and sturdy, averaging a little over five feet in height, dusky of skin and dark of eye. Men are hirsute, often bearing bushy beards, and are handsome in a somewhat ursine manner. Women tend to be short and muscular, and wear their black hair long, often in elaborate







braids. Both sexes are strong, hard workers and make good warriors.

Rashemi in Thay dress simply, in baggy trousers, tunics, or smocks. Personal decoration is limited among the lower classes, though an occasional earring, bracelet, or ring is not uncommon. Wealthier Thayan Rashemi wear rich robes and cloaks and often shave their heads and bear tattoos in imitation of the ruling Mulan class.

## Mulan

Although common Thayans are the most likely to be encountered by visitors and adventurers, the real power in Thay lies with the Mulan, the descendants of the renegade Mulhorandi who first founded the nation. They are tall, spare, and sallow complected. Fashion dictates that the Mulan remove what little body hair they possess, usually replacing hair with fanciful tattoos—stylized representations of dragons, fiends, legendary monsters, cryptic runes, or abstract designs. Among the Red Wizards, tattoos are often magical as well as decorative. This passion for tattooing has spread throughout Thay, and it is said that the skin artists in the port city of Bezantur are the best in all the Realms.

## Slaves

Many other races inhabit Thay as well, but most are not considered civilized beings by the general populace. These are the slaves, and they come to Thay from many lands. The most common slaves are those from neighboring Rashemen and Aglarond, captured in slaving raids by the forces of various Red Wizards and tharchions. Humans from dozens of other nations may also be found here along with dwarves, halflings, gnomes, orcs, goblins, gnolls, and other nonhumans. Elves are the most prized slaves in Thay, but they are rare, being hard to get in the first place and having a tendency to die rather than submit to captivity. Drow are the rarest slave race (those here are provided by the drow themselves from among defeated noble houses, criminals, and escaped slaves) but seem to take to it better than their elven cousins.

Slaves crouch at the lowest rung of Thayan society. They are considered nothing more than property and are treated as such—bought, sold and traded, mercilessly

punished or thoughtlessly put to death for the smallest infraction. Most agricultural and mining slaves wear only the most minimal clothing: rags, loincloths, or tattered tunics. To distinguish them from their masters, slaves are forbidden to cut their hair, and one can tell the length of their enslavement by this.

The notion of slaves as individual beings with hopes, fears, and feelings is completely alien to the Red Wizards, who see them as nothing more than property or, at best, useful animals. Although slavery itself is an evil institution and the Red Wizards have little or no sympathy for the suffering they create, wanton cruelty or punishment is frowned upon and generally considered to be bad for business. Overly enthusiastic “punishment” reduces the value of the property, and even the Thayans know that a dead slave isn’t nearly as useful as a live one. (Barring transformation into an undead creature, of course, but undead slaves often prove clumsy and unreliable.) Cruelty is considered a tool: Used with restraint and intelligence, it creates hard working, compliant slaves; used foolishly or too often, it makes slaves sullen, resentful, and rebellious. Far better to punish, torture, or kill a single slave as an example to the others (so Thayans believe) than to punish all the slaves equally (which lowers slave morale and inspires thoughts of rebellion or escape).

Though the lot of slaves in Thay is so poor as to be virtually hopeless, there are many roles played by slaves, and some are less onerous than others. The worst job for a slave is, not surprisingly, in the mines, where they are worked every day to exhaustion and fed only so long as they continue to work. Slaves there die by the score each day and are immediately replaced. Escaped slaves, incorrigibles, and troublemakers usually become fodder for a Red Wizard’s experiments, and these can do little but pray for a quick death.

Most Thayan slaves work the slave farms found throughout the nation. Slave farms are found everywhere—grim, cheerless places with vast cramped barracks for slaves and quarters for the guards who oversee them. Although some Thayan nobles are more humane than others, in the main a slave’s life is a terrible one. Driven mercilessly from dawn to dusk and fed only enough for basic survival, individuals sent to Thay’s slave farms usually live only a season or two, eventually succumbing to disease, despair, or the swords or magic of





their captors. Their lot is somewhat better off than in the mines, but not by much. Most farm slaves hope for either escape or promotion to the position of “house slave.”

House slaves run the gamut from simple domestic servants to concubines, cooks, teachers, and even erudite, intellectual companions for Thayan nobles. Whatever their position, household slaves’ lots are far better than their unfortunate counterparts in the mines and on the farms. The threat of shipping an unruly slave “back to the farm” is usually sufficient to restore unquestioned obedience.

Manumission, or freeing, of slaves is forbidden in Thay. Once an individual is sold, he or she is considered a slave for life and nothing short of escape can bring freedom. Particularly beloved or successful slaves are sometimes given their own estates by grateful owners, or are given positions with considerable authority and freedom, but in the eyes of Thayan law they remain slaves. The children of a slave are likewise considered slaves and can never be freed, either. Outside observers have noted that this tradition means that when the Thayans enslave someone, they are enslaving that person’s descendants in perpetuity.

Thay is known to have the most thriving slave markets of any land in Faerûn. The most common slave merchants hail from Mulhorand, Thesk, Chessenta, Calimshan, Amn, and Semphar. Note that most of these lands have poor relations with Thay. This does not stop unscrupulous traders from visiting Thay, however; for safety, most do so with their colors concealed, and they deal with the Thayans in secret.

## The Red Wizards

The most important group in Thay, and the one most often associated with the nation, is the Red Wizards. Originally a dissident faction of Mulhorand magicians (see “History” above), they have evolved into the elite ruling class of one of the most evil and corrupt nations on Toril.

Red Wizards are almost always Mulan. It is forbidden by custom for a Red Wizard to take on an apprentice who is not of Mulan extraction. Many do nonetheless if a Thayan Rashemi is of sufficient magical talent, and the other Red Wizards look the other way. They are the only group in Thay allowed to wear red robes—anyone else

foolish or ignorant enough to wear such robes is rewarded by instant death at the hands of the Red Wizards themselves. Outside of Thay, most wizards avoid wearing their robes to prevent hostile reactions by foreigners who hate and fear them.

It isn’t until an apprentice Red Wizard gains a “minimal” proficiency in magic—“minimal” to the Thayans being 9th level—that he or she is awarded any position of importance in Thayan society or government. It is also at this point that Red Wizards come under scrutiny from their superiors, as they are reaching a dangerous level of magical competency. These always-paranoid superiors are quick to see signs of defiance and traitorous tendencies, indicating that the apprentice is about to assassinate his or her master for greater status. (Assassins may make a splendid—if often extremely short—living in Thay.) Loyalty tests and sudden apprentice deaths are common at these levels. It is for this reason that many mid-level Red Wizards (9th-15th level) are spies, merchants, and agents for their sponsors, constantly striving to prove their loyalty.

The wizards choose eight representatives, or zulkirs, from among their ranks, one for each school of magic. Zulkirs are usually the most powerful member of each school, though occasionally the rank falls to the most politically astute. Competition for the position of zulkir is intense, since zulkirs are the most powerful individuals in Thay.

Once elected to the position, a zulkir serves for life. While this seems a simple rule, the complex nature of Thayan society complicates the situation. If a zulkir serves for life, what happens if he or she becomes undead, as in the case of Necromancy Zulkir Szass Tam? By Thayan law, a zulkir can only be removed if he or she is destroyed utterly, beyond hope of resurrection or existence as a member of the undead. The best-known example was the infamous “Vampire Zulkir” Nyressa Flass, who lived for over 300 years and was finally “removed” from office with the aid of numerous fireball spells and an oaken stake.

Until recently, the Red Wizards were divided into two major factions—the Imperialists and the Researchers. The Imperialists, who have had the most influence on Thayan history, believed in the expansion of Thay’s influence throughout Faerûn, whether through subterfuge and intrigue or through outright conquest. The isola-





tionist Researchers, on the other hand, wished to keep Thay safe within its borders, while perfecting their spells and gaining power in more esoteric areas than temporal realms. The repeated failures of the Imperialists to expand Thayan power has always kept the Researcher faction healthy, if not powerful. Over the centuries, the two groups have largely balanced each other.

This has changed recently through the ambitions of the oldest zulkir, Szass Tam. Weary of the constant divisions in Thayan society, he set plans into motion to sweep away the ancient Imperialist-Researcher conflict and create a new and powerful Thay with himself as ruler. One by one, the zulkirs have moved away from their old allegiances, now declaring themselves for Tam, against him, or neutral.

The identities of the various zulkirs are usually kept secret from the general public, though rumor and high-level “leaks” usually reveal their identity. The current known zulkirs and their political positions are listed below.

**Zulkir of Abjuration.** Lallara Mediocros (CE hf Abj21): Cunning and intelligent, Mediocros shares Szass Tam’s disgust with the Red Wizards’ past squabbles and is his ally in the current conflict. Her chaotic alignment makes her of limited use, for she tends to ignore Tam’s entreaties and be elsewhere when he needs her most.

**Zulkir of Alteration.** Druxus Rhym (NE hm Tra24): Rhym was once a member of the Researchers faction, but has since changed allegiance and now supports Szass Tam. He is skilled, intelligent, and more reliable than Lallara Mediocros.

**Zulkir of Conjuraction/Summoning.** Nevron (NE hm Con24): This relatively new zulkir is an aggressive expansionist and hates Szass Tam. He is presently scheming with zulkirs Lauzoril and Aznar Thrul to invade and finally conquer Rashemen.

**Zulkir of Enchantment/Charm.** Lauzoril (NE hm Enc22): Lauzoril has lead the Imperialist faction for years but favors expansion through treachery and intrigue rather than open conquest. As the head of such an influential faction, he is one of Szass Tam’s most vocal and powerful opponents. He has formed an al-

liance of convenience with Nevron, whom he likes, and Aznar Thrul, whom he detests, to fight Szass Tam’s ambitions.

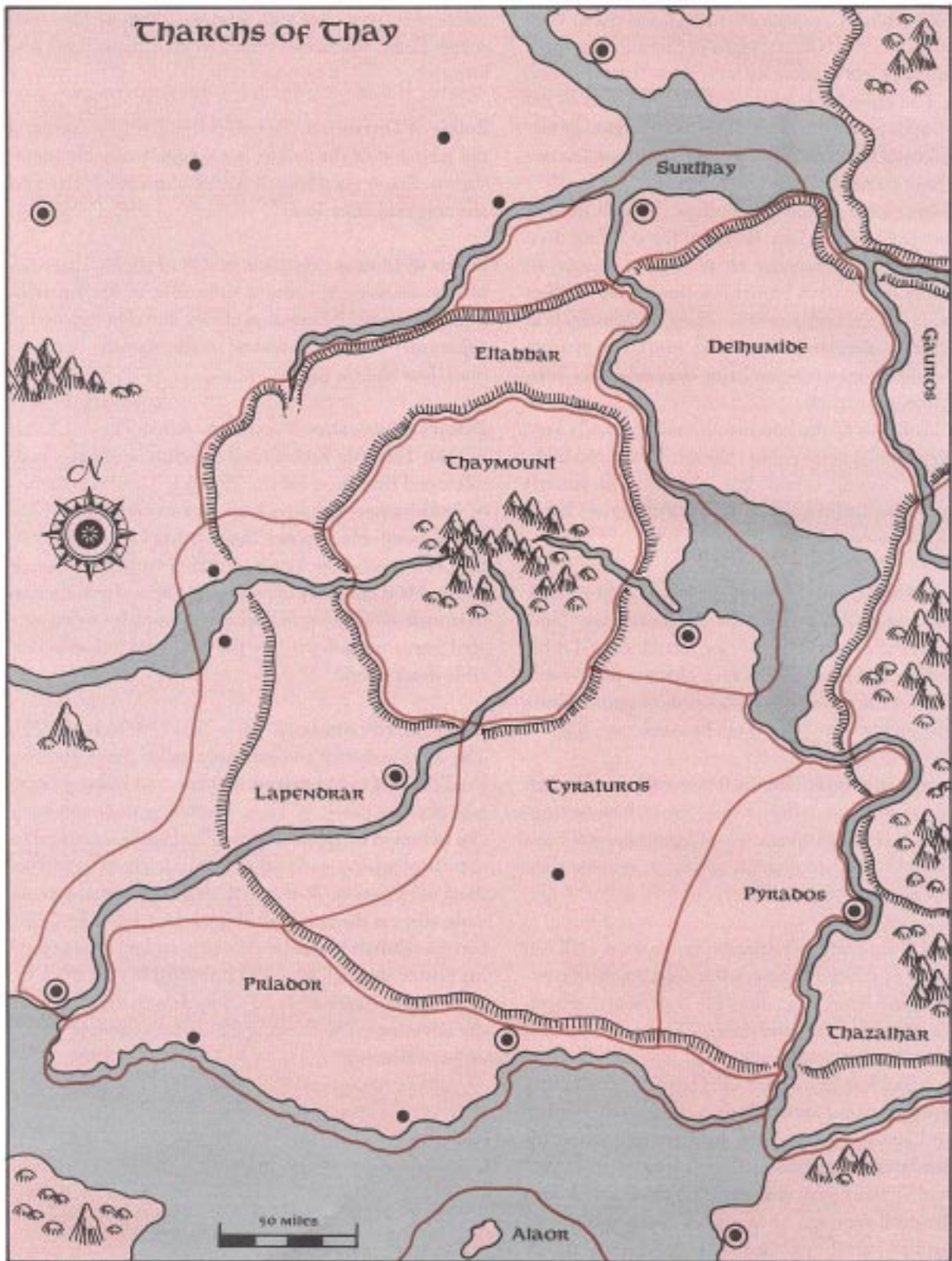
**Zulkir of Divination.** Yaphyll (LE hf Div19): Yaphyll is the youngest of the zulkirs but is highly capable nonetheless. She is good friends with Lallara Mediocros and also supports Szass Tam.

**Zulkir of Illusion.** Mythrell’aa (CE hf Ill20): This mysterious sorceress is content to remain in her tower in Bezantur, served by mindless slaves, and thus far she has apparently remained neutral in the struggle between Szass Tam and his rivals.

**Zulkir of Invocation/Evocation.** Aznar Thrul (CE hm Inv23): The only Red Wizard currently serving as both zulkir and tharchion (of the Priador), Thrul is possessed of a ruthlessness and drive for power second only to Szass Tam himself. He opposes Tam but has kept his opposition relatively low key, preferring to work through pawns. He is currently encouraging Lauzoril and Nevron to launch an invasion of Rashemen, using his newly created gemstone golems (see the MC booklet) as invincible shocktroops.

**Zulkir of Necromancy.** Szass Tam (NE lich Nec29): The most powerful and infamous zulkir, Szass Tam has lived the last two centuries as a lich and today plots to take absolute power in Thay. The old factions are obstacles to him in his quest for power and unification, and he uses them against each other or ruthlessly exterminates them as he sees fit. To this end, he has recruited such diverse allies as the lich Larloch and the tanar’ri Eltab (albeit unwillingly), and he currently struggles to expand his power through foul and powerful magic. (See his entry under *Appendix I: NPC’s by Region*, Card #4, and the adventure *The Runes of Chaos* for complete details on his schemes.)







## Government and Politics

"The first thing you must understand," said my informant, a minor functionary in the Thayan government whom I had plied with considerable quantities of Elminster's Choice (and almost depleting my stock, might I add), "is that there are many levels of power in Thay." He took another long pull on his tankard, moving my wine collection one more swallow toward oblivion. "You might think that the tharchions rule the land. After all, they represent absolute power in the tharchs they rule, and they can choose the autharchs who serve under them. Their word is law and their disapproval is death. Believe me, gnome. It's true. My uncle once crossed a tharchion, and he vanished. His body was delivered to his wife six weeks later and it was . . . Gods, I'd best not describe what had been done to it." He shuddered and drained his cup. "Got some more of that, brother? It's a fine, fine vintage."

I sighed wearily and refilled my informant's tankard.

"But think, small one: Who chooses the tharchions?" He waved his pipe at me like Khelben Blackstaff casting a spell. "I'll tell you who, my little friend. The zulkirs select the tharchions. The zulkirs are those wizards deemed worthy to represent the eight schools of magic, and they hold ultimate power in Thay."

I paused, waiting for him to continue, watching as he swilled my wine and surrounded his head with a cloud of foul smoke. (Thayan pipeweed is vile in the extreme, with an odor reminiscent of burning orc trash.)

"Of course, the zulkirs hold ultimate power," he went on. "But who, you may ask, chooses the zulkirs? Why, the Red Wizards do—the descendants of those rebels and miscreants who broke off from the empire of Mulhorand all these countless centuries ago. They are a self-perpetuating group of spellcasters who choose their own apprentices and secretly control Thay behind the scenes."

Another swig, another deep breath of foul smoke.

"Not that the Red Wizards or the zulkirs ever cooperate. Factions of Red Wizards select zulkirs to further their own aims, and the zulkirs constantly compete with each other. Tharchions are chosen to further the zulkirs' needs, and they constantly fight. Gods, it's fortunate for Faerûn that they fight so often, or else the wizards' gnoll and zombie and goblin and human armies would be marching through Aglarond and Rashemen and Thesk and—fiends and saints, can't you see the Red Wizards taking Mulhorand! Imagine—once slaves, now masters of the ancient empire! Oh, my friend,

*my little gnomish friend . . . All of Faerûn should be grateful that the Red Wizards are not united . . . But . . . perhaps someday they will be . . .*" My informant's eyes glazed and his speech grew disjointed. ". . . A fine . . . wine . . . very fine . . . You are a gracious . . . host . . ."

*With that, my informant collapsed face down on the table, leaving me to ruminate on what he had said.*

—from Heino's report

To outside observers, the term "government" as applied to Thay is a joke. The land is ruled with iron fists by the Red Wizards. The wizards choose the zulkirs from among their own ranks, while the zulkirs choose the tharchions and tharchionesses who rule Thay's tharchs, or provinces. Tharchions choose their own subordinates, known as autharchs, to carry out their will, and the autharchs usually become scapegoats when things go wrong.

Tharchions and tharchionesses may be of any class, including Red Wizards, though this is rare. Wizard tharchions see the position as a route to the greater power of zulkirhood.

The tharchions and tharchionesses are completely beholden to those who placed them in power, making Thay a patchwork of competing political factions, cabals, conspiracies, and secret societies. Given this, it is no wonder that every attempt at expansion by the Thayans has collapsed into internecine bickering, with tharchion fighting tharchion and Red Wizard battling Red Wizard. Many hidden civil wars have wracked Thay throughout its history, though the land remains secure within its borders.

There are presently 11 Thayan tharchs. Each tharch, its character, and ruler are described below. See *Appendix I: NPCs by Region* for further details.

**Tharch of Alaor.** This small but important tharch comprises the small island of Alaor off the Thayan coast, site of Thay's largest naval base. Tharchioness Thessaloni Canos has managed to keep ahold of her office for the last three decades in the face of considerable conflict and rivalry from other Thayan politicians, as well as the death of her brother Mikal, who was a strong supporter.

Facilities here were heavily damaged during the Salamander War and were replaced with more up-to-date and sophisticated installations. See "Armed Forces" below for more information on the Thayan navy.





**Tharch of Delhumide.** Delhumide, a blasted ruin of a city, was once capital of the Thayan province of the Mulhorand empire. Utterly destroyed in the war for Thayan independence, Delhumide has existed as a shattered shell ever since, rumored to be full of lost treasure, magical traps, and magical secrets.

The tharch of Delhumide controls all land east of Lake Thaylambar and south of the River Mulsantir. The previous tharchion, Mikal Canos, occupied himself primarily with exploring and exploiting the ruins, with slave revolts and Thayan politics for diversion. While investigating rumors of a powerful artifact in Delhumide five years ago, Mikal disappeared and has since been presumed dead.

The new tharchion of Delhumide, Invarri Metran, is less interested in treasure hunting. He has given himself over to administration of the region's slave farms and to strengthening the border against occasional Rashemi invaders. A relatively young tharchion from a relatively young family, Invarri realizes the troubles that Thay's divided government has caused and is a supporter of Szass Tam's attempts at unification.

**Tharch of Eltabbar.** This tharch, which encompasses the Thayan capital city and the western shores of Lake Thaylambar, is one of the most politically important in the nation. Its ruler is the exotic woman known only as "The Tharchioness." Dmitra Flass has severed all ties with her original family.

The Tharchioness was for years in an extremely precarious position, ruling the central tharch of Thay while at the same time not offending the legions of Red Wizards and their servitors who lived in the city. Though a young and relatively inexperienced Red Wizard (at the time she was said to be no greater than a 6th-level illusionist), she managed to stay in power by avoiding conflict, leaving major decisions to her autharchs, and maintaining good relations with her sponsor and chief ally, the zulkir Szass Tam.

Since her early days in power, the Tharchioness has managed to consolidate her authority considerably. Now an accomplished illusionist, she manages to keep the Red Wizards of Eltabbar under tighter control and rarely has to deal with challenges to her rule. She is considered quite an exotic beauty despite (or perhaps because of) the fact that she is completely hairless; her head and face are

covered with elaborate tattoos, many of which are said to be magical. She recently married the High Blade of Mulmaster, giving her powerful political pull outside of Thay.

The Tharchioness is still closely allied with Szass Tam, and is a strong supporter of his attempts to unite Thay under his rulership.

**Tharch of Gauros.** Thay and Rashemen have fought over the mineral-rich Gorge of Gauros for many years. Tharchioness Azhir Kren is a warrior with considerable experience fighting the Rashemi. Though her invasion of Rashemen in 1357, backed by Szass Tam's zombies, was eventually driven back, Kren has not stopped plotting to eliminate the Rashemi and their (imagined) schemes to take over the tharch. Her legion is one of the best in Thay and is still backed by Tam's zombies. She naturally supports Tam in the current conflict; the two are united by their hatred of the Rashemi.

**Tharch of Lapendrar.** Comprising the River Lapendrar from Amruthar south, this tharch once encompassed only the east bank of the river. Since the elemental campaign and the Salamander War, the Thayans have managed to hold most of the river's surrounding territory, though many areas are patrolled and garrisoned only sparsely.

Currently under the control of tharchion Hezess Nymar, a priest of Kossuth in the pocket of a number of wealthy Red Wizards, Lapendrar was once considerably more important due to its central role in the invasion of the coastal cities in 1357. After the death of its Thesborn tharchion Hargrid Tenslayer and the formation of the new tharch of the Priador, the Lapendrar declined somewhat in importance. Nymar claims much more territory than he actually controls, including the coastal cities of Taskaunt, Lasdur, Tilbrand, and—much to its citizens' amusement—Laothkund. The Thayans retain a firm grip on the port city of Escalant, which has become an important economic asset.

Somewhat vague and weak willed, Nymar is a supporter of the wizards who oppose Szass Tam. He does little to actively help them, leading some to suggest his replacement.

**Tharch of the Priador.** This newest tharch comprises territories south of the First Escarpment—the entire Pri-





ador, the coastal cities conquered during the elemental campaign of 1357, and the city of Bezanur, which was originally its own tharch.

After the tharch's creation, the tharchioness of Bezanur, Mari Agneh, made it clear that she wanted rulership over the expanded province. Her rival, the cunning and thoroughly wicked Aznar Thrul, squared off with her in a furious wizard's conflict from which he emerged the victor, reducing Agneh to the status of mindless slave. Agneh lives today, a puppet to Thrul's will and kept alive for his amusement, though most believe she is dead.

Aznar Thrul rules the tharch with an iron fist. Its people are his to exploit, enslave, and kill as he desires. Thrul's troops roam the Priador, looting and killing in his name, taking slaves and property as they choose. The people have been terrified into submission and rarely resist, and when they do their defiance is ruthlessly punished. Thus far the Red Wizards have ignored Thrul's excesses since the region continues to prosper, but should income and trade start to fall off other zulkirs may act to remove him.

Thrul is out for himself and no one else. His alliances are carefully chosen to benefit his own position and are abandoned the moment they become ineffective or threaten his plans.

**Tharch of Pyarados.** Though Pyarados is a small tharch, it is important since it controls access to the Sunrise Mountains. The tharch reaps income from the mountains' rich mineral deposits and from the motley crowds of adventurers who use Pyarados as their jumping-off place. The current tharchioness, Nymia Focar, was chosen after the removal of the realm's former ruler, Valerios Theokillos, in the wake of the destruction of Thay's Griffon Legion during the Tuigan invasion. Focar carries on Valerios' policies, charging adventurers small fortunes for the most basic equipment, and raking in huge amounts of gold from taxes on mining operations in the Sunrise Mountains.

As Focar derives considerable personal wealth from the Thayan system as it stands, she opposes Szass Tam but takes little active role in the struggle.





**Tharch of Surthay.** The tharchion of Surthay controls some regions in and around Lake Mulsantir, the Surmarsh, the Long Portage, and the River Thay as far as Lake Thaylambar. Tharchion Homen Odesseiron is a former Red Wizard who maintains strong garrisons against the Rashemi and occasionally leads raids into Rashemen. He also assisted Myrkul's Legion, Szass Tam's army of zombies, in its invasion of Rashemen in 1357, but he feels that Tam did not sufficiently support him and has since turned against his ally. As he leads powerful military forces and has foiled several plots against his life, Odesseiron is an important player in the struggle for control of Thay. His antipathy toward Szass Tam is matched only by his dislike of those who oppose the lich, and he currently remains neutral.

**Tharch of Thaymount.** Until recently, this tharch was primarily a military fortress and reserve area intended to aid in the defense of Thay against foreign invasion. The tharch also contains gold mines which bolster Thay's economy. Its former tharchion, a fighter named Spiros Dehkahks, bitterly opposed Szass Tam.

Dehkahks disappeared over a year ago, to be officially replaced by a young Thayan civil servant named Pyras Autorian. Many believe that Autorian is far too young and inexperienced to run such an important tharch, but he was chosen personally by Szass Tam, and few voice such concerns openly.

Autorian seems to take little real role in the administration of Thaymount, reinforcing the general opinion that he is nothing more than Szass Tam's puppet and that the true ruler of the province is the Zulkir of Necromancy himself.

Thaymount has been a beehive of activity lately. Szass Tam and many of his important allies have met here, and numerous Thayan forces have been dispatched to the Citadel, the ancient fortress at the heart of the region. It is apparent that Szass Tam has chosen Thaymount as his headquarters and base of operations for his bid for power in Thay, but no one knows why. Most assume it is because of Thaymount's strategic central location, but his reasons may be far deeper and more significant.

**Tharch of Thazalhar.** This tharch controls the trade routes between Pyarados and the Mulhorand frontier. Its tharchion is Milsantos Daramos, a fighter of consider-

able experience. Well into his fifties, Daramos rides with his troops and exacts considerable tolls from the caravans and travelers who journey through his tharch. He has decided to ride out the current troubles in Thay and remain neutral, though he secretly opposes Szass Tam.

**Tharch of Tyraturos.** This tharch controls the city of Tyraturos as well as the Eastern Way and the High Road, the most important trade routes in Thay. Tharchion Dimon of Tyraturos is an intelligent and surprisingly reasonable man, who recently admitted to being a (former) priest of Waukeen. He sees the value of a united Thay and supports Szass Tam. He taxes caravans only lightly and keeps the roads well patrolled. Despite his political leanings, he has made few enemies and seems relatively secure in power.

## Economy

Thay is known as a prosperous land with mercantile connections across the continent and beyond. The secret of Thayan wealth, in addition to its rich agricultural base, is the vast store of free labor provided by slaves.

It is ironic that slaves, members of the lowest and most despised Thayan social class, are in reality its most important resource. Without slaves, Thay's economy would quickly collapse, reducing even the most powerful Red Wizards to penury.

The tradition of slavery was inherited from the ancient and corrupt empire of Mulhorand. It was a natural state of affairs for the Red Wizards who founded the nation, and they saw no reason to change it. In fact, the Thayans have surpassed their old masters in terms of the sheer extent of slavery and its role in the Thayan economy.

Slaves are sold in Thay from all across Faerûn. Professional slavers, though hated and despised by all free folk, ply their trade throughout the continent. Many methods are used to gain slaves for the Thayan trade: raids on coastal communities and villages from Nimbral to the Spine of the World; kidnaping likely candidates, often from under the noses of their families and friends; luring innocents with promises of riches, love, or friendship; attacks on legitimate merchant caravans—all these and many more techniques are used to sustain the wicked institution of slavery, and to keep the Thayan economy alive.







Thay's economy is primarily agrarian, with enough different grains and fruits sufficient both to feed the nation's inhabitants and export the excess to foreign lands. Grains include wheat, oats, and barley, while major fruit crops are apples, pears, citron, figs, and oranges. Timber is also harvested by slaves on large tree plantations, where pine, maple, alder, and the unique Thayan blackwood are grown. Blackwood is (as one might suspect) black, sometimes with a dark red grain. Furniture and sculpture made from blackwood are popular outside Thay among collectors and wealthy individuals who choose to ignore the pain and suffering that went into its creation.

Thayan magic keeps the land's weather favorable, even in times of drought in surrounding lands. For this reason, many nearby nations, particularly Thesk and Chessenta, are dependent on Thayan crops to keep their own people fed. In the past, the competition and bickering of the Red Wizards have prevented any concerted effort to use food as a political weapon, but the possible unification of Thay under Szass Tam has once more raised such a possibility.

Artwork created by slave craftsmen and often enchanted by the Red Wizards is popular outside of Thay. Thayan sculpture, utensils, jewelry, and other items are another source of outside income for the Red Wizards; these are crafted of gold, silver, or platinum from Thay's mines and embellished with gems, rare hardwoods, and semiprecious stones such as jade and lapis. Though they are fully capable of producing magical weapons and objects of considerable power, Red Wizards are forbidden to sell any item of military use outside of Thay. Of course, most Red Wizards ignore this rule and sell such objects if the price is right. Such dealings are hazardous, for treacherous Red Wizards often accept a client's gold, then turn the luckless buyer over to the tharchions for horrific punishment, leaving themselves both prosperous and with the appearance of selfless patriotism.

## Armed Forces

Though Thay is nothing short of a military powerhouse, capable of standing off and even defeating the most powerful of Faerûn's nations, the nation's armed forces have rarely, if ever, been used effectively. As might be guessed, this is due to the same old and familiar cause: the chaotic and competitive nature of Thay's government.

Each zulkir and tharchion is allowed to raise his or her own body of troops (usually referred to as legions), limited only by finances and resources. Even "ordinary" Red Wizards are allowed to maintain bodyguards, units that sometimes contain thousands of troops.

Coordinated action by the various Thayan legions is rare save in times of threat to the entire nation. The Tuirgan invasion of 1359-60, for example, forced some degree of cooperation on rival Thayan factions, but even the defense against this dire threat was not without problems and petty squabbles. Though nominally under the command of Valerios Theokillos, tharchion of Pyarados, the numerous units of the Thayan defense force were all overseen by their various sponsors, all of whom felt they had some say in tactics to be used against the nomads. Although Valerios managed to retain command of his army in the face of such rivalry, he was still blamed for the virtual destruction of the proud Griffon Legion. Though the legion's name survived and it was later rebuilt to its original strength, Valerios himself was removed from office in disgrace.

Few generalizations can be made about the Thayan military. Infantry legions range in size from 800 to 2,000, and in type from nearly naked goblin skirmishers to heavily armored and virtually immobile foot knights. Cavalry legions are even more varied, with such diverse units as unarmored archers, lancers, and heavy knights, all mounted on a bewildering variety of animals; these have included horses (naturally the most common), giant cats, centaurs, manticores, leucrotta, griffons, hippogriffs, giant beetles, and even, with little success, dragons. The Thayans' dreaded black unicorn cavalry is the nation's best known cavalry force, consisting of hundreds of evil female fighters mounted on a corrupt strain of unicorn created by the Red Wizards.

The races who serve in the Thayan military are just as bewildering. Among the most popular are goblin slave troops, used as light skirmishers and archers, orcish and half-orcish mercenaries and slaves, and such miscellaneous monstrous creatures as hill giants, ogres, and trolls. The tharchion of Thaymount's best unit, Grummsh's Legion, is composed entirely of orcs and ologs and is considered one of the finest in all of Thay.

Aside from the human forces, the most popular troops are gnolls, a race favored for its ferocity and violence. Gnolls' morale is known to be brittle, however, and they





often rout at crucial moments, forcing more reliable human troops to stabilize the situation. Some leaders make the mistake of training gnolls with normal human weapons—swords, maces, and axes—rather than more traditional gnoll types such as flails, flindbars, and simple teeth and claws. Gnolls trained in this manner are invariably inferior due to their clumsiness with the unfamiliar weapons.

The best known aerial Thayan unit is the Griffon Legion, commanded personally by the tharchion of Pyrados. Numbering over 350 griffons, each with a Red Wizard mount, the legion itself is a potent fighting body capable of defeating forces many times its own size. Though crippled and almost completely wiped out by the Tuigan in 1359, the Griffon Legion has since been rebuilt to full strength and remains one of the most potent military units in Thay.

Given the chaotic and disorganized nature of Thay's military, it is actually magic which provides the Red Wizards with their true martial strength. Circles of Red Wizards and their apprentices serve in every major military engagement, casting powerful spells to smash, drive off, or dishearten foes. Undead creatures raised by Thayan clerics and necromancers such as Cyric's Legion and the Legion of Bone (a skeletal cavalry unit), both under the command of Zulkir Szass Tam, serve on the battlefield and strike terror into the hearts of Thay's enemies.

Several other troop types have been experimented with, yielding varying degrees of success. The infamous Zulkir Maligor, for example, attempted to create a flying army of darkenbeasts to support his gnoll legions. Though Maligor was defeated and his darkenbeast legion eliminated, several other wizards have followed his lead and maintain darkenbeast forces of their own.

The recent creation of creatures known as chosen ones—humanoid slaves converted into tormented creatures by Red Wizards' torture and magic—has led several Thayans to suggest creating an entire army of these monstrosities, which can be unleashed upon surrounding nations with only minimal Thayan leadership. Some cynics have suggested that the chosen ones' occasional tendency to turn on their masters might limit this particular scheme, but so far they have been ignored.

Probably the best recent development from the Thayan military's standpoint is the successful breeding of a new race of orcish warriors, tentatively called the

neo-orog. These creatures combine a fierce loyalty to the Red Wizards with the martial skill and stamina of the orog. The only drawback so far is that breeding of the neo-orog has gone slowly, and only a few units have actually been fielded.

Thay maintains a small but efficient navy based in the land's smallest tharch, Alaor, a small island south of Bezantur. Thayan naval forces are considerably less chaotic than its army, since the navy is under the unquestioned control of the tharch of Alaor. Thayan vessels range from small raiding caravels to large, multi-banked, oared galleys driven by hundreds of slaves. The navy is supplemented by several magical vessels including a vast metallic construct known as the Red Scourge, a terrifying vessel that has never yet served in battle.

Despite the problems inherent in Thay's military, it has managed to keep the land safe from invasion for centuries. Unfortunately, this success has not been matched in Thay's many campaigns of imperial conquest which, though they often meet with initial success, invariably collapse due to the wizards' rivalries.

## Thayan Religion

Religion is secondary to magic in Thay, but most Red Wizards at least pay lip service to a favored deity. The usual evil gods and goddesses are worshiped in the Red Wizards' realm—Beshaba, Loviatar, Malar, Shar, Talona, Umberlee, and the quasi-power Gargauth the Outcast all have devoted followings. Cyric, once supreme among Thayan deities, has declined in power considerably since going mad after reading his own evil book, the *Cyrinr ishad*. He has been supplanted by a number of other gods, most prominently Iyachtu Xvim and Kelemvor (not an evil god, but responsible for the dead, of which there are many in Thay). Small holdout congregations still worship the so-called "dead gods" (Bane, Bhaal, and Leira), and rumors persist of their continued existence.

Kossuth, the lord of fire elementals, is also a popular deity, especially since his direct aid helped Thay to victory during the Salamander War. In addition, the humans of Thay are not reticent about adopting other races' deities, such as Juiblex, Lolth, and Vaprak, into their evil pantheon.

The inhuman servitors of the Red Wizards continue to worship their own gods. Orcs pay homage to Grumsh





One-Eye and the other orcish gods, while gnolls worship Yeenoghu, the powerful tanar'ri lord who is considered the patron of their species.

Many outsiders consider the Red Wizards to be fiend worshipers and believe that they treat tanar'ri, yugoloths, and baatezu as gods. This is not true; most Red Wizards have little time for religion, and even those who do see fiends only as tools or useful, if dangerous, servants and allies. The tanar'ri lord Eltab, for example, was summoned by the ancient Thayans to fight the god-kings of Mulhorand, but in the end he proved too powerful and, after being unable to dismiss him, the Red Wizards imprisoned him beneath Eltabbar.

## The Land

*The main thrust of these geographical facts are notes of use to the Harpers and anyone else unfortunate enough to visit Thay. Heino and his troupe spent a thoroughly miserable season in this unpleasant land, and are responsible for the bulk of what follows.*

— Lhaeo

## The Alaor

The Alaor is an island south of Bezantur, constituting the smallest tharch in Thay. Its size belies its importance. Although it is craggy and rugged, with virtually no arable land, the island houses Thay's main naval base. The Alaor is vital to Thayan interests in the region and maintains extensive shipbuilding and repair facilities, a protected artificial harbor, and a settlement of over 15,000 individuals. Thayan vessels help keep the Sahuagin Sea free of pirates and marauding monsters and thus maintain Thay's trade connections with other lands.

The massive vessel Red Scourge is located here (see *Appendix II: Miscellaneous Locations*), and the entire facility is defended by batteries of massive siege weapons known as Thayan bombard (see "New Enchanted Items" for details).

## The Citadel

Buried atop one of the highest peaks of Thaymount, the Citadel was already here when the Kingdom of Rau-

mathar first claimed the land millennia ago. Its original builders are unknown, but dilapidated wall paintings and bas reliefs at the lower levels of the fortress suggest that they may have been an advanced race of lizard men, pushed out by human expansion. The lizard men of the Surmarsh may be the degenerate descendants of the Citadel's original inhabitants, but this is not known for certain.

The Red Wizards have sent several expeditions into the Citadel, but these have met with mixed success. Some have returned with large amounts of treasure: gold, silver, artworks of nonhuman manufacture, and a number of valuable enchanted items. Most have never returned, lost in the depths of the fortress which other explorers claim are occupied by troglodytes, tren, and similar subterranean species. Our informants also tell of secret reports claiming the presence of drow in the Citadel, and of a locked and magically protected tome describing the horrors of the Citadel's lower levels, including a monster-infested labyrinth called the Paths of the Doomed.

In recent months, it seems that Thaymount—and the Citadel in particular—has been the site of much activity. Reports from Harper agents in Thay indicate that all but the most powerful Red Wizards have been barred from the area, and even then only a select few are permitted into the Citadel's vicinity. This edict is supposedly a direct order from Zulkir Szass Tam, and though some many grumble at the restriction, few choose to defy it.

## The First Escarpment

*The cliffs were visible from many miles away. I sent Phillip the bard and Starlight the sprite ahead to scout the region and they returned with reports of clifftops bristling with small citadels and alive with activity—horsemen scurrying back and forth, and the hulking figures of spear-armed gnolls marching from place to place. We proceeded south beneath the Escarpment in the unpleasant knowledge that we were constantly under the watchful eyes of the Red Wizards or their agents.*

—from Heino's report

This long line of sheer cliffs, ranging from 50 to over 200 feet in height, forms Thay's western border and first line of defense. A natural fortress protecting Thay's fertile





highlands, the First Escarpment provides the land with greater security than the largest army.

This is not to say that the Thayans skimp when it comes to their military defenses. The high cliffs are honeycombed with tunnels, barracks, and fortresses carved from the living rock. Here, garrisons of gnolls and other troops keep watch at all likely invasion points. Small citadels, also manned by gnolls or elite human troops, are liberally sprinkled along the edge of the Escarpment as well. These fortresses serve the double purpose of strengthening Thay's defenses and keeping an eye out for escaped slaves or refugees.

There are only a handful of major routes up the Escarpment and onto the Plateau of Thay beyond. These routes are detailed below and are all well guarded by the Thayan military.

## The High Road and The Eastern Way

*After turning south from Tyraturos, we took the High Road directly to Bezantur. The ever-present Thayan tax stations lie along this major caravan route with increased regularity and we were stopped and shaken down by human and gnoll troops several times. We earned our keep by performing in the various squalid settlements which surrounded the tax stations, though the work was thoroughly unpleasant. Those Thayans who were not slaves were either besotted peasants or, worse, swaggering soldiers who threw drinks, hooted loudly, and insisted on "special private performances" by Darna, our human cultural dancer, and the other women of the troupe. We were fortunately able to extricate ourselves from these situations without incident.*

*We found there is considerable prejudice against both gnomes and dwarves in Thay, as members of our troupe were forced to endure numerous vicious epithets and considerable provocation from those we encountered. The slaves and peasants were the worst—perhaps this is because those at the bottom of a society only find satisfaction in tormenting someone perceived as beneath themselves. Elves are also unpopular, but they are avoided rather than attacked, possibly out of superstitious dread. Oddly enough, there was little prejudice against Grax, our half-orc knife thrower. This is most likely because orcish troops are common in Thay, and common people oppose or interfere with them at their peril.*

*—from Heino's report*

These two main arteries of travel in southern Thay were originally constructed by the god-kings of Mulhorand. Elevated several feet above the ground and covered with sturdy alchemical tar, the roads are carefully maintained by the Red Wizards, who constantly send out teams of slaves to repair and resurface them. Tax stations and their attendant villages lie at regular intervals along the roads, and patrols of humans and gnolls are a constant sight to travelers and merchant caravans.

## Lake Thaylambar

This vast and deep lake is located in central eastern Thay and feeds both the Thay and Thazarim Rivers. Both the ruins of the old imperial capital of Delhumide and the Thayan capital of Eltabbar are located along Thaylambar's shores.

Lake Thaylambar contains rich fishing grounds but also harbors a number of dragon turtles in its icy depths. These creatures are usually blamed for any losses to Thay's fishing fleets, and Thayan nobles sometimes set out on hunting expeditions to find the beasts. So far, the score remains nearly even, with some expeditions returning with slain dragon turtles and others never returning at all.

## The Long Portage

*Master Trevin of the Whiteglyph trading coster provided me with the following information on the Long Portage and its quirks.*

*"We had never taken the Long Portage before, and so were unprepared for what was to greet us as our boats approached the roaring rapids that thundered down the First Escarpment. I saw what I assumed was a group of humans in tattered clothing approaching us with a slow, stumbling gait.*

*"As the figures approached, I realized with horror that they were not humans at all—though they once might have been. Now they were shambling travesties of humanity—mindless zombies clad in tattered rags, with scraps of desiccated, rotting flesh hanging from their bones.*

*"Amid shouts of alarm from my companions, I made ready to loose my sword, only to be stopped by a jolly shout from the shore.*

*"'Ahoy, the Whiteglyphs!' came the cry. 'Don't be alarmed! They're friendly!'*





"Then I saw that a tall, thin man dressed in red robes accompanied the zombies, and that unlike his companions, he was very much alive. Two Thayan warriors, also living, accompanied him. He urged us to beach our boats and introduced himself.

"'Master Kammmos Tam at your service,' he said. 'Greetings in the name of his excellency, the tharchion of Surthay.' He swept a robed arm to encompass the zombies, who were clumsily taking up our trade goods and hauling our boats out of the water. 'These are our assistants.' He grinned merrily. 'Using the undead for menial labor has many advantages, you know. They don't eat much, they never demand wages, and they can't run away. In fact, I rather enjoy their company. Mikos! Come here!' he barked, and a slender zombie who might once have worn wizard's robes detached itself from the group.

'('This is Mikos,' said Kammmos, patting the zombie's rotting pate, to which a few wisps of gray hair still clung. "He was my brother." His expression grew sorrowful. 'That is, until he tried to replace me as master of the Long Portage.' Kammmos was silent for a moment, as if remembering hap-

pier times. Then he returned to his original lighthearted mood. 'But that is all in the past. Say hello to the lady, Mikos.'

"Mikos' empty sockets regarded me for an instant, then the zombie made a gurgling sound which might have been a greeting.

"'See?' Kammmos said, brightly. 'He likes you!'

"I simply stared.

"'Well,' Kammmos continued, 'enough talk. Back to work, brother!'

"I watched in horrified silence as Mikos shambled back to the boats and attempted to lift a crate of pottery by himself. The strain was apparently too much for the zombie, for as he tried to lift, both arms ripped loose at the shoulder, and remained gripping the crate as Mikos obliviously turned and walked up the slope as if he was actually carrying his burden.

"A look of annoyance flashed across Kammmos's face.

"'Damn!' he muttered and, turning to one of his guards, asked, 'Kiros, do I have any other relatives we can use?'

— Lhaeo





As the River Thay flows north toward Lake Mulsantir, it descends the slopes of the First Escarpment. Although most of the Escarpment is quite sheer, the River Thay has carved a relatively gentle descent down the cliffs. It is still far too rough and swift moving for upstream boat travel, and passage downstream is fast and hazardous. Land portage in this area is required for efficient travel.

Over 300 years ago, the Guild of Portagers charged exorbitant rates to haul vessels overland. The Red Wizard Shevas Tam took exception to the rates charged by the guildmaster, killed him and most of his guildsmen, and transformed them into zombies.

Since that time, portage has been carried out by shambling undead under the control of Tam's descendants. Most travelers agree that this is a far preferable system, especially since the Tams' fees are considerably less than those charged by the old guildsmen. Occasionally, the clumsy zombies have been known to damage precious items, carry cargo off into the wilderness, or mindlessly dump boats and their entire contents into the river, but no one has yet dared complain to the Tams for fear of being "recruited" as undead porters themselves.

## The Plateau of Thay

Although Thay's borders stray beyond the line of the First Escarpment in a few places—most notably in the Priador and the lands surrounding Surthay—for the most part the nation occupies the highlands known as the Plateau of Thay.

The Plateau is a vast and fertile region, covered with farmsteads, Red Wizards' demesnes, and the villages that surround Thayan tax stations. Completely cultivated and tamed, the Plateau contains vast plantations, orchards, and tree farms, where slaves tend crops, pick fruit, fell timber, and perform other tasks under the watchful eyes of their overseers. Gnoll and human troops constantly patrol the area, keeping a sharp lookout for escaped slaves and foreign travelers.

About 150,000 free Thayans inhabit the Plateau, living in small villages or overseeing slave farms. Vast barracks house over 1,000,000 slaves and their gnoll guards. These slaves are worked mercilessly, tilling the land, planting, and harvesting Thay's crops. The realm's enormous free (slave) labor pool enables Thay to produce huge amounts of grain and other food crops, which are

exported throughout the eastern realms, bringing further prosperity to the Red Wizards.

Travel on the Plateau is dangerous, since this land comprises the heartland of Thay itself. The small fortresses known as tax stations are located at strategic points throughout the regions; each contains dozens of troops, and most have small villages attached to them. Many Red Wizards maintain towers or palaces throughout the region, and keep tight control of the land around their domains. Trespassers on Red Wizards' estates are dealt with harshly—lucky ones are enslaved, while the less fortunate meet horrific fates in the wizards' dungeons or laboratories.

## The Priador

To the south of the Plateau of Thay, beneath the sheltering ramparts of the First Escarpment and between the Lapendrar and Thazarim Rivers, lie these coastal plains and rolling grasslands.

With the exception of independent small slave farm complexes and the coastal settlements of Bezantur, Thaselen, and Murbant, the Priador remains in a largely wild state. It also harbors a number of preserves where the Red Wizards keep monsters required for research and spell components. There are no restrictions on these creatures, which often venture beyond the boundaries of their preserves. Travelers attacked in the vicinity of these monster preserves are entitled to defend themselves, but Thayan law states that the creatures' owners are not liable for any damage they do or deaths they inflict.

Originally under the nominal control of the tharchion of Lapendrar, the region was given full tharch status after the capture of the coastal cities and the Salamander War of 1357. The old tharch of Bezantur was incorporated into the new region, and that thriving port city now serves as the tharchion's seat. The Priador is under the control of the sadistic tharchion Aznar Thrul.

## The River ELTar

This relatively short river originates in the Thaymount region, then flows swiftly down to Lake Thaylambur. Legend claims that the river was created by the Red Wizards themselves when they summoned a powerful extraplanar being to aid them in their battle for inde-





pendence from Mulhorand. Today, the Eltar provides much of the water to Thay's capital city Eltabbar and helps to create the canals that divide its major districts.

### *The River Gauros*

This river flows from the Sunrise Mountains, through Thay's eastern regions and down the First Escarpment, joining the River Mulsantir in the rocky Gorge of Gauros. The Gauros harbors little animal or plant life and is only minimally navigable. The zulkirs have planned extensive colonization and cultivation of the area surrounding the Gauros, but internal power struggles have kept these plans from being completed.

### *The River Lapendrar*

This second longest river in Thay is also known as the River of Sorrows, in memory of the miners who died in the gold mines near its headwaters and the warriors of Aglarond and Thay who died along its banks during Halacar's invasion of Thay in 1260 DR.

The Lapendrar is also an important avenue of trade and travel in the southern tharchs, flowing down from Thaymount and past the "independent" city of Amruthar, where the Eastern Way crosses its waters at the Feldsparr Bridge. The Lapendrar also forms part of Thay's border with Aglarond and has been the scene of many clashes and confrontations over the centuries.

### *The River Sur*

This river forms part of Thay's northern border with Thesk. Narrow and swift at its origin, a spring located along the top of the First Escarpment, the Sur slows and widens rapidly, becoming wide, shallow, and infested with disease-carrying insects as it flows past the Surmarsh, finally emptying into Lake Mulsantir.

Despite its proximity to Thay, the Red Wizards have little influence over the Sur and its environs, though vessels from Surthay periodically sail here to fish. In this, they exist peacefully alongside the fisherfolk of Tezir-on-the-Marsh, a Theskian settlement on the Sur's north bank. A few small villages huddle along the Sur, occasionally visited by Thayan tax collectors but generally left to their own devices.

### *The River Thay*

Navigable for almost its entire length, the Thay is the major artery of travel and commerce for the northern tharchs. River traffic from Surthay to Eltabbar is heavy, and the Thayans patrol the river heavily, keeping a watch out for unauthorized travelers and occasional raids by skrags or lacedons that apparently originate near the ruins of Delhumide.

### *The River Thazarim*

The clear blue river Thazarim originates in Lake Thaylambar, flows south across the Plain of Thay, then turns abruptly eastward, cutting a deep gorge through the Surague Escarpment before once more flowing southward in a series of magnificent waterfalls from both the Surague and the First Escarpment and finally terminating in the deep waters of the Alamber Sea. While much of the Thazarim is used for travel, the regions near the Escarpments are impassable due to the falls.

During the height of the Mulhorand empire, the Thazarim and its surrounding lands were home to prosperous villages and farmsteads. Devastated in Thay's war for independence, the eastern banks of the Thazarim have yet to recover (see Thazalhar, below), while its western banks contain slave farms and the estates of various Red Wizards.

### *The River UMBER*

The UMBER originates on the slopes of Thaymount and tumbles down the First Escarpment at Nethentir. Though it is not important to Thay's economy, it forms an important part of the defense of Aglarond.

### *The Ruins of Delhumide*

As Eltabbar is the capital of modern Thay, so was the city of Delhumide the imperial seat when Mulhorand ruled the land. Shattered by the powers of the Red Wizards' summoned tanar'ri, Delhumide lies in ruins today. No structures higher than one story remain intact above ground, although extensive, labyrinthine tunnels still exist below.

The ruins are occupied by the forces of the tharchion of Delhumide, whose troops, assistants, scholars, and





low-ranking wizards explore the ruins. Various subterranean races—meazels, derro, jermlaine, kobolds, and possibly beholder-kin—occupy the lower portions of the ruins, inflicting considerable casualties on Thayan explorers and resisting even the most determined attempts to root them out.

## The Second Escarpment

*Setting out from Eltabbar, we made our cautious way along the line of the Second Escarpment. These cliffs, too, were liberally dotted with small fortresses and defensive troops, and the towering mass of Thaymount—grim and brooding, with occasional plumes of ash rising from its peaks—served only to increase the lurking sense of dread we all felt.*

*“What in Oghma’s name could they be doing up there?” Phillip asked quietly as we rode together at the head of our caravan.*

*I scratched my beard and tried to smile in spite of my fear. “That,” I said, “is something I would rather not know.”*

*—from Heino’s report*

Looming above the Plateau of Thay is another ring of cliffs called the Second Escarpment. Similar in appearance to the First Escarpment, these cliffs rise up to a second plateau, then swiftly to the craggy peaks of Thaymount.

Not much is known about the Second Escarpment and its features. The Thayans maintain several garrisons in the same manner as the First Escarpment, and access to the lands surrounding Thaymount is tightly controlled. This may be due to the many secret goings on at Thaymount itself.

The Second Escarpment contains extensive gold mines, worked by slaves and overseen by the tharchion of Thaymount.

## The Surague Escarpment

Yet another line of towering cliffs forms Thay’s eastern borders. Beyond the Surague Escarpment lie the Sunrise Mountains, guardians of the Endless Waste and the far eastern lands beyond. This is a wild and underpopulated region of Thay, and the Red Wizards maintain minimal forces here beyond a handful of small fortresses.

Occasional mining expeditions are sent to the

Surague region to delve for the rich copper and silver deposits said to be found here, but these are rare and have never met with great success, largely due to the wild animals and hostile humanoids which inhabit the area. It is known that several tribes of goblins and kobolds lurk in ravines and tunnel complexes throughout Surague, and rumors tell of evil naga, lamia, chimera, and worse living in the region. One gnoll slave, the sole survivor of a recent expedition, babbled madly about misshapen abominations dwelling in a deep canyon, but such tales are generally dismissed.

## The Surmarsh

This dreary, fever-ridden swamp is claimed by Thay and inhabited by tribes of lizard men, possibly the degenerate descendants of the Citadel’s original builders. Most of these tribes are at least theoretically allied with the Red Wizards and consider service in the Thayan military to be a high honor. Thayan nobles sometimes venture into the swamp on hunting expeditions, hoping to bring home a black dragon, roper, or otyugh—all of which are known to dwell in the Surmarsh—for display as trophies and for use in spell and potion creation. Slithermorphs and the dreaded undead called skuz also inhabit the Surmarsh’s dark reaches.

## Tax Stations

*As we proceeded slowly into the village, the doors of the central fortress opened up and a dozen black-armored humans issued forth. All save their leader had bored, weary expressions, as if they had done this same thing a thousand times and expected to do it a thousand more before they died. Their leader, however, was a fresh-faced young warrior in carefully oiled leather armor bearing the flame insignia of the Red Wizards.*

*“Halt!” he cried, holding up a hand. “Who approaches this Thayan tax station?”*

*I sighed inwardly, realizing that we were in the presence of a fanatic, and a young one at that. A deadly combination, indeed!*

*“Heino’s Woodland Troupe,” I told him. “A band of entertainers, singers, dancers, jugglers, comedians, tragedians, tragic comedians, comedic tragedians, acrobats, and performers of all manner of legerdemain.”*







*Our officious young friend seemed puzzled by all this, and stared at me for some seconds before replying.*

*“Are you carrying any fruits or vegetables?”*

*—from Heino’s report*

Each tax station is a small fortress featuring a tower and defensible keep and containing a garrison of 30-50 gnoll or human fighters. Villages have sprung up around most tax stations, providing such services as smithies, wheelwrights, livery stables, inns, and caravan suppliers. Each tax station is responsible for taking a fee from travelers for the upkeep of the road and maintenance of its garrison. Ambitious young civil servants often volunteer to manage tax stations as a way of gaining recognition from their superiors.

Tax stations are maintained by their region’s tharchion or tharchioness, who sets the tax rate and oversees maintenance of roads and trade routes. The tax rate varies from tharch to tharch but is rarely exorbitant. Woe to the traveler who refuses to pay, however, for the tharchions have little patience with lawbreakers.

See *Appendix II: Miscellaneous Locations* for a full description of a typical Thayan tax station.

## Thaymount

*The direct impetus behind the creation of this report was the magical “dampening field” that settled over Thaymount and the surrounding area approximately eight months ago. This field has completely frustrated divinations of all kinds, preventing the Harpers and their allies from gaining any sort of intelligence through magical means. Aside from the fact that this requires individuals to directly risk their lives in searching out information in Thay, it is most alarming in that it clearly announces to the rest of Faerûn that the Red Wizards are plotting something of import. While that is certainly not a new state of affairs, the magnitude of the field and its impregnability are unquestionably causes for alarm.*

*—Lhaeo*

Rising up in the center of Thay are the rugged volcanic peaks known collectively as Thaymount. Access to Thaymount is tightly controlled by the Red Wizards, who maintain numerous fortresses in and along the edge of the Second Escarpment. Exactly what the wizards do on Thaymount is not known for certain. It is known that

Thaymount contains the ancient fortress complex known as the Citadel and the thriving gold mines that help maintain Thay’s prosperity. There are many disused and abandoned mines here also, which are rumored to lead directly into the Underdark.

The tharchion of Thaymount, one of the most powerful nobles in Thay, has an extensive estate here, built into the slopes of Thaymount itself. This vast fortress and palace contains barracks for Thay’s military reserve—thousands of gnolls, darkenbeasts, and other fell creatures.

None of this explains the deepening paranoia and security which surrounds Thayan operations in the region. Over the past three years, garrison sizes on Thaymount have doubled, and several new fortresses have been constructed. Tharchions and even zulkirs are rumored to have visited Thaymount for major councils, though the subject of these meetings remains unknown. In addition, a number of minor earthquakes and ash clouds rising from the higher peaks of Thaymount suggests that volcanic activity in the area is increasing.

## Thazalhar

The eastern bank of the Thazarim River, once a prosperous farming region, is now considered nothing more than a vast graveyard. Thousands died here in the struggles between Thay and Mulhorand. Today the land is largely uninhabited, though caravans sometimes travel here en route to Durpar and Raurin. Some travelers’ stories tell of numerous undead, the troublesome spirits of slain warriors which haunt the region.

The region is under control of a tharchion and his supporters, but it is not considered an especially choice assignment. A few small pirate settlements dot Thazalhar’s coastline, home to corsairs who prey on seaborne trade. The tharchion of Thazalhar sends his forces on occasional raids against the pirates, but these are invariably gone by the time the Thayans arrive.





## Cities of Thay

**A**lthough the vast majority of Thay's population lives on slave estates scattered throughout the land, the cities are critical to the nation's survival. Crowded and dirty, Thay's cities are bustling centers of trade, industry, and government. Heino and his troupe performed in several major cities, and provided much of the following information.

—Lhaeo

### Amruthar

*Our first major stop in Thay proper was the "independent" city of Amruthar. Given the minimal Thayan presence within Amruthar, the city was far more pleasant than the remainder of the nation, and gave little hint at the indignities we were later to suffer during our tour through Thay.*

—from Heino's report

Theoretically independent of Thay, the thriving trade city of Amruthar is actually controlled by the zulkirs through their puppet, the ruler known as the Hierarch. The Thayans generally leave Amruthar in peace as long as the tribute continues to flow.

Amruthar is surrounded by stout stone walls and boasts a population of over 30,000. Its city guards are professional and efficient but are only lightly armed, serving as a police force rather than a true defensive army; the zulkirs would never allow the city to develop a real army. Beyond the walls lies a vast tent city where merchants sell their wares and migrant workers live. This area is somewhat on the lawless side and rarely visited by Amruthar's authorities.

The atmosphere here is far less oppressive than that in the rest of Thay. Wide streets are lined with many shops and inns, and the central marketplace is alive with colorful pavilions and booths. Several parks are maintained by the Hierarch at considerable expense for the enjoyment of the populace.

Amruthar was once home to Zulkir Maligor, a major rival of Szass Tam who sought supreme power in Thay. Since Maligor's defeat at the hands of Tam, (with the unwilling cooperation of several Harper agents), no Red Wizard has lived in Amruthar, although they still make extended visits to the city.

The occasional presence of Thayan wizards, nobles, or gnoll soldiers adds an uneasy edge to all this beauty and reminds both visitors and the city's inhabitants that Amruthar remains under the thumb of the Red Wizards. In reality, the broad avenues, bustling shops, and colorful pavilions are nothing more than a facade, one which the residents know the Red Wizards can crush any time they choose.

The Hierarch and his nobles are all lost in their world of luxury and decadent living, doling out much of the city's considerable treasury on public works, festivals, and other activities to keep the populace happy. The Hierarch's palace, once a stem military citadel, has been transformed into a fanciful fairy-castle with many slim towers, buttresses, slender bridges, and attached buildings. Here the nobles engage in endless celebrations and feasts, purposefully ignoring the wicked land to which they are beholden.

The rest of the city is not as enchanted with the Thayan shadow. Outside the palace, three major factions vie for influence. The largest of these, the Realists, wish to maintain the status quo: keeping the zulkirs happy while maintaining the city's ostensibly free status. Amruthar may be a puppet state, the Realists claim, but at least the Thayans allow the city's inhabitants a relative degree of independence. The Thayans are aware of the Realists' existence and leave them alone, since their stated goal is consistent with the zulkirs' aims in the region.

The next largest faction, the Independents, favors severing all ties with Thay. Most Independents realize that this is a long-term goal and that an immediate break with Thay would lead to war and the inevitable destruction of the city. The Independents therefore favor a slow buildup of the city's power, coupled with covert contacts outside of Thay to secure military or magical help if necessary.

The smallest faction, the Aglarondans, favor union with the nation of Aglarond and crave the protection of the Simbul. Due to Aglarond's geographical distance and the fact that the small nation lacks the military force to hold the city, most consider the Aglarondans' goals to be hopelessly unrealistic.

Not surprisingly, membership in or sympathy with either the Aglarondan or Independent faction is considered a capital crime by the Thayans. Prominent sympa-





thizers tend to disappear, which is taken as proof that the city exists only at the Red Wizards' indulgence.

## Bezantur

*Eltabbar may be the capital of Thay, but Bezantur is the nation's heart, where trade of every sort passes beneath the stern gaze of the Red Wizards and the city's myriad temples.*

*Though Bezantur is nearly as large and prosperous as Waterdeep, it has none of that great city's joy and beauty. Resting like a suppurating sore on along Thay's southern coastline, Bezantur is a dark, brooding walled city where assassins walk unhindered, the word of the Red Wizards is unquestioned law, and every imaginable vice (as well as some unimaginable ones) may be instantly satisfied.*

*At our approach, the walls of Bezantur rose before us, black and stern. Slumlands clustered around the walls and spread beyond them; the stench of unwashed humans and humanoids combines with the odors of domestic animals, burning wood and trash, and open sewers to create an indescribable olfactory horror.*

*Beyond the city lies the Sahuagin Sea, deep and blue. Docks, warehouses, and port facilities also spread beyond the city walls, and ships of many nations make port here, though few have the courage to fly their nation's colors and admit that they trade with the Red Wizards.*

*We made our way through the slums by way of the High Road, which in the city is frequented by many caravans and kept relatively safe by Thayan patrols. Once at the gates, human and half-orc troops gave our wagons a cursory examination and admitted us. So it was that we came to Bezantur, blight of the Sahuagin Sea, City of a Thousand Temples, Citadel of Thieves, and home of one of the most evil of Thayan tharchions, Aznar Thrul, ruler of the Priador.*

*—from Heino's report*

Bezantur began its long life as Kensten, a Raumathar port city. The Red Wizards arrived in the 900s and the city was quickly brought to heel, renamed, and given its own tharch. In the wake of the conquest of the coastal cities and the Salamander War, Bezantur was reorganized as provincial capital of the new tharch of the Priador. Aznar Thrul, an ambitious young Red Wizard, and Mari Agneh, tharchioness of Bezantur, were the leading candidates for rulership of the new tharch. When Agneh disappeared under mysterious circumstances, the

position went to Thrul, who has ruled with an iron hand ever since.

With a population of over 100,000, Bezantur is Thay's largest city, vital to the nation's prosperity and ultimate survival. During her tenure, the whimsical Mari Agneh eliminated all taxes in Bezantur, contenting herself with confiscating small portions of every cargo which entered her city. Under Aznar Thrul this policy has continued, making Bezantur a thriving port city where anything and everything is available for purchase.

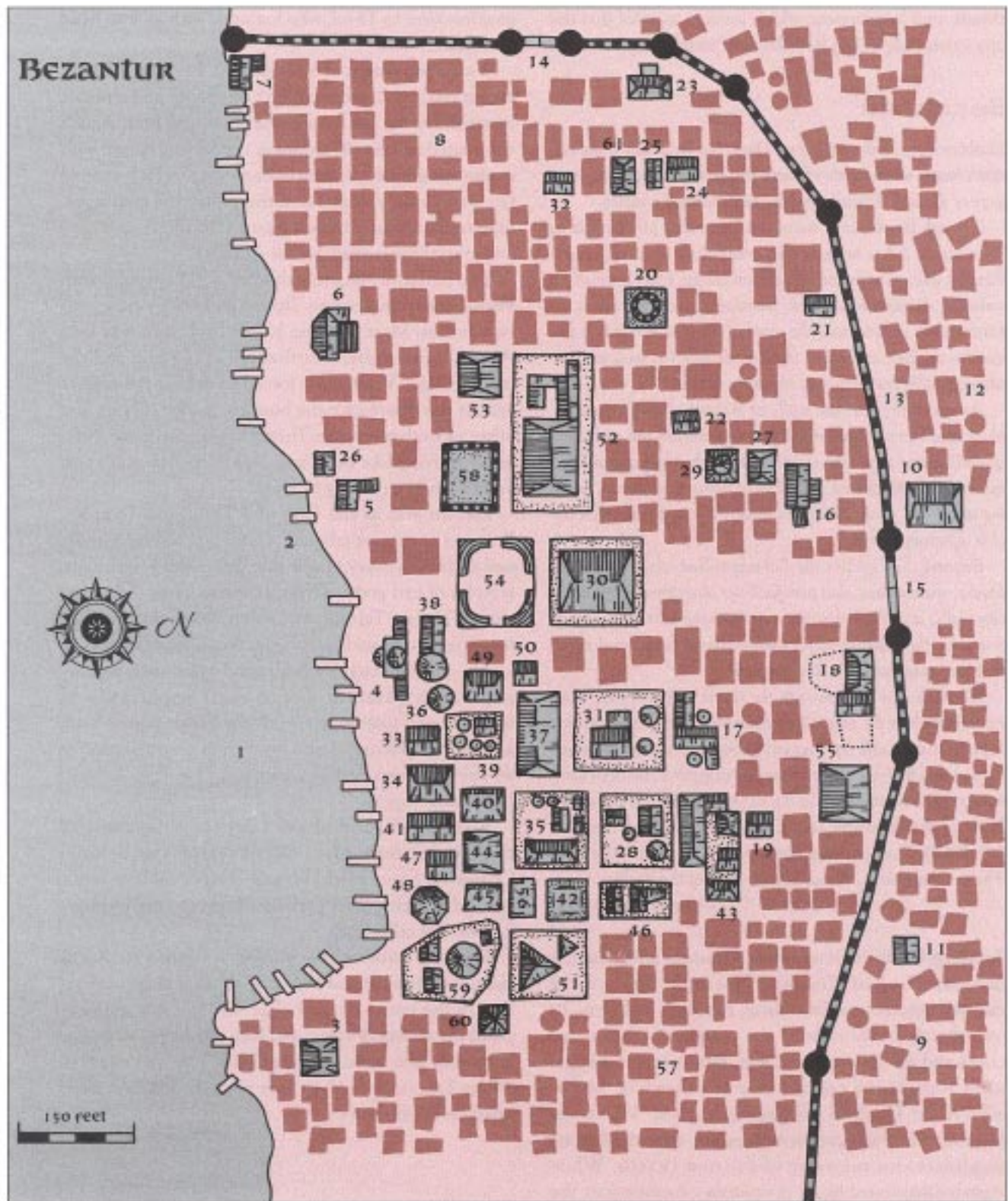
The powerful Bezantur thieves' guild operates with virtual impunity, keeping Thayan authorities away with rich bribes. Most of those bribes find their way into Aznar Thrul's coffers, further enriching him and the land of Thay. Visitors are forced to defend themselves against the thieves, for the humans, gnolls, goblins, and other races that serve in Thrul's Legion are more interested in living like kings and exploiting Bezantur's citizenry than in enforcing its laws.

Known also as the City of a Thousand Temples, Bezantur is a major religious center containing temples and shrines to every imaginable deity. Not surprisingly, temples of evil gods—Cyrice, Loviatar, Shar, Talos, Beshaba, Malar, Talona, and even dead, shunned, or forgotten gods such as Bhaal, Bane, Gargauth, and Leira—predominate. Umberlee and Mask are especially popular in Bezantur due to their importance to mariners and thieves, respectively. Lesser powers such as Hoar and Moander also have their own temples, as do the inhuman deities Grumsh One-Eye, Juiblex, Lolth, and Vaprak.

Worship of good-aligned deities is discouraged though not forbidden. Small temples of Selûne, Chauntea, Sune, Mielikki, and Tempus exist at intervals, with their priests periodically driven out by angry followers of other gods.

The only deities whose worship is banned are Azuth (patron of wizards) and Mystra, goddess of magic and patron of the hated Harpers. The Red Wizards jealously guard the secrets of magic and hate any being, mortal or immortal, who seeks to spread knowledge of sorcery to others. Despite this, Mystra's worshipers maintain a few small, secret enclaves.







## Map Key

The following entries describe in detail several prominent features in the city of Bezantur. As the City of a Thousand Temples, Bezantur holds an inordinately large number of temples, shrines, and religious structures. The entries below only cover a few of the many temples in Bezantur; DMs should be aware that many others exist, and the more popular deities have several temples. Some temples are identified by location only, leaving details of their internal arrangement and personnel up to the DM.

### Aznar Thrul's Legion

The tharchion of the Priador, the evil Aznar Thrul, rules in Bezantur, and his troops come and go as they please. Most businesses must pay bribes to keep Thrul's Legion at bay; poor citizens have no such recourse. The following statistics cover typical members of Thrul's Legion, as they are likely to be encountered by adventurers in Bezantur.

**Human Warriors (NE hm and hf F1):** AC 4 (chain mail and shield); MV 12; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NE; XI? 15 each.

**Human Commander (LE hm or hf F6):** AC 2 (plate armor); MV 12; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword); SZ M; ML 14; Int Average; AL LE; XP 270.

**Gnolls:** AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SZ; ML 11; Int Low; AL CE; XP 35 each.

**Orcs:** AC 6; MV 9; HD 1; hp 6; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL LE; XP 15 each.

### 1. Alamber (Sahuagin) Sea

The gleaming blue depths of the Alamber lie just beyond Bezantur and hide the deadly underwater kingdoms of the sahuagin, ixitxachitl, locathah, and giant kraken. Merchant convoys leaving Bezantur are always heavily guarded to ward off attacks by the creatures that cruise beneath the Alamber's surface.

Sahuagin sometimes raid inland, and patrol boats keep a constant watch for attacks on the docks.

### 2. Docks

Extensive port facilities extend all along Bezantur's waterfront. Those nearest the walled portion of the city are the best maintained and are frequented by the wealthiest legitimate vessels. A prosperous and busy port due to its unique taxing system, Bezantur's harbor is always choked with ships—loading, unloading, preparing for departure, or standing at anchor awaiting a berth.

Beyond the city, the docks and piers deteriorate, often reduced to stumpy posts poking out of the water's surface, barely adequate even for minimal moorage. Other piers are badly rotted, and cargo is unloaded on them only at the owner's risk. Despite this, even the more run-down docks are always busy, though only less-scrupulous individuals such as smugglers are more likely to use such areas.

The thieves' guild and troops loyal to Aznar Thrul jointly control the dock regions. The run-down regions are more often frequented by guild representatives, who inspect cargo, accept bribes, or confiscate goods as they choose. "Official" Thayan troops differ from the guild only in that they wear Thrul's uniforms. Thrul's troops are more likely to be encountered in the well-maintained sections of the docks. Either way, most merchants agree that the cargo confiscated by guild or Thayan "inspectors" is far less than is taken in taxes by other nations, and they continue to flock to Bezantur.

Even the "good" parts of the docks are dangerous places. Constantly present are smugglers, thieves, drunken sailors, minions of the Red Wizards, and unscrupulous captains' agents on the lookout for lone travelers to seize and impress into service on board ship. Sharks, giant eels, and octopi inhabit the waters beneath the docks, waiting for the odd accident victim or dead body occasionally flung into the water. Small parties of sahuagin also sometimes slip ashore under cover of darkness to raid the docks for supplies and slaves. Worst of all, the sea near the docks occasionally disgorges legions of weed-draped skeletons or lacedons, the twisted results of experiments by the Red Wizards.

Smuggled goods may be purchased in the dock area directly off of the ships without the troublesome intervention of middlemen. Thayan troops are bribed to ignore such activities but sometimes raid smugglers' vessels nonetheless.





### 3. Naval Base

Near the main dock area and sharing some of its amenities is this restricted naval facility where Thayan vessels may be repaired and supplied. The main Thayan base at Alaor is only a half-day's sail from Bezantur, making this base of only secondary importance.

### 4. Temple of Umberlee

This grim building, crafted of blue-veined green marble, is one of the largest and most extensive temples of Umberlee in Faerûn. High priestess Alyssa (CE hf P12) oversees a staff of over 100 lesser priests, priestesses (P3-P5), and acolytes (P1-P2), all working for the greater glory of the wicked sea goddess.

Umberlee is usually appeased with gifts of gold and gems thrown from ships, but her representatives in Bezantur consider their means considerably more efficient. Hired thugs of various races, recruited from waterfront dives, are sent to separate ship captains from their valuables, a portion of which is then immediately thrown into the water as an offering, a second portion which goes into the thugs' pockets, and a third part which is carried back to the temple to enrich Alyssa and her followers.

So far, Umberlee has raised no objection to this practice, and the temple prospers. High priestess Alyssa's lavish parties, held every tendays, are attended by the elite of Bezantur society, including Aznar Thrul and his various sycophants.

Numerous fortune seekers have braved the waters beneath the Bezantur docks, seeking out the treasure thrown there by the temple's employees. Those who survived the ravages of sharks, sahuagin, and other malignant marine creatures have returned with considerable amounts of loot, but rumor has it that none lived long enough to enjoy their wealth. Those plundering Umberlee's treasure are said to be invariably found drowned, their lungs filled with water and looks of horror frozen on their faces regardless of their location, even if they fled deep into the Anauroch desert. Umberlee's generosity toward Alyssa and her priests does not extend to thieves.

### 5. The Rusty Anchor

This popular sailors' inn features its own barber, an old sailor of uncertain nationality named Thethro, and a bald, muscular tattooist named Xamik who himself

sports a colorful selection of skin art. Xamik also sells earrings and noserings and even does the piercing himself, though it usually takes vast quantities of ale and several other sailors to hold his customer down while he does so.

The Anchor is dark, smokey, and rather dangerous (fights break out nearly hourly), but it is still a relatively happy place, with friendly service and good food and drink. Innkeeper Crow (CN hm T5) (a nickname; he claims that giving away his real name will bring bad luck) is friends with several high-ranking Red Wizards, and they keep the authorities away from his place as much as possible in return for bribes and whatever sailors' talk Crow overhears.

### 6. The Sea Wolf Inn

Another rough waterfront establishment, the Sea Wolf is owned and operated by innkeeper Wola Fahn (CE hf T3), who is rumored to have bought the place after murdering her husband, a wealthy Amnian merchant. She is friendly to customers and guests, but her sudden flashes of temper make many wonder if she really did once commit murder. Though pleasant to outsiders, Wola is also incredibly cruel to her employees, not hesitating to throw them into the street if they do not jump to obey her every command.

Despite her shortcomings, Wola serves decent food, though her ale is said to be somewhat watered down. Gnolls and other Thayan troops sometimes harass the Sea Wolf's patrons, but rarely cause any serious trouble.

Like most other Bezantur inns, the Sea Wolf has a resident tattooist, a woman named Vedula (N hf 0) who is rumored to be an escaped slave, though no one has ever proven this. She has many influential clients, including some Red Wizards, who pay her well for her services. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that Vedula's close association with the wizards is what has kept her safe from the slave-catchers all these years. Interestingly enough, Vedula is one of few employees whom Wola generally leaves alone.

### 7. The Slain Sahuagin

The Sahuagin redefines the word "dive"—literally, in fact, for it lies only a few feet above sea level and is periodically flooded by exceptionally high tides. During these times the Sahuagin is evacuated for a few hours, and pa-





trons eventually return to dry out whatever belongings have escaped the attention of the thieves' guild.

When not flooded, the Slain Sahuagin has the reputation of being the dirtiest and most disreputable spot on Bezantur, which is saying a lot. Innkeeper Nyrin "Filthy" Zaxim (CN hm F2) doubles as barber, tattooist, and nose- and ear-piercer and proudly proclaims that he can perform all these services for half of that charged by other inns. Of course, this does not mean that he does any of these things well, and the streets and alleys of Bezantur harbor numerous poor souls who prefer to lurk in the shadows rather than allow anyone to see the results of Zaxim's haircuts or tattoo art.

Food is cheap and horrid, often dredged from the docks beneath the inn or salvaged from fish and other flotsam that remain in the inn after flooding. Some claim that various victims of the Red Wizards have ended up in Zaxim's stewpot to be fed to unwitting guests, but most hope these are only rumors.

### 8. Warehouse District

Buildings of all sizes fill this dark, labyrinthine district. Some are owned and actively used by the various trading priakos and costers, others are available for rent, while still others lie empty and in disrepair, often used for shelter by vagrants, criminals, and the various dark creatures which scuttle about Bezantur's side streets.

The Warehouse District is a popular place for clandestine meetings, exchange of stolen goods, disposal of dead bodies, transfer of contraband, and so on. Aznar Thrul's troops patrol the region only sporadically and are easily bribed, thus maintaining the district's sinister reputation.

### 9. Market Town

This vast eyesore, which spreads for many square miles beyond the city walls, is actually a massive slum where trade in all forms of goods, contraband, slaves, and services goes on with little oversight from Aznar Thrul's legion.

Market Town is actually ruled by several rival crime bosses, all of whom pay tribute to the Bezantur thieves' guild. The guild, in turn, allows the rival bosses to battle each other as they choose, so long as their conflict does not interfere with trade or guild thieves' normal operations.

The High Road from Tyraturos passes directly through Market Town, but Aznar Thrul's Legion keeps the road clear and protects traffic from attack.

Most merchants end up visiting Market Town sooner or later. Safe passage from the various bosses who control the slums is required and usually runs about 10 gp per person and 15 gp per wagon. Once in the trade settlement, virtually anything can be bought or sold, and Aznar's troops only bother to intervene if the proper bribes have not been paid.

The major bosses of Market Town are Kevlin the Fat (CE hm T8), a corpulent but highly intelligent gangster whose thugs ruthlessly enforce his will and whose financial managers keep the Red Wizards well paid; Phormin the Sly (LE hm T10), who favors guile and stealth in his dealings, and who maintains a corps of well-trained spies and assassins to keep him well supplied with blackmail information and to dispose of the occasional troublemaker; Halymira the Red (NE hf F7), a strapping woman said to be capable of lifting Kevlin with one hand, whose fighters and thieves are considered among the best in the market town; and Diarka, a mysterious gang boss whose exact identity (and even his or her gender) remains unknown, but whose minions are every bit as ruthless and efficient as those of the other bosses.

### 10. Market Town Barracks

About 200 gnolls of Aznar Thrul's Legion are posted here, with the responsibility of maintaining the safety of any caravans traveling through Market Town. Their human commanders have little love for their troops and drive them mercilessly. These human officers sometimes meet with "accidents" when they grow too unpopular.

### 11. Nyrak's Second-Hand Merchandise

Nyrak (CE hm T4) is actually one of the leading fences of Market Town, dealing in stolen and "lost" merchandise. He drives a hard bargain, buying goods for a fraction of their worth and selling them at a considerable profit, sometimes to the individuals who "lost" them in the first place. Nyrak's shop is jammed with junk accumulated over two decades in business and is guarded by his wife, Druula, who was changed into a troll in a tragic magical mishap 12 years ago and has remained so despite many attempts to dispel or lift the curse.





### 12. Mufrim's Place

This establishment, typical of "businesses" in Market Town, combines several functions. It is an inn, tavern, trading post, and general store, with the usual business in stolen goods on the side. The original Mufrim died several years ago; the current proprietor is his nephew Tybolt (N hm T4), who kept the name. He is a thin, dark man who nonetheless retains a bright sense of humor and is generally considered quite pleasant to be around.

### 13. City Walls

These walls date back to the original city's founding. They are over 40 feet tall, equipped with low towers, and are continuously patrolled by gnomes, human, and humanoid troops. The Thayans keep these walls in good condition, for the nation would be in serious straits if Bezantur ever fell to siege.

### 14. West Gate

Caravans traveling to and from Thasselen and the coastal cities use these gates, which are kept open at most times. No toll is charged for their use, but Aznar Thrul's troops periodically search wagons and carry off choice items. This is simply considered another cost of doing business in Bezantur.

### 15. North Gate

These massive, iron-bound, magically strengthened portals are the major entrance and exit from the city. Busy at virtually every hour of the day and night, the North Gate swarms with caravans, wagons, dray animals of every species, merchants, travelers, and the servants, both living and unliving, of the Red Wizards themselves. As with the West Gate, those traveling by this route often find themselves inspected by Thayan troops, who appropriate any goods that take their fancy.

### 16. Myulon's Inn

Located conveniently close to the North Gate, Myulon's establishment is popular with foreigners, since he pays considerable bribes to keep the authorities away. Aznar Thrul's troops occasionally "check up" on the place but rarely cause any trouble, as Myulon (NE hm T5) keeps their palms liberally greased.

Accommodations here are spare but clean. Rooms go for 1 sp per night, with fruit and bread included for

breakfast. Dinner is served promptly at sundown and usually consists of bowls of stew for 2 cp each. Myulon stables horses here for an additional copper piece per night.

### 17. Temple of Sharess

Although this relatively new goddess is of chaotic good alignment, her hedonistic philosophy and her supposed identification with Shar make her a perfect deity for decadent Bezantur.

Sharess' temple is a large dome rising from an octagonal base, surrounded by several hexagonal shrines. Daily sermons by high priest Haldran (CG hm C6) and his acolytes emphasize the importance of worldly pleasure and excess and the enjoyment of one's time in the mortal realm. Weekly "High Worship" ceremonies resemble nothing more than elaborate debauches at which vast quantities of food and intoxicants are consumed and many fleshly pleasures are indulged. Not surprisingly, the temple of Sharess is one of the fastest growing in Bezantur, since the excesses here exist for their own sake and are nowhere near as painful as those dedicated to Loviatar.

### 18. Caravanseraï

Caravans arriving in and departing from Bezantur may purchase supplies and equipment, stable their animals, and repair vehicles here. Mistress Nydra (CN hf 0) also provides dormitory-style accommodations to caravan personnel for 1 sp per night per person. Groups of 12 pay only 10 sp per night.

### 19. Temple of Gargauth

This horrific god, whose wickedness proved intolerable even to other evil gods, wanders the Prime Material Plane doing mischief and plotting vengeance on those who betrayed him.

Most residents of Faerûn choose not to worship Gargauth, since he is infamous for feeding on his own worshipers. This does not deter the citizens of depraved Thay, who follow the fallen god with unparalleled fervor.

High Priest Marr (CE hm C7) dresses in jet-black robes and wears a hideous, homed skull-mask when he leads his followers in frightening midnight ceremonies. Gargauth's worshipers wear the god's symbol (a broken







horn) on their chests with pride and are treated with superstitious respect by other citizens of Bezantur.

Marr claims that Gargauth has visited his temple here on several occasions, causing great damage and devouring or otherwise slaying several ecstatic worshipers. The truth of Marr's assertions is not known, and some suggest that he is simply covering up his own ineptitude and the accidental deaths of some of his followers.

## 20. Mythrell'aa's Tower

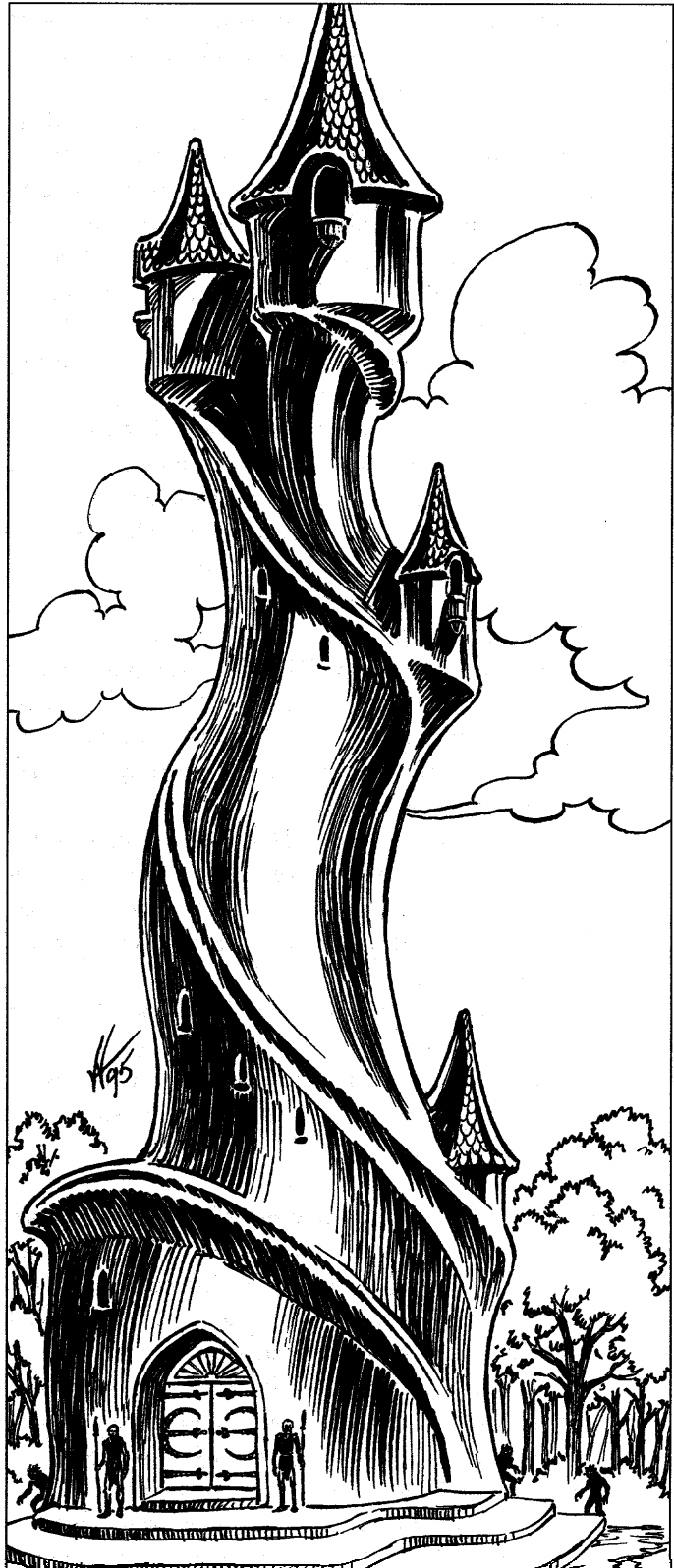
This slender, gnarled tower houses one of the most powerful and mysterious of the Red Wizards, Zulkir Mythrell'aa (see *Appendix I: NPCs by Region*). She rarely shows herself outside her tower, content to send legions of blank-faced, shambling slaves about the city on errands. These individuals are not zombies; observers report that they are alive but seem to have no will of their own. Mythrell'aa's shopping list is extensive, including many exotic spell components, the parts of rare animals, scarce metals and substances, and even slaves of specific races, ages, and appearances. Those who refuse service to the wizardess' representatives invariably suffer horrific consequences—dying of strange diseases, death in the night at the hands of otherworldly creatures, or sudden disappearance, sometimes later appearing as Mythrell'aa's mindless slaves.

The tower itself is crafted of a glossy black substance that seems resistant to all forms of force, including magical. Few have gotten close enough to test this in any event, for Mythrell'aa's residence is surrounded by magical traps and lurking servitors, including invisible stalkers, shadows, and similar inhuman creatures.

What lies inside the tower is anyone's guess. Rumors vary wildly, claiming that Mythrell'aa's home contains nothing but ancient, dusty books and moldering corpses, or it is a silken pleasure palace where the sorceress' every whim is instantly satisfied. All rumors agree that Mythrell'aa is unbelievably wealthy but that stealing even a portion of that wealth is not worth the risk.

## 21. Slave Merchant

One of the most hateful things about the evil land of Thay is its dependence upon slavery to drive its economy. Along with the vile institution of slavery comes an equally vile class of slave merchants who make their fortunes trading the lives of other beings.





Thyvo Vrass (LE hm F8) is one such merchant, one of many in Bezantur. He has few scruples concerning his “merchandise,” whether they are humanoids, humans, or demihumans. A mercilessly cruel man, he values profit above all. Nonetheless, he is known as a “fair” slave trader and never cheats his clients. He is quite honest when he describes slaves to buyers, explaining their strong and weak points and agreeing on a fair price. Thyvo has prospered in Bezantur and is well known among the Red Wizards.

Thyvo’s estate consists of a large mansion for him and his family (he has three daughters—aged four, fourteen, and nineteen—all of whom he indulges shamelessly), a slave barracks and exercise yard, and a dormitory for his slave trainers—individuals of various races hired to teach slaves “the value of obedience.” Thyvo’s chief overseer is a minotaur named Ahurrong.

## 22. Charm Merchant

Havureela the Mystical (N hf M4) is a purveyor of charms and tokens said to bring good luck in all business and social settings. She is most popular with the superstitious thieves of Bezantur, who will wear anything they think will make their jobs easier.

Magical inspection proves Havureela’s charms worthless, but they nevertheless have a great reputation owing to the fact that thieves who carry them are far more confident and sure of themselves, which results in more effective operations.

The shop is guarded by Havureela’s pet displacer beast, which she obtained while adventuring over a decade ago. The beast remains fiercely loyal, attacking anyone who enters the shop without his mistress’ permission.

## 23. Temple of Garagos & Santhro’s Rooming House

Garagos, a war god once worshiped throughout the Inner Sea, has only a few temples left in Faerûn. One such is this rather rundown tenement, where a handful of worshipers still pay him homage.

High Priest Santhro (CE hm C8/F7) is actually a quite powerful individual, a priest and warrior of considerable accomplishment. He manages to whip up enthusiasm for Garagos despite the fact that the ancient god was defeated by Tempus and most people believe him to be dead. Santhro continues to receive spells, a

fact which he claims is proof positive that Garagos still lives.

Santhro also rents out rooms in the temple for 1 gp a month to earn extra money. He even cooks for guests if they ask nicely.

## 24. Ruvya’s Toys and Amusements

Ruvya (NG hm M7) is a bright-eyed, happy old man who has spent most of his life making toys for children. His dolls, puppets, tops, and intricately crafted automata are famed throughout the city, and some are sold as far away as Waterdeep. He has never had trouble with the authorities, and even the stem Aznar Thrul looks on the old toymaker with something approaching affection.

Unknown to these authorities, Ruvya is actually an accomplished spellcaster and one of the Harpers’ few allies in Bezantur. Beneath his shop, hidden both physically and magically, is a safehouse where Harpers can seek refuge. Ruvya’s contacts throughout the city can provide an accurate picture of events even in the far corners of Thay. So far, no one even suspects that Ruvya is anything more than a kindly old tinker, and he is only too happy to keep it that way.

## 25. Clothier

Adzul Xan (N hm 0) creates tunics, cloaks, breeches, shirts, and hats for wealthy Thayans. His shop is also a front for smuggling enchanted garments into and out of Thay.

## 26. Tattooist

Rhuna the Dark (CN hf M7) is known as one of the best tattoo artists in Bezantur. Her elaborate designs grace the pates and bodies of several prominent Red Wizards, including, it is rumored, tharchion Aznar Thrul and Zulkir Mythrell’aa. She favors elaborate knotwork based on designs created by the Ffolk of the Moonshae isles, complex geometries in the style of Semphar, and dragons, phoenixes, and other exotic beasts from Kara Tur. Her use of color is especially intricate, and it is said that some of her creations are actually enchanted to move.

Rhuna’s skill does not come cheap; she charges 100 gp per hour and, as a devoted follower of Loviatar, she does not use anesthetics, believing the pain she inflicts on her clients is a holy tribute to her goddess.





### 27. House of Entropy

Dedicated to the worship of the destructive deity known as Entropy, this jet black structure has no windows and only a single, small door.

Traditionally, Entropy's priests hate mages and magic in general, but in Thay they must modify this view somewhat. The high priest of Entropy is unknown but is seen sometimes wearing black robes and a dark veil with only his eyes showing. He speaks loudly against magic but excludes the Red Wizards in his sermons, claiming that their use of sorcery actually promotes the cause of Entropy.

### 28. Canos Estate

This Thayan family is quite influential, though it has no Red Wizards in its ranks. The extensive estate includes green manicured grounds, a huge main house, several smaller guest and summer houses, and slave barracks.

The Canos are known to be extremely wealthy and most believe that considerable riches are to be found on their estate, which makes it a constant temptation to the thieves' guild. As they do not have the protection available to Red Wizards, the Canos must defend themselves without assistance. They do this with great efficiency, employing traps, magical wards, incorruptible mercenary guards, and enchanted creatures. In the years since the Canos' estate was built, no one has ever succeeded in robbing them.

### 29. Temple of Jergal

Jergal, Seneschal of Bone Castle and Scribe of the Doomed, is responsible for keeping track of the final disposition of dead spirits. A servitor of Myrkuil and then Cyric, Jergal now serves Kelemvor, the newly ascended lawful neutral god of the dead. As such, his congregations have grown in Thay, where death is a fact of daily life.

This building is a small, onion-domed structure of gold-veined black marble. Temple mistress Dyhna Zhyborrin (N hf C8) oversees her staff, leads worship services, and maintains a close relationship with the worshippers of Kelemvor.

### 30. Central Citadel

This black, heavily fortified structure towers over the city like a vulture. It houses the bulk of Aznar Thrul's legion—over 4,000 gnolls, humans, goblins, and other

creatures, an aviary containing dozens of darkenbeasts, and the private quarters of Zulkir/tharchion Aznar Thrul himself. Here, the tharchion engages in elaborate debauches with invited guests, contemplates operations against rival tharchions, develops schemes to increase his own power, and inflicts cruel torments on the slaves in his private dungeons and laboratories.

Unknown to anyone save Aznar Thrul and his closest friends, the citadel houses former tharchioness of Bezantur Mari Agneh, thought by most to be dead. In fact, the ex-tharchioness would probably be better off dead, since she now lives as Aznar Thrul's mindless slave. It amuses the tharchion to keep his predecessor in this state, bent to his will, acting as a sycophantic servant and entertainment for guests at his elaborate parties. For her part, Mari may or may not be aware of how she is being treated; if she is ever freed from the magical compulsion, her desire for vengeance will be terrible to behold.

### 31. Loviatar's Manor

This facility, known as "The Manor" to the more dedicated members of its congregation, is probably the largest temple of Loviatar in Faerûn. Its grounds are extensive, carefully manicured, and equipped with pleasant graveled walkways, fountains, and even an indoor bathing pool. The temple itself is built into a hillside and is quite a rambling affair, with many common rooms for group "worship" and private chambers where individuals may pay homage to the Maiden of Pain without outside prying. Many Red Wizards, and even priests of other deities, come here, paying only minimal obeisance to Loviatar but enjoying the various activities available to her worshippers nonetheless.

High Priestess Mylra (CE hf P12) is the leading official of her goddess in Thay and actively participates in all aspects of worship here. Her skill with a scourge is legendary.

### 32. Temple of Mystra

Hidden beneath an abandoned apartment building, this temple serves as a refuge for Harpers, dissidents, escaped slaves, and enemies of the Red Wizards. High Priestess Dolare (NG hf P9) oversees operations, maintaining secrecy and preventing detection of her small temple through the use of magical wards and concealment.





Several tunnels radiate out from the underground temple and are used as escape routes from the city. An image of Mystra watches over the underground complex, and Dolare's followers claim that it is an actual representation of the goddess' divine powers, for it seems to keep the temple safe from harm.

### 33. Temple of Malar

This small structure houses the priests and congregation who worship Malar the Beastlord, an evil god dedicated to, among other things, the extermination of the elves of Faerûn. High Priest Nul (CE hm P7) performs services clad in a wolf's head and wolfskin cloak and leads a group of various worshipers, mostly foreign barbarians and freed slaves.

### 34. Temple of Talona

This squat, gray, fortresslike building is headquarters for the faith of Talona in Thay. Unlike most regions of Faerûn, Talona's worship is out in the open here and has a devoted following. Priests and priestesses are fancifully scarred and tattooed, and revel in the spread of poison, suffering, and disease.

Despite the fact that Talona's worship is relatively overt, she is still not popular with the general public, and even the Red Wizards are ready to believe that her devotees are responsible for the occasional plagues, epidemics, and (many more) poisonings that take place in the city. High Priestess Mynnsha (CE hf P10) keeps the authorities bribed to leave her alone, but mobs of armed citizenry periodically attack the temple, placing it under siege until Aznar Thrul's gnolls show up to restore "order."

### 35. House of Cyric

This evil god, once-successor to the slain gods Bane, Bhaal, and Myrkul, has undergone hard times of late, going mad and losing many of his portfolios (and worshipers) to such upstarts as the Godson and Kelemvor. Despite this, his worship is still popular in Thay, and Cyric's congregation remains the largest in Bezantur. His temple here is a vast, multi-structure complex originally dedicated to Bhaal but quickly changed to this new use with the birth of Cyric during the Time of Troubles. Most Thayan worshipers of Cyric simply believe that he is Bhaal reborn in a new form and have no trouble worshipping him as such.

High priest Sharthane Zul (NE hm P20) is one of the most powerful individuals in Thay, rivaling even the zulkirs themselves. He has carefully maintained neutrality in the current Thayan civil conflict, since even he is not completely safe from the Red Wizards' wrath.

This complex of buildings contains dormitories for its legions of priests and priestesses, facilities for visiting dignitaries, slave barracks, several shrines and cathedrals of varying sizes, a luxurious mansion for Sharthane, smaller homes for high-ranking clergy, and extensive dungeons where some of Cyric's more horrific rites are performed. Those who vanish into the underground cells of the House of Cyric are rarely seen again or, more often than not, reappear in the form of shambling, mindless zombies completely under the command of Cyric's priesthood.

Sharthane's mansion is a palace worthy of the rulers of some smaller kingdoms. Hundreds of slaves see to his every need, and he maintains a small, private subterranean chamber for his own amusement. He is said to associate with several tanar'ri of various types; many tales tell of a succubus who visits him late at night, imparting wisdom and romantic diversions in exchange for a "paltry amount" of Sharthane's life energies.

### 36. Temple of Auril

This small, white domed temple is dedicated to the goddess Auril, deity of cold and winter. Her following is small but dedicated, always warning Thayans of the terrible winter to come and of an eventual alliance between Auril and other evil deities to drive off the likes of Chauntea, Mystra, and Tyr.

### 37. Temple of Oghma

This white marble, colonnaded structure houses an extensive library of books and scrolls dealing with history, philosophy, science, and religion. Rumors abound that the priests also maintain several texts on magic and spellcasting, but these are banned by the Red Wizards, and any concrete evidence of such tomes would lead to the temple being sacked and its inhabitants slain mercilessly.

Oghma has a small following, but the priests maintain this temple in order to collect information on Thay and Thayan society.





### 38. Temple of Shar

Eternal foe of Selûne and sometime ally of Cyric, Shar is quite popular in Thay. Since Cyric's decline and Iyachtu Xvim's ascendancy, Shar has been associated with the Godson as well. Black-robed and hooded priestess and priestesses of Shar work here, coordinating their secret war against the followers of Selûne and doing mischief throughout the Realms. Many citizens of Bezantur, including Red Wizards and even the clergy of other evil faiths, attend services in this long, dark stone temple which terminates in a vast amphitheater where dark magic and black rites are performed.

### 39. Temple of Lliira

The Lliiran joybringers maintain a temple here, which consists of a white marble central hall surrounded by colorful tents and pavilions. A joyful and somewhat hedonistic faith, the worship of Lima has many adherents in Bezantur, though the Red Wizards dislike its altruistic and individualistic nature.

### 40. Temple of Sune

Close to the popular temple of Lliira lies this lavish palace dedicated to the worship of Sune Firehair, goddess of love and passion. Though her worshipers are of good alignment, they pose little threat to the Red Wizards due to their chaotic romanticism and lack of political or social aspirations. Attendance at this temple is a popular pursuit, in fact, for their elegant feasts and festivals are enjoyable displays of self-indulgence. Many who attend the temple pay Sune herself only lip service and are here for the food and to meet members of the opposite sex. The temple has recently lost many adherents to the more passionate worship of Sharess, and the Sunites have responded by portraying those who revere Sharess as crude, uncivilized debauchers.

### 41. Temple of Myrkul

Another temple dedicated to a supposedly dead god, this once-proud structure of gilded wood is inhabited only by the evil god's former high priest, Dhimar (NE hm (former) P12), who, unlike other worshipers of Myrkul, has steadfastly refused to transfer his allegiance to Cyric or Kelemvor. He is possibly the last remaining worshiper of Myrkul in all the Forgotten Realms and no longer receives spells.

### 42. Temple of Talos

One of few permanent temples to the Lord of Destruction, this structure is a granite cube topped by a low white dome. It once housed another congregation, but the Talos followers managed to drive them out and take up residence here. High Priest Nofallis (LE hm P9) relishes his duties as chief official of a chaotic evil power and never tires of preaching about the doom and destruction that is sure to come when Talos finally triumphs over all the other petty godlings. Talos' followers are often blamed for fires and other disasters in Bezantur, but thus far the public has not caused them any trouble in return.

### 43. House of Iyachtu Xvim

The Godson, offspring of the dead god Bane, is worshiped in Thay with great enthusiasm and has become a lesser power in Faerûn since the onset of Cyric's madness. Xvim's house in Bezantur is one of the largest and newest temples in the city, including a large central hall, two long wings containing small shrines, living quarters, dining facilities and storage, and a dozen smaller outbuildings used for various arcane worship ceremonies and as housing for higher-ranking priests.

While all of his worshipers acknowledge that Iyachtu himself is the true head of his church (he has visited this temple and led ceremonies on several occasions), most day-to-day running of the faith is left to high priestess Dienje Xavarri (NE hf P14), generally considered the ranking official of the church for all of Thay. Dienje is a true fanatic, dedicating every aspect of her life to the Godson. Dark rumors hint that she has even enjoyed an intimate relationship with Iyachtu himself and borne him at least one child, though no one is certain whether such progeny would be divine or not. The consequences of a living grandson of Bane are unknown, although none of them are likely to be pleasant should the child prove to be real and manifest divine powers.

Since Iyachtu is dedicated to the final elimination of Cyric and the usurpation of his portfolios (possibly turning himself into an intermediate power in the Realms), conflict between his temple and that of Cyric has been increasing lately, with a rash of assassinations, magical attacks, and even occasional street brawls keeping Aznar Thru's legion busy.





#### 44. Temple of Tempus

Though Tempus' followers have often opposed the legions of Thay, he is a popular deity in the land of the Red Wizards, possibly due to the unrestrained violence that he represents. The Lord of Battles' representative in Bezantur is Priest-Captain Zeidero (CN hm P10/F5), a scarred veteran of a dozen military campaigns in a dozen lands.

The temple is a great granite fortress with a massive iron gate, flanked by statues of Tempus astride his white steed Veiros on the left and his black steed Deiros on the right. Tempus' sigil, a blazing sword on a red field, is emblazoned on the walls above the temple gates.

#### 45. Temple of Tyr

Tyr's following in Thay is small, due to his lawful nature. A dozen warrior-priests, led by the aged Mytura Shebala (LN hf F6/P7), former mercenary who had a vision of Tyr on the battlefield and dedicated her life to the god.

#### 46. Temple of Beshaba

A chaotic evil and somewhat mad deity, Beshaba nevertheless has a large following in Bezantur. Many Thayans worship her in order to avoid the worst of the bad luck that she and her priesthood create.

The temple is a chaotic jumble of structures and its interior a maze of blind passages, stairways to nowhere, secret doors, traps, cul-de-sacs, and other confusing features. Only the priests who live and work here know the extent of the labyrinth, and of them only the most high ranking know it all. Doommaster Hargrim Theos (CE hm P12) is a wicked but efficient leader who delights in causing misfortune to others.

#### 47. Temple of Leira

The masked, anonymous priests of this chaotic goddess still maintain a small temple in her honor, though most believe her to be dead. They still receive spells, but this may be from another deity who has taken over Leira's portfolio.

Leiran priests are not popular, for they are known to lie constantly, and no one knows who is in charge at the temple or whether any hierarchy exists at all.

#### 48. Temple of Gond

About 20 priests of Gond the Wonderbringer serve in Bezantur. The temple is a fascinating construct of iron

plates held together with massive exposed rivets, clanking mechanical gates, and numerous chimneys and vents from which steam and strange smoke periodically issues.

Few actively worship Gond in Bezantur, leading the Red Wizards to suspect that this is simply a spy station for the inquisitive Gondsmen. No one has been able to infiltrate the temple, since it is well protected with traps, and the Gondsmen are rumored to have deadly clockwork automatons that can slay legions of warriors at will. The priests here are also armed with Lantan arquebuses—weapons which, while troublesome and unreliable, are nothing short of terrifying to the average Thayan.

#### 49. Temple of Helm

A contingent of six warrior-priests maintain this small citadel, an island of lawfulness in an ocean of Thayan wickedness. No one in Bezantur worships the guardian god, and most blame Helm for the destruction of Bane, Bhaal, and Myrkul in the Time of Troubles. For these reasons, the priests are constantly insulted and even assaulted when they go out in public, and their temple is periodically defaced with graffiti and ofal. The priests remain in Bezantur more out of stubbornness than anything else, for to abandon this temple would be tantamount to an admission that Helm is no longer the power he once was.

#### 50. Ilmater's Cathedral

A small fane here is dedicated to the Crying God, where a small staff of priests sees to the needs of the poorest and most downtrodden of free Thayans. The temple is surprisingly popular with the oppressed common citizens and the slaves of Thay, who believe that their suffering under the rule of the Red Wizards must surely be eventually rewarded. The wizards have accused the priests of Ilmater of aiding Thayan slaves to escape and of granting free clerical healing to victims of official torture and punishment, but nothing has ever been proven.

#### 51. Temple of Kossuth

The Tyrant of Fire is very popular with the citizens of Thay. The bright flame of magic is one of the land's official symbols, and Kossuth himself helped the Red Wizards defeat the rebellious salamanders and efreet during the Salamander War.





High priest Mythalanir (LE hm C16) keeps this multitiered, red marble structure in perfect condition. His priests tend to the sacred flames that burn in braziers throughout the temple, and he leads nightly services in which sacrificial victims are given up to the flames of Kossuth.

The fire tyrant's close relationship with Thay has been carefully maintained since the Salamander War, and it is hoped that Kossuth can be persuaded to lend his support (and, hopefully, the various creatures of his flaming realm) to future Thayan military adventures.

## 52. City Tombs

The city crypts have grown huge over the centuries and are now a rambling labyrinth of marble hallways, domes, passageways, galleries, cloisters, graveyards, and a bewildering number of other places for interring the dead. Only the newest sections of the mausoleum are maintained and utilized; the remainder of the structures have been allowed to age and disintegrate as the years go by.

Since a goodly number of Red Wizards, evil priests, and even nonhuman monsters have been interred here, the old sections of the mausoleum are places best left undisturbed by the public. Many who were buried here were not dead to begin with, while others live on helplessly, trapped in moldering mortal shells. Still others regained life of a sort after lying in state for years. The oldest tombs are places of unbelievable horror where every imaginable form of undead creature shambles, either mindlessly or with the purposeful intent of the completely insane.

Also considered insane are those occasional thieves who enter the tombs, seeking to plunder the riches interred with ancient nobles, wizards, and wealthy individuals. Few return, but a handful are rumored to have made it out alive with fortunes in gold, gems, and enchanted items. Not surprisingly, many of these items are cursed, but this does not stop the occasional suicidally brave burglar from trying his luck.

The most powerful resident of the tombs is the ancient Zulkir Ythazz Buvaar, one of the founders of the modern nation of Thay. Unknown to those modern zulkirs who have forgotten Ythazz and his contributions, the zulkir lives on, still clinging to the elaborate throne upon which his embalmed body once sat. He is now a demilich, but his life force is such that he still schemes to

return and visit terrible vengeance upon those Thayans who do not honor his memory. Currently he seeks a mortal body to inhabit, and he sends his various minions—vampires, wights, ghosts, and lesser forms of undead—forth to obtain a suitable victim. So far all candidates have proved unworthy, dying of fright or other stresses well before Ythazz can steal their mortal bodies.

## 53. Orcish Temple

Orcish mercenaries and warriors in service to Thayan officials are allowed to maintain this black, three-story structure where idols of the various orcish deities—Grumms One-Eye, Bahgtru, Ilneval, Luthic, Shargaas, Yurtrus, and various tribal heroes and demigods of the many orcish bands—are maintained and regularly worshipped. Orcish worship is unsurprisingly loud, violent, and unpleasant, often accompanied by the sacrifice of prisoners or unfortunate criminals from within the orcs' own ranks.

The idols here are all crudely carved and said to be very old representations of the gods. The orcs claim that during the most frenetic and bloody ceremonies, the statue of Grumms comes alive and dispenses wisdom and advice to the orcs who prostrate themselves before it.

## 54. Slave Market

Most of the city's trade in human, demihuman, and humanoid flesh goes on in this vast stone-paved open-air arena. Buyers and sellers from all over Faerûn may be found here along with their chained or otherwise bound captives. The square is usually filled with tents, corrals, and improvised auction blocks where the foul process of buying and selling takes place.

Daily auctions take place, free from any interference by Aznar Thrul's officials, who content themselves with confiscating the occasional attractive or useful slave in lieu of taxation.

## 55. Thieves' Guild/Temple of Mask

Conveniently enough, this fortresslike building serves a dual purpose as headquarters of Bezantur's powerful thieves' guild and main temple of Mask, patron deity of thieves. Guildmistress Shabella the Pale (NE hf T17) also serves as the local high priestess of Mask, taking both a cut of all illicit goings-on in the city and part of the money given to the temple by worshippers.





The guild controls illegal activities in and around Bezantur. They allow the bosses of Market Town to control the area with little oversight but demand regular tribute in exchange for doing so. Any Market Town boss who refused to pay his “dues” to the guild quickly and efficiently disappears.

Independent thievery is not tolerated and nonguild sanctioned criminals also disappear, albeit much more painfully. The guild even controls the forces of Aznar Thrul, keeping guards and legion members well bribed to stay out of guild business. For his part, Aznar Thrul doesn’t mind since Shabella pays him well—and every year, on the anniversary of the city’s founding, she sends him a very nice basket of fruit.

Surprisingly, the guild house is not terribly well defended. Most external doors are left unlocked, while only a token number of human, orcish, and ogre guards patrol the halls. Most apartments, including those of the guildmistress, are open to all, and the guild treasure vault is guarded only by a single iron golem.

The reason for this is simple: No one in Bezantur dares steal from the thieves’ guild. It is said that the spirits of several who tried are kept in the guild house’s deep subterranean levels, tormented by captive tanar’ri. Should anyone gain access to the guild house and steal anything, his or her identity is instantly known through magical means or through the guild’s citywide network of informers. Such an individual’s lifespan is measured in hours or even minutes from the time they escape with their loot.

#### **56. Temple of Bane**

As everyone in the Realms knows, Bane was destroyed during the Time of Troubles, and most of his powers were usurped by Cyric, the new god of evil and strife.

Just the same, Bane’s worship was so popular in Thay that a small number of priests maintains his temple and prays for his return. High priestess Cothra (CE hf C11) keeps this jet-black fane clean and even leads services for those who wish to attend. She also worships Iyachtu Xvim, who provides her with spells.

#### **57. Street of White Roses**

This region, which in other cities would be known as the “Red Lantern District,” is one of the most lawless in this highly lawless city. Here, stolen goods are exchanged, il-

licit deals are struck, forbidden magic is practiced, and courtesans of all sorts walk the streets.

The thieves’ guild controls activities here and pays the Thayan officials well to stay completely away. It is the one part of the city besides the thieves’ guild house where visitors are guaranteed complete safety from official Thayan interference.

Named for the massive white rose bushes that line its length, the street is a wild place, constantly hung with colorful lanterns, banners, and windsocks. Torches and magical lights keep the area well lit, and its buildings are of a bewildering combination of gaudy styles from a dozen lands.

Many businesses exist here: inns, taverns, merchants’ shops, fest halls, bath houses, and, not surprisingly, many small temples to such deities as Sune, Mask, Lliira, Sharness, and, of course, Loviatar, whose worship is especially popular with those who frequent this district.

#### **58. Citadel of Correction**

One of the most dreaded structures in Bezantur, this gray stone fortress contains barracks for gnolls and humans, but its primary function is the imprisonment and punishment of criminals and any who displease the Red Wizards. Its labyrinthine dungeons contain hundreds of cells, torture chambers, pits, and oubliettes, while its upper floors are devoted to interrogation rooms and offices for the fortress personnel.

In Bezantur, the term “taken to the citadel” means that an individual has vanished and is not expected to return. Those who do return from the citadel’s black depths are usually mindless wrecks of their former selves. Sometimes, locals claim, the screams of those imprisoned deep underground can be heard in the streets above, and the lowest levels of the dungeon are said to connect to the nightmare realms of the Underdark.

#### **59. Temple of Lolth**

The spider queen of the drow is a popular deity among the humans of Thay. Her temple here is a black dome covered in silver spiderwebs, with the drow inscription *Lolth tlu malla; jal ultrinnan zhah xundus* (Lolth be praised; all victory is her doing) inscribed in gleaming letters over its portal. Worshipers attend midnight ceremonies here, dressed in long black robes and often decorated with pigments and wigs to make them look like







drow. The drow themselves often attend these services and there are always one or two at the temple.

Thayan priestess Rhytella (CE hf C9) considers herself only an acolyte, although she has authority over her entire congregation. The “real” high priestess of Bezantur’s temple of Lolth is Triel Teienna (CE ef C12), a drow of the Underdark who visits the temple every few months to oversee operations, indulge in a few sybaritic pleasures, and choose a handful of human followers to accompany her back to her realm. Exactly what happens to these chosen humans is not known; none has ever returned, but this does not lessen the fervor of Lolth’s congregation in Bezantur. Instead, most are of the opinion that the chosen humans are living lives of decadent splendor deep underground with their drow “brethren.”

#### 60. Temple of Juiblex

The Red Wizards do not normally worship tanar’ri or other evil extraplanar deities, considering them merely independent beings of great power who can be summoned and manipulated. Nevertheless, a few Thayans have (for reasons known only to themselves) taken to worshiping the vile Juiblex, lord of jellies, slimes, aboleths, and similar creatures. This structure, resembling a tall, elongated pyramid and surrounded by a triad of granite obelisks inscribed with unreadable runes, is where these worshipers congregate and call upon the power of their repellent, slimy god.

Aznar Thrul is not terribly fond of these individuals, disliking both Juiblex and the notion of a temple whose members he cannot control, and he has often sent spies into the congregation to find out what they’re up to. So far, none of these spies has returned; some have confessed their “sins” and joined the temple, while others have disappeared altogether, reportedly into a terrible underground chamber which seethes with dozens of slimes, jellies, and deadly puddings. Thrul is not concerned enough to order an attack on the temple but continues to investigate its practices.

#### 61. Narfel’s Rooming House

Most Bezantur residents know this large, blocky apartment building as a low-rent flophouse where travelers and the indigent can find cheap housing (1 cp per night, with no extra charge for fleas and bedbugs) and cheap food (1 cp for a bowl of grael), but few are aware that

this is nothing more than a cover for the house’s true function—Bezantur’s headquarters for the infamous Thayan assassins’ guild.

Narfel himself (NE hm T13), as far as his tenants and the outside world know, is a small, wizened, miserly old man who demands payment in advance and does not hesitate to throw the rudest beggar or most pathetic crippled orphan into the street if they prove unable to pay. In reality, Narfel is a skilled, high-level assassin who oversees a vast and powerful organization closely allied to several prominent Red Wizards.

The guildhouse actually lies beneath the rooming house, past several secret doors, each with a magical password and progressively more powerful guardians. The house is the nexus of a network of tunnels that extend throughout Bezantur, which guild assassins use to move secretly against their targets. Among house facilities are training rooms, barracks, armories, luxurious apartments for Narfel and other high officials of the guild, and document rooms containing information on every contract the guild has ever carried out—to be used as insurance against blackmail or in case the guild wishes, in turn, to blackmail anyone else.

At any one time, there are anywhere from a dozen to a hundred guild assassins here. The assassins share facilities with the Bezantur thieves’ guild, and a few guild thieves are often present here, exchanging information or taking training from master assassins.

### *The Cities of the Coast*

The 10 cities along the southern coast of Aglarond and Thay have had a long and tumultuous relationship with Thay. Once part of the empire of Unther, all of the cities have at one time or another been under Thay’s control. Delthuntle, Nethra, Teth, and Laothkund are too far away for continued Thayan domination and have remained free trading cities for centuries. Despite their close proximity with Aglarond, these cities have chosen to remain fully independent, though they maintain good trade relations and standing defense agreements with Aglarond in the event of a Thayan invasion.

Until the fiery assault by salamanders and efreeti in 1357 DR, the cities of Tilbrand, Lasdur, Taskaunt, Escalant, Murbant, and Thasselen considered themselves independent also. When the last fires were out, Lasdur





and Taskaunt retained their independence (mostly by virtue of being too small for Thay to bother with), and the other cities (each described in its own entry below) fell back under Thayan domination to one extent or another.

## ElTabbar

*I suppose that under other circumstances, Eltabbar would be beautiful. Its broad canals—unique in all Faerûn—spread across the city in an intricate network, often decorated with floating flowers, and lined with tall, elegant stone walkways and baroque buildings. Its wizards' residences are graceful, fluted towers built of many colorful and exotic materials. The River Eltar pours down from Thaymount in a foaming white waterfall, then spreads throughout the city, following the canals before flowing through the city watergates and into Lake Thaylambar. The lake itself spreads its blue-green blanket beyond the city, periodically ruffled by the wind and roughened by catspaws, the white sails of ships visible in the distance. Eltabbar's public parks are manicured collections of flora from a dozen lands, some seen nowhere else in Faerûn. Colorful birds flit from tree to tree, filling the air with song. Privileged Thayans wander the gardens, contemplating the beauty around them, scarcely noticing the miserable slaves who tend the trees around them.*

—from Heino's report

Eltabbar is a huge city with a population varying between 80,000 and 100,000. Over half of these are slaves; nowhere in Thay is the grim institution of slavery more evident.

There are many strange things about Eltabbar. First and foremost is its exact layout. Until recently, no one knew precisely what the city looked like, since owning a map of Eltabbar was at one time punishable by instant death. For some reason this restriction has relaxed recently, and several maps of the city exist. Still, the Red Wizards maintain their assertion that maps are to be kept out of the hands of the general public "for security reasons," and unauthorized possession of a map of Eltabbar lands its owner in a Thayan dungeon.

Eight months ago, a massive earthquake did considerable damage to the city, and the widespread destruction of buildings and flooding drove many residents away. Since then the city has been largely rebuilt with labor provided by Szass Tam's zombies. The tharch's ruler, the

woman known as the Tharchioness, has gained considerable authority and power since that time.

Poster map 3 displays a full-color map and text key for Eltabbar.

## Escalant

First settled by colonists from Unther around 400 DR, Escalant's prime location at the mouth of the River Lapendrar has made it a thriving trade city. The Escalanter declared independence from Unther in around 625 and maintained their freedom for the next three centuries. The Thayans arrived in 934, demanding tribute from the city as part of an overall expansion campaign that included the Red Wizards' first invasion of Rashemen.

Thayan domination of Escalant continued, on and off, for the next 400 years. The social upheaval accompanying the Great Inner Sea Plague forced the Thayans to withdraw in 1320, leaving the Escalanter determined to maintain their independence in the future. This situation continued until 1357 when the Red Wizards attacked once more, sending an army of elementals against the coastal cities, forcing their inhabitants to choose between submission and immolation. After a brave fight, the Escalanter were forced to surrender, and a strong and oppressive Thayan occupation has been in effect ever since.

Escalant remains a prosperous settlement, and most of the damage done by the Thayan elementals has been repaired. Extensive dock and port facilities are visited by vessels from Chessenta, Mulhorand, Turmish, and elsewhere. Escalant's level of trade is second only to Bezantur, and the city has become an important part of Thay's economy.

The city is a vast, rambling settlement, with only the central, oldest section surrounded by a wall. Even this wall is in disrepair, and sections damaged by the elementals remain blackened and tumbled. Warehouses, apartments, shops, and port facilities line the river for nearly a mile inland.

Escalant boasts a population of over 20,000 and is under direct Thayan rule, overseen by the tharchion of Lapendrar. Although the Thayan presence is always felt, the tharchion feels it best to let the Escalanter go their own way and interferes with them as little as possible. His gnoll troops, which are barracked in groups of 100 or so throughout the city, are content to patrol the streets,







menace an occasional citizen, and wreck the businesses of merchants suspected of smuggling or holding out on their taxes.

## Murbant

Inhabitants of this moderately sized coastal city (population 5,000) make their living from fishing and occasional smuggling. A garrison of gnolls keeps order in the city, which fell to the Thayans after a brief siege by fire elementals in 1357. Murbant is under the control of Aznar Thrul, tharchion of the Priador, and its citizens usually pay their taxes and try to ignore their rulers. For some reason, Thrul seems to have little interest in Murbant and spares the city the ravages which he has visited upon other coastal settlements.

Several large slave farms and freeholds lie around the city. These are sometimes plagued by the monsters that the Red Wizards keep on their preserves in the Priador, and the farmers occasionally need assistance to eliminate the marauding creatures.

## Nethentir

*We approached Thay by one of the few public routes into the country—the city of Nethentir, and the precarious, winding road which rose above it. Phillip and Starlight preceded us, the bard riding a mule, and the sprite flitting through the air around and ahead of him. Our wagons rumbled through the crowded streets, gathering curious or suspicious glances from the dark-haired Thayans who lived there.*

*We rumbled up the trail and an uncertain dread came over me. We were actually entering Thay, one of the foulest citadels of evil this side of Zhentil Keep and the Underdark. What was going to happen to us?*

*The town behind dwindled in the distance as we traveled up the escarpment. The road was broad but had neither shoulder nor railing; anyone who slipped or strayed too far would have a long fall and a nasty sudden stop at the end.*

*We were about halfway up the escarpment when Starlight came streaking back to us, her small face bearing an urgent expression.*

*“Up the hill!” she squeaked excitedly. “Gnolls, coming down! They’ll try to crowd us off the road, they will!”*

*“Are you sure?” I asked, suddenly concerned.*

*“Of course,” Starlight replied. “They’re gnolls. It’s how they are.”*

*I agreed that this made sense and immediately ordered the wagons and riders to move as close as they could to the escarpment wall, then stop. In a few moments the caravan was strung out, single file, with fully half the trail now clear.*

*Phillip arrived a few moments later, confirming that the gnolls were, indeed, on their way down. The gnolls followed close on his heels, a foaming, snarling band of hyena-headed abominations clad in scaled armor emblazoned with the red flame of Thay. Their leader, a tall flind with glaring yellow eyes, caught sight of us.*

*“You!” it barked in brutally accented common. “Off the grakling road!” (I believe “grakling” is some form of gnoll-ish expletive, though I cannot know for certain).*

*“There’s enough room for us all,” I replied. “Besides, pushing our wagons off the cliff is probably more work than your troops care to do.”*

*The flind looked puzzled and more than a little disappointed. After a tense few moments, it finally came to a decision and barked an order at the gnolls behind it, which had been growing restive and quarrelsome. To our relief, the gnoll column resumed its march down the road, passing us by with nothing more than hostile stares.*

*—from Heino’s report*

Located at the shores of Lake Umber beneath the towering cliffs of the First Escarpment, Nethentir would be a peaceful fishing settlement save for its importance as the only large Thayan city in the area. Many caravans pass through Nethentir bound for the Thayan interior, and the city boasts extensive inns and supply businesses.

Although the Escarpment itself provides the bulk of Thayan defense, Nethentir also boasts a large fortress and several outposts occupied by gnolls and human cavalry, who constantly scout the surrounding grasslands for the approach of enemy forces or unwanted visitors. A winding trail with numerous switchbacks climbs the Escarpment, one of the few major routes into Thay itself. Caravans and Thayan military convoys are constantly on the move up and down the Escarpment. Gnoll and cavalry units move along the trail with impunity, often scattering non-Thayan groups before them. Several deaths from falling are attributed to such behavior each year.

Service in this area is considered tedious and undesirable, so Thayan troops unwind by periodically by raising





havoc in Nethentir—brawling, wrecking inns, molesting citizens, and so on. The town’s inhabitants have come to dread the days when troops arrive on leave and respond by bolting their doors, hiding in their homes, or taking extended fishing trips on the lake to avoid trouble.

## Pyarados

*The following information is taken from a report by a Harper agent in Thay (whose identity remains secret for obvious reasons), who was asked to investigate rumors of Szass Tam and his current activities.*

*“Pyarados is a lawless frontier town with a central core of rigid authoritarianism and harsh beauty. I was forced to defend myself against a gang of half-orc bullies in the rough-hewn settlement that sprawls around the central citadel. The streets of Pyarados are muddy and crowded, full of beggars, swaggering bravos, rough and ready adventurers, courtesans, and others. Everywhere there are stalls and shops selling ‘adventuring equipment’—that is to say, overpriced junk guaranteed to fall apart at the most crucial moment.*

*“I searched out my regular informants in Pyarados, only to find that of three, two were missing, and the third saw me only with great reluctance.*

*“Szass Tam’s dreams are finally coming true,’ my informant told me in the fetid depths of an abandoned warehouse. ‘He has walked the Paths of the Doomed and gone unscathed past the Devouring Portal. His destiny lies beneath the Thaymount, and when he looks to the future he sees all of Faerûn turned into a great charnel house, full of undead creatures which do his bidding. The other zulkirs have only one choice—follow him, willingly or unwillingly. Those who do so willingly are to be rewarded. Those who do not lose both life and soul, and become Szass Tam’s slaves. He means to do this, believe me. Seek the Paths of the Doomed, and you will see what I speak of. I will tell you no more.’*

*“My informant told us nothing else.”*

*—Lhaeo*

This rambling city of 50,000 is a relatively young settlement, consisting of many small dwellings arranged around winding, chaotic streets. The level of prosperity varies widely in the outer city, with structures ranging from vast mansions to crude lean-tos. There are few public works here, though some streets are paved by wealthy

individuals. The Thayans maintain several guardposts to keep order.

The central core of Pyarados, which formed the original city, is walled and much better organized than the remainder of the city. Palaces, parks, broad streets, extensive statuary, and other luxurious surroundings are common. Here live various Red Wizards, wealthy merchants, and other influential Thayans.

Pyarados acts as the jumping-off place for explorers headed into the Sunrise Mountains. Many inns of every conceivable level of quality crowd the city. Almost all of these are located outside the walls. Many expedition outfitters also call Pyarados home, selling supplies, dray beasts, and adventuring equipment, often at inflated prices.

Those adventurers with nerves steady enough to hazard travel within Thay invariably find themselves in Pyarados sooner or later. The zulkirs are relatively tolerant of these, leaving them to their own devices as long as they do not threaten Thay’s internal security. The upshot of this is that the outer city, beyond the pacifying heights of the walls, is a wild and lawless place where the authorities turn a blind eye to most crimes, allowing street justice to settle accounts. Visitors should note that law enforcement is anything but lax in Pyarados, despite the lack of a large Thayan police force. Vigilantes punish those crimes the Red Wizards ignore, and their punishment is just as swift and certain.

## Surthay

Originally intended as a stronghold against anticipated (but never appearing) Rashemi invasions, this northernmost Thayan city has since served as the departure point for the Red Wizards’ own invasions, and today remains an important military position. The inhabitants survive by farming the surrounding flood plain, fishing, and trading with Theskian merchants from the north. None of these pursuits earn Surthayans more than subsistence, so most of Surthay is a place of poverty and hard living.

Nobles, Red Wizards, and their acolytes occupy Surthay, living in pleasant mansions and towers on the eastern heights above the city, well away from the filth, disease, and stench of the swamp.

The city itself is well fortified, with a high stone wall bristling with sturdy towers, fortified gates, sally ports,





positions for ballistae and other artillery, and citadels garrisoned by crack troops.

Located across from the dismal Surmarsh, Surthay is often ravaged by diseases carried by insects from the swamp. The stench of rotting vegetation frequently fills the streets, especially at the height of summer. During hot months, the humidity is nearly unbearable, combining with the stench to drive out any Thayans capable of leaving.

Surthay has limited port facilities, although the city is built on a good natural harbor. This is because the Witches of Rashemen control much of Lake Mulsantir and sink any Thayan warships they encounter. Surthay fishing vessels are small feluccas that are dragged inland at the end of each day.

Forces loyal to the tharchion of Surthay occupy the city and the small fortresses which surround it. These receive the lion's share of supplies and income, leaving the remainder of Surthay's population to fend for itself.

There is much poverty and despair in Surthay, which has spawned a thriving criminal underground. The tharchion professes little tolerance for crime and has given his troops full rein to capture suspected lawbreakers and punish them on the spot. As usual in Thay, this has been taken by the garrison to be a license to pursue, capture, abuse, assault, murder, and destroy as they please.

Fortunately for the citizens of Surthay, the various criminal guilds are relatively powerful and can have particularly troublesome guards disposed of quietly. Systematic bribes and extortion keep other officials under control, but those with no connections to the crime guilds are helpless against the ravages of the Thayan soldiers.

## Thasselen

Thasselen is a city that lives in the shadow of terror. Badly damaged by the Thayan fire elementals in 1357, Thasselen fell to forces under the command of Hargrid Tenslayer, tharchion of the Lapendrar. After Tenslayer perished in the Salamander War, Thasselen was handed over to Aznar Thrul and has been ruled with an iron hand ever since.

Once a city with a population of 20,000 specializing in fishing, farming, and a small amount of trade, Thasselen is today a burned-out shell of its former self. Most structures destroyed in the siege have not been replaced,

and a gnoll garrison keeps the 10,000 or so people who live here in line.

Aznar Thrul considers this settlement to be his private domain, and his warriors regularly raid it for slaves and experimental subjects. With its walls breached, Thasselen is often terrorized by monsters that wander out of the Priador.

The gnolls, human warriors, and associates of the tharchion who live nearby are given free rein to oppress, terrorize, assault, or murder the citizens of Thasselen as they choose. The central keep and the small fortresses that surround the city often echo with the screams of the Thayans' victims.

As the people of Thasselen are considered Aznar's personal possessions, escape is a crime punishable by death—or worse. The destruction of an underground movement dedicated to smuggling children and important citizens out of Thasselen was seen by Aznar as a chance to practice using his *flensing* (see page 101) and other horrific spells on the survivors.

## Tilbrand

Tilbrand narrowly escaped the sorry fate of Thasselen. Forced to surrender without a fight by the might of Thay's elemental army, Tilbrand was occupied but quickly abandoned after Hargrid Tenslayer's death in the Salamander War.

Since then, Tilbrand has remained technically under the administration of Hezess Nymar, tharchion of Lapendrar, but is not occupied due to its distant location and the difficulty of maintaining administration so far from Thay. Nymar's agents periodically visit the city, demanding tribute, and the Tilbranders usually pay at least part of what is demanded if for no other reason than to keep the tharchion and his legions well away.

Many Tilbranders consider the destruction wrought by the Thayan siege to be a blessing in disguise. Though many died in the battle, several old and run-down sections of the city were leveled, enabling the survivors to rebuild. Today Tilbrand is a walled, active port city with a population of over 25,000. Tilbrand also maintains close ties with Aglarond, and a garrison of Aglarondan rangers helps protect the city. Most Tilbranders are determined that, should the Thayans ever wish to take the city by force again, they will do so only at great cost.





Tilbrand is ruled by an elected council, though it has a ceremonial high lord whose primary function is to oversee festivals and deal with diplomats. The Waverunner clan, a family of humans and half-elves, is the most powerful shipping and mercantile concern in the city, and their influence is growing to the point that they may become a major factor in Faerûn trade around the Sea of Fallen Stars. Waverunner cash helps pay tribute to Thay and may one day be used to hire troops to defend Tilbrand.

## Tyraturos

*Tyraturos is one of the filthiest and most unpleasant cities in a filthy and unpleasant land. Our performances in Tyraturos were well attended, but few deigned to throw us any coins, forcing us to spend some of our rapidly dwindling reserves for food and shelter.*

*The trip to Thay wore heavily on all of us, but the greatest ordeal was poor Starlight's. A carefree sprite more used to the freedom of the open road and the beauty of the wilderness than the horrid realm of the Red Wizards, she often strayed from the caravan, flying about in search of some scrap of peace amid the slavery, wicked sorcery, and poverty of Thay.*

*One day she strayed too far, ending up in Tyraturos' teeming slave market. I sent Grax (our half-orcish knife thrower) and my apprentice Zan to search for her when she did not return – and, as it turned out, they sawed her from a horrible fate.*

*Sprites are among the rarest of slaves, prized as novelties and house servants by Red Wizards and other wealthy Thayans. The fact that sprites and their kin invariably waste away and die as a result of such treatment is of no consequence to these monsters; pity and sorrow are alien concepts to the wizards and their allies.*

*As a result of this, a pair of half-orc slavers who caught sight of Starlight flitting about the marketplace decided to capture her. The first stunned her with a thrown rock, the second showed her into a sack, and together they made for the slave market to sell their prisoner.*

*Zan and Grax desperately searched for Starlight, and heard her cries for help purely by chance. Realizing that they could not directly fight the slavers without drawing attention to themselves, Grax and Zan approached them, inquiring as to the contents of their bag. After several long minutes of bargaining, they settled on a price, and Grax returned to our caravan to fetch a sack of platinum pieces. The exchange was made, Starlight was liberated and returned to us, and my fol-*

*lowers made their way back to the caravan, hoping to get away before the illusion I had cast wore off and the platinum was revealed to be a collection of small stones.*

*Needless to say, we decamped from Tyraturos immediately thereafter.*

*—from Heino's report*

This third largest Thayan city was built by Mulhorand as a caravan and trading town. It has since continued in this capacity under Thayan administration, though many other less savory aspects have been added to its character. Today, Tyraturos boasts a permanent population of 50,000, though this swells to over 100,000 with seasonal caravan traffic.

Vast and rambling, many buildings sporting the slender minarets, onion domes, and spires of distant Semphar, a land which Tyraturos' original architects admired considerably. Tyraturos is unwallled, though it boasts a fortified central citadel and a garrison 8,000 strong. The remainder of the city sprawls over the surrounding grasslands, stretching new tentacles out as roads and trade routes are established.

The city's central marketplace, beneath the grim walls of the citadel, is known as "the place where anything and anyone can be bought." This refers to the extensive selection of slaves available here: humans of all lands, sturdy dwarves, slender elves, brutish orcs and goblins, thick-skulled ogres, and even more exotic races such as centaurs, lamia, and the most sought-after of all slave races, drow. Virtually any item of contraband can be purchased here if the price is right. Spell components, forbidden books, maps, secrets of the various zulkirs, weapons, and other items damaging to the Thayans are all available. The Thayans themselves punish such treasonous smuggling with instant (or worse, lingering) death, but generous bribes by the merchants of the city keep the zulkirs' forces away.

The primary function of Thayan forces here is to levy and collect taxes on all legitimate goods that pass through the city. With their masters bought off and their actions against smugglers limited, the human and groll troops in service to the tharchion of Tyraturos make up for their frustration by squeezing every copper piece out of the caravans they inspect. Despite this, excessive taxation is discouraged, for the zulkirs are aware of the income caravans bring into Thay.





## II: Aglarond



*In marked contrast to the grim and evil land of Thay, neighboring Aglarond is a pleasant land of deep woods, deep seas, and towering cliffs. Ruled by the mysterious woman known as the Simbul, one of the Red Wizards' most implacable enemies, Aglarond is an important counter to the growing strength of Thay and has defeated that land's legions on several occasions. Given its (vital role in the continuing struggle against Thay, a good knowledge of Aglarond, its land, and its people is important for both the Harpers and anyone who plans to travel in the region. We rely for this section on reports from the ranger Talyssa Strongbow, a good friend who shared her experiences in Aglarond with us.*

— Lhaeo

### Overview of Aglarond

Folk speak of Aglarond (when it is spoken of at all) as the Land of the Witch-Queen. The Simbul, wild and unimaginably powerful, is feared and respected Faerûn-wide. Most are grateful for her constant vigilance against Thay and quite openly acknowledge that without her magic, the Red Wizards would have spilled into the Inner Sea. They are also glad that she has the Thayans to occupy her; the Simbul is simply too powerful and impetuous to inspire trust in her methods and motives. (See 9475 *The Seven Sisters* for full details of the Simbul.)

Her subjects, on the other hand, are regarded as ordinary folk who have fought valiantly (for centuries before the Simbul ruled them) against the incursions of the evil wizards. The Aglarondans keep to themselves, but are considered examples to the rest of Toril of how “ordinary people” may defend themselves from magical and malevolent forces.

Aglarond itself is a land of great beauty, isolated from the rest of the world by the Sea of Fallen Stars to the north, south, and west, and by the menacing shadow of Thay in the east. The towering peaks of the Tannath mountains and the vast UMBER Marshes protect Aglarond's border with Thay, and those natural barriers are bolstered by the fortresses Emmech and Glarondar and the magically created Watchwall. In the center of the peninsula lies the vast enchanted Yuirwood. Aglarond's territory comprises only the Yuirwood and the northern coast of the peninsula.

The nation is a monarchy, ruled by a king or queen with aid and advice from a ruling council. The society of Aglarond is unique, divided equally between the humans of the coastal cities and the half-elves who dwell in the ancient and tangled Yuirwood. Once home to a powerful nation of elves, today the Yuirwood is the site of ancient ruins of unknown power and origin. Though differences between the two races were resolved in war long ago, a few lingering resentments still simmer.

Aglarond, along with Rashemen, represents the front line of resistance against the Red Wizards and their schemes. Despite its isolation from the rest of Faerûn, it is important that contact with and support for Aglarond be maintained.







## History

The dense Yuirwood once covered the entire Aglarondan peninsula and was home to the Yuir, a race of Sy-Tel'Quessir, or wild (green) elves. Ancient and powerful, the Yuir mastered powerful magic and built wondrous stone menhirs and circles in which to perform their mystical ceremonies.

As the centuries passed, elven power waned in the Yuirwood, as elsewhere. The forest dwindled and the Yuir, hard-pressed by mountain trolls, drow, and even by conflicts among their own tribes, retreated with it.

During this time, coastal Aglarond remained largely untouched, although a handful of retired human pirates, refugees, and hermits scratched out settlements and lived as best they could while avoiding the depths of the Yuirwood.

The first wave of human fisherfolk arrived in 756 DR, mostly colonists from Chessenta seeking unspoiled lands to settle. Such settlements as Velprintalar, Corth, and Ingdal's Arm were founded at this time, and they began to grow and prosper.

Slowly, human civilization expanded inland, building farms and villages, clearing woodland, and clashing with the evil denizens of the Yuirwood—owlbears, stirges, drow, and trolls—as well as with less malevolent beings such as the Yuir elves and satyrs, who were nonetheless determined to defend their homes from encroachment.

Adventurers from across Faerûn came to the region, eager to explore the Yuirwood and to earn rewards from the fisherfolk who wanted the wood cleared of its more dangerous inhabitants. The decade from 870 to 880 DR was a colorful one in which many bold wizards and warriors fought, died, and eventually triumphed beneath the dark green branches and boughs of the Yuirwood. The Yuir retreated even further into the forest, protecting their dwindling numbers with magic of camouflage and warding. They became legends, rarely glimpsed by human invaders. By the 880s, most of the outer Yuirwood's hostile species had been exterminated or driven out, and the region was open to further exploration and exploitation by adventurers, hunters, fur trappers, miners, and the like.

Persistent human adventures finally pierced the depths of the woods, and there they discovered a sad

spectacle. The Yuir elves, once a proud and powerful nation, had dwindled to a few huddled villages and nomadic tribes decimated by disease and warfare—and most of all by that strange malaise which overcomes many elves who weary of mortal existence and simply give up, going to join their ancestors in Arvandor.

Although the Yuir were obviously in serious (and probably irreversible) decline, the human adventurers made contact with them nonetheless, aiding them in their struggles with the trolls and drow, both of whom were eventually driven from Yuirwood. As time passed, the humans gradually intermarried and mingled with the Yuir, creating a new race of half-elves who returned to the woods with a new vitality, reclaiming much of their elven heritage.

Meanwhile, with the dangers of the Yuirwood largely eliminated, the humans of the coast began to do what they have done all across Toril: reproduce, expand, found new settlements, and push back the frontiers of the ancient wilderness. Farms sprang up along the edges of the Yuirwood, woodcutters' cottages were built within the wood itself, and large tracts of land were cleared.

All this did not go unnoticed by the half-elven descendants of the Yuir. After numerous demands for the humans to desist went unanswered, the half-elves descended upon the humans, overrunning the farms and cottages on the edge of the Yuirwood. Their human defenders were either driven out or slaughtered, and the half-elves advanced on the human coastal cities.

Though many humans called for negotiation and peace, most of the coastal dwellers burned for revenge and fought back against the half-elven "invaders." The humans won a few skirmishes but were steadily pushed back by elven druidic magic and the fierceness of the half-elf warriors. The main human army was finally defeated, perishing to the last man at the Battle of Ingdal's Arm in 1065 DR. Surviving humans in other settlements made peace, and through negotiation created the modern nation of Aglarond.

A few humans refused to share power with the half-elves and migrated to Altumbel. Others settled in the rugged lands of the Fang, where their descendants remain today, grim and embittered.

That majority of humans (and a handful of halflings) who remained in Aglarond worked with the half-elves



to create a new nation. Brindor, the leader of the half-elves, was chosen to be the first king, with the assistance of a council of advisors made up of representatives from all Aglarondan settlements. The surly inhabitants of the Fang chose not to send representatives to the council but were still considered part of Aglarond nonetheless.

Brindor's reign was marked by several significant accomplishments. He created the Aglarondan army, built the fortress Emmech and, with the assistance of the galeb duhr of Umbergoth and Tannath, raised the citadel Glarondar and the great Watchwall from the stuff of the earth itself. Emmech quickly showed its worth, turning back Theskian raiders and keeping the land's northern borders secure.

Brindor's heir, Althon, began a great program of irrigation, road building, and careful husbandry of the much shrunken woods of Aglarond. He lived over a century, becoming known as Althon the Old. During Althon's reign, Aglarond was established as a secure nation, and much of the damage done to the Yuirwood was repaired.

Althon's eldest son Elthond ruled but briefly, perishing in the epic Battle of Singing Sands. In that battle, Aglarond's defenders drove back the first Thayan invasion, albeit at a dear price. Althon's second son Philaspur ruled thereafter before dying, in his turn, while fighting the Thayans at the battle of Brokenheads.

The tradition of Aglarondan leaders dying at the hands of the Thayans was broken by Philaspur's two daughters, Thara and Ulae. Known as the Gray Sisters for the drab habitual color of their garments, they were both accomplished wizardesses, frustrating the invasion attempts of the now-hated Thayans on several occasions. Thara, the elder, was more skilled in magic and diplomacy, while Ulae was a talented military leader and domestic ruler. It is said that each sister formed half of the perfect monarchy, with Thara embodying the heart and Ulae the mind. Perhaps there was more to this than allegory, as the two sisters died within a few days of each other, in 1257.

Both sisters married later in life, Thara to Elthar of Milvarune (forming a bond with Thesk that survives to this day), and Ulae to the forester Ilion. Ulae's son Halacar took the throne upon the deaths of his mother and aunt. The first full human to hold the throne (for a half-

elf and a human produce human offspring), Halacar was neither subtle nor wise, and in 1260 he led his small army on a campaign into Thay itself, hoping to punish the Red Wizards for their repeated incursions.

The campaign ended in disaster, with Halacar and a small handful of followers stumbling out of the Umber Marshes with Thayan-led tanar'ri in hot pursuit. Once on their own land, the Aglarondans were able to turn the Thayans back, but Halacar perished within the year of poisoning—although his murderer's identity was never discovered, most Aglarondans believe that he was yet another of their monarchs slain by the Red Wizards or their agents.

Halacar's sister Ilione took the throne and ruled with caution, slowly building Aglarondan strength and fending off the occasional Thayan plot. An accomplished spellcaster, she chose as her successor a mysterious woman known only as the Simbul, who was known to be her apprentice. Ilione died in 1320 of the plague which was ravaging the Inner Sea, and the Simbul has ruled the land ever since with wisdom and an awesome arsenal of magical abilities.

The Simbul is known to be one of the most powerful sorcerers in Faerûn (and possibly Toril), and her abilities are equal to or greater than such celebrated mages as Elminster of Shadowdale and Khelben Blackstaff of Waterdeep. Now known as one of the Seven Sisters and a powerful shapeshifter and plane traveler, she is a dedicated foe of Thay. Although she has been known to disappear from Aglarond for long periods, leaving the council to govern in her absence, she always returns. The Red Wizards hate the Simbul with a rare degree of vehemence, even for them, and would do anything to rid the world of her. For her part, the Simbul seems amused by the wizards' petty attempts at vengeance and does as she pleases. In the words of Waterdhavian Mirt the Moneylender, "That lady—she goes her own way."





## People and Society

**A**glarond is an unusual society in that its population and government are both divided by two different and distinct groups—humans and half-elves. Although the two races once faced each other with distrust, fear, and even outright violence, most have managed to set aside their differences. Confronted by the threat of Thay and its Red Wizards, the Aglarondans have created a united and peaceful nation.

### Humans

The humans of Aglarond have not strayed far from their origins. They remain a race of sturdy, no-nonsense fisherfolk, although they have since diversified, becoming farmers and herdsman as well. Aglarond remains an agrarian and insular nation, held together by its ruling council and the constant threat of the Red Wizards.

The human culture of Aglarond is independent and hardy. As a holdover from the racial wars, the humans of Aglarond usually remain close to coastal cities. Isolated from the outside world both by geography and choice, Aglarondan humans grant their loyalty but slowly, yet they are faithful friends to those who earn their trust. Aglarondans are known throughout the Sea of Fallen Stars as a simple and provincial but earnest and trustworthy folk who can be relied on to deal fairly with outsiders.

Although they are, by and large, a serious and hard-working people, they enjoy revelry and raucous celebration during their off-hours. Aglarondan beer and liquor are simple but potent, and their men sing songs that vary from grim and heroic ballads to brash, bawdy ditties sung carefully out of the earshot of children and spouses.

In years gone by, many humans harbored a deep resentment and even hatred toward the half-elves who had driven them from the Yuirwood. Today, that sentiment has mostly died out, and the humans of Aglarond happily share power with their half-elven brethren. Most of those humans who refused to accept the new order migrated to the wind-swept land of Altumbel, but a few remained behind, inhabiting the bleak settlements of the Fang. Today, those who live there (often contemptuously called *Fangers*) are isolated and xenophobic, only barely acknowledging their role as Aglarondan citizens.

Aglarondan humans are of mixed heritage. The first human settlers originated from lands all around the Sea of Fallen Stars, and the fisherfolk who began arriving in the 750s were a dusky-skinned people of Untherite extraction from the ancient nation of Chessenta. Adventurers and immigrants from other lands added to the mix. Modern Aglarondans are a sturdy, dark-haired race with brown or blue eyes, with men averaging 5'8" in height, and women 5'2". They are not exceptionally strong but are very tough and can endure great hardship without complaint.

A motley mix of cultural heritages makes Aglarondan dress and decoration highly varied. In eastern Aglarond—Osker, Furthinghome, and Dlusk—humans wear tunics and trousers woven of bright colors, embroidered with black thread in a variety of naturalistic patterns such as vines, roses, and abstract designs. They favor silver and bronze jewelry—rings, circlets, necklaces, earrings, and bracelets.

The Fangers, inhabitants of the cape known as the Fang, are a dour and suspicious lot and their dress reflects this, consisting of dark smocks with trousers for men and skirts for women. Though they sometimes embroider their garments with gold or silver thread, personal decoration and jewelry is rare. Fanger men wear felt caps or broad-brimmed hats, the better to conceal their crabbed and sullen expressions.

The humans of western Aglarond—Corth, Urst, Urve, and Ingdal's Arm—take much of their heritage from the pirates and other outlaws who once lived there and often dress in flamboyant garments of contrasting but basic colors such as yellow and blue or black and white. Bandannas, headbands, ear- and noserings, necklaces, and jeweled brooches are favored, though most simple folk cannot afford such expensive ornamentation. Western Aglarondan everyday dress is more simple—brown or white tunics with little decoration.

A sturdy, no-nonsense race, Aglarondan humans have little use for magic or blathering mystics—the bad example of the Red Wizards is taken by most Aglarondans as “proof positive” that sorcery is a corrupting tool of wickedness. That many Aglarondan monarchs (including the land's current queen) have been powerful wizards is of little consequence. Most magic is bad, the Aglarondans rationalize, but it can be used for good by especially





powerful or saintly individuals, which Aglarondan rulers unquestionably are in the eyes of their subjects. The Simbul may be a sorceress, but to her subjects she is an Aglarondan sorceress, and therefore can do no wrong. Should a common citizen (one not gifted with the exceptional strength of character expected of Aglarondan kings and queens) dabble in magic, he or she is sure to come to grief.

Though the Simbul remains amused and sometimes impatient with this opinion among her subjects, she has not sought to change it, perhaps believing the Aglarondans' attitude only bolsters their determination in opposing the Red Wizards. Those few Aglarondan children who display magical aptitude she takes as her own apprentices (with their parents' permission, of course, which is usually eagerly granted) and trains to serve the nation to the best of their abilities. These wizards, called the *Simbul's Children*, often travel throughout the Sea of Fallen Stars and the Unapproachable East, watchful for threats against Aglarond and serving as the Simbul's informants.

## Half-Elves

The other major inhabitants of Aglarond are the half-elves of the Yuirwood, who rule the nation in cooperation with the coastal humans. These are the descendants of the once-proud Yuir, the wild elves who once ruled Aglarond's interior—and whose heritage was saved through the intervention of human adventurers and hunters.

Aglarondan half-elves represent the only major population descended from humans and wild elves. They are a beautiful people, with coppery skin (sometimes with a greenish tinge) and black or blonde hair. Elven pointed ears are present in about 50% of all half-elven births.

Most half-elves live in and around the Yuirwood, home of their elven ancestors. They are divided into various family and tribal groups and exist at many different stages of cultural development. Those half-elves who live in close proximity to humans have very human outlooks and personalities, live in houses or on farms, and mingle freely with their human fellows. The half-elves of the Yuirwood tend more toward their elven heritage the fur-





ther one goes into the forest, living in small communities built in the trees or clearings, or, in extreme cases, scraping out existences as nomadic hunter-gatherers, all but completely rejecting the modern nation of Aglarond. These wild half-elves are avoided by most other Aglarondans and are quite happy with the situation.

Unlike the humans of Aglarond, the half-elves of Yuirwood have few qualms about the practice of magic although, as in the remainder of Faerún (with the exception of the enchanted isle of Evermeet), elven magic has dwindled to a mere shadow of its former self. Some old women of the nomadic tribes still practice totemic magic (fully described in 9430 *Elves of Evermeet*), which involves the creation of enchanted images that generate potent magical effects.

The “wild” tribes of the interior also claim knowledge of many ancient secrets of Aglarond. The enchanted stone circles of the deep woods, they claim, sometimes act as doorways to other worlds and have in recent years become active once more, allowing enchanted creatures, both malicious and benign, to enter Aglarond. Wild elf stories also tell of ancient forest spirits of near-godlike power which slumber underground and have once more, with the expulsion of the humans from Yuirwood, begun to stir.

For the most part, the half-elves either actively support or at least do not actively oppose their union with the humans. A small group is rumored to exist that advocates a war of extermination in which the violent, upstart humans of the coast will be driven into the sea. Although there has been no absolute proof that such a group truly exists, rumors persist nonetheless.

As might be expected, dress varies depending upon a half-elven community’s location. Half-elves who live in coastal regions or in proximity to humans dress in the style of Aglarondan humans, as described above. Those of the Yuirwood choose to dress either in human style or in the minimal style of wild elves: loincloths, fur cloaks, and sometimes with the tattoos and complex braids of the Sy-Tel’Quessir.

## Halflings

A few hundred Hairfoot halflings, originally from Chessenta, maintain farmsteads around Mesring in eastern Aglarond. As with most halflings, they are friendly, outgoing, and often irritatingly optimistic. They have

maintained good relations with both the humans and the half-elves throughout Aglarond’s history, and their farms were largely spared during the war.

## Government and Politics

Since its unification by force at the hands of the half-elves in 1065, Aglarond has been ruled by a single monarch, who chooses his or her own successor and is advised by a ruling council with representatives from all Aglarondan communities.

The council has 30 members, 11 from Aglarond’s major cities and 19 from various villages, hamlets, and small settlements throughout the land. All communities with a mayor or other governing body are entitled to elect council members, but not all take advantage of the fact. The Fanger cities of Findar and Dahst, whose citizens refuse even to acknowledge that they are Aglarondan, have never sent representatives to the council. In recent times, a small but growing minority in those cities has called for full Fanger participation in the land’s government.

There is much speculation regarding who is to succeed the Simbul, for she is infamous for disappearing from Aglarond for weeks on end, leaving the country in the hands of her council. It is said that she has, indeed, chosen a successor and even committed a name to paper. The document bearing the name is in the keeping of the Harpers, to be revealed only upon proof of the Simbul’s death. Currently, rumor has it that the document is held by Elminster or Khelben Blackstaff, neither of whom would be at all willing to share such information.

The Simbul is undoubtedly the most powerful and active ruler Aglarond has ever had. While her goals are known only to her, authorities on the economics of the Inner Sea region have noted that the nation has become far more open to trade in the years since she took the throne. Thus far, she has continued Aglarond’s policies in relationships to the surrounding realms: trade and peace treaties with Thesk, friendly communications with Rashemen, and a constant watchful eye on Thay.

## Economy

Aglarond’s economy is largely self-contained and self-sufficient. The land produces enough to keep its citizens prosperous, plus a small surplus for trade. Though the





land has few contacts with the outside world, a few traders come here to exchange Aglarondan lumber, grain, gems, and copper for glass, iron, textiles, and produce; Aglarondan blood wine has become a thriving export since *Aurora's Whole Realms Catalogue* made it available to the populace of Faerûn. Aglarond has no trade fleet of its own, and its citizens are quite happy to remain at home and keep visits from foreigners to a minimum.

Most of the coastal humans are fisherfolk, though a substantial number tend farms and herd sheep, goats, and cows. The halflings are successful farmers, while the half-elves tend to follow the prevailing economy of the region they occupy. In human areas they fish and farm, while those who live closer to the woods tend orchards, hunt, or travel through the Yuirwood as primitive seminomads. Half-elves also craft fine musical instruments and artwork from wood and silver.

## Armed Forces

Aglarond's army has always been small but skilled. The elite corps of Foresters, rangers in service to the Aglarondan crown, occupy the Yuirwood, remaining in contact with more primitive half-elven tribes and keeping a close watch out for invaders from Thay or elsewhere. The bulk of Aglarond's army—archers, pikemen, and a small number of cavalry—are stationed in the fortresses of Glarondar and Emmech. These troops are the front line of Aglarondan defense, and are well trained and equipped. A unit of griffon-riders is stationed at Glarondar, but these are few in number and are used primarily for scouting and as dispatch riders.

Aglarond has no navy to speak of but uses small "coastboats" for transportation. These boats, long canoe-like craft with oars and lateen-rigged sails, are found throughout Aglarond, on the coast and along rivers. Aglarondan foresters are especially adept at using coastboats for raids against invading forces.

Although Aglarond's armed forces may seem few in number, all Aglarondans, even the old and infirm, are able and willing to take up arms to defend their homeland. Farmers and fisherfolk are more than willing to exchange plowshares and fishing poles for spears and pikes if the need arises. The Simbul's small army, no more than 6,000 in the best of times, could easily swell to five times that size if the call to action goes out.

## Aglarond's Religion

A sturdy and sensible folk, the Aglarondans keep religion in perspective. The gods exist (they walked the land during the Time of Troubles, didn't they?), the Aglarondans say, but as every thinking being knows, they tend to stay out of worldly affairs, leaving mortals to choose their own fate. And that is how it should be (so the line of reasoning goes), for they are subject to the same foibles and limitations as mortals, and if they tried to intervene on Toril disaster would surely result (remember again the Time of Troubles)!

All the same, Aglarondans pay homage to the gods, though they have few large temples. Chauntea the Great Mother is favored by farmers, while fisherfolk venerate Valkur the Mighty, a patron of sailors, and Selûne, lady of the moon and stars. Umberlee, evil goddess of the sea, is reluctantly acknowledged and is widely held in disdain. Half-elves worship the human deities which suit their occupations (as well as forest deities such as Mielikki and Silvanus) or the Seldarine, and many pay homage to both in deference to their mixed heritage.

There is no real priestly class in Aglarond, although the few real temples in the land are staffed with clerics of the appropriate religion. Aglarondans attend worship services dutifully, or pay homage to the gods in their own way in private. Either is considered appropriate, and Aglarond's continued prosperity is taken as proof of divine favor.

## The Gods of the Yuir

In addition to their reverence for the Seldarine, the ancient Yuir elves worshiped a pantheon of forgotten gods that apparently vanished with the decline of the Yuir. There have been recent stirrings that the gods of the Yuir might soon return. A general description of several Yuir gods follows.

**Relkath of the Infinite Branches.** This powerful, chaotic, and unpredictable deity resembles a treat of enormous size. The Yuir claimed that he often strode the land and that great forests sprang up where his heavy, rooted feet touched the ground. He was a defender of the Yuir but sometimes victimized them as well, transforming priests into trees and villages into forests. Some half-elves believe Relkath is simply another face of the leaflord Rillifane Rallathil.





**Zandilar the Dancer.** A beautiful and seductive blue-skinned elven woman, Zandilar was a goddess of love somewhat like Hanali Celanil and Sune, although her portfolio was more oriented toward passionate, physical love, which burned hot and quickly but eventually died out. She was at once a joyful and tragic deity and is said to have used her feminine wiles to gain vital information from deities of other pantheons and to persuade human chieftains and kings to leave the Yuir in peace. Her worship is similar to that of the human deity Sharess.

**Elikarashae.** A mighty elven warrior who bore three great weapons: the spear *Shama*, which could speak to elven warriors of pure heart and noble mind; the sling *Ukava*, that never missed; and the club *Maelat*, which could only be wielded in defense of the Yuir. Elikarashae fought many of the Yuir's enemies and was finally lifted up to Arvandor and made a god.

## The Land

*A*lthough I realize that most people are only minimally aware of Aglarond's existence, it remains one of the most beautiful and magical of all Faerûn lands. After spending a considerable amount of time adventuring in the Western Heartlands and the Gray Land of Thar, my familiar wanderlust overcame me and I started looking for some new territory to explore.

Fortunately for me, my friend, the wild elf druidess Aerilaya—a woman who does not make friends easily—mentioned in passing that she planned on a trip to Aglarond in order to speak with the half-elven mystics who inhabit the deep interior of the Yuirwood. She implied that this was some kind of arcane mission from Queen Amlaruil of Evermeet, but Aerilaya seems to relish being mysterious and cryptic, so I can't be certain what her real motivations were.

We spent quite a bit of time in Aglarond, and came to love and cherish the land and its peoples. Aglarond sits in one of the most unenviable of positions in all Faerûn—facing down the evil of the Red Wizards and acting as the first line of defense against the zulkirs and their schemes. In spite of this, it remains a place of rare peace and beauty, home to strong and gentle people who defend their land to the East drop of blood.

—from Taylssa's report

## Altumbel

Though not a part of Aglarond proper, Altumbel's proximity to the nation necessitates its inclusion here. This stretch of peninsula was "founded" by the Untherite empire in 163 DR but was inhabited only by itinerant pirates and the odd hermit or two looking to escape from more populated domains. These were joined in the 1060s by the bitter human refugees fleeing from the half-elves of the Yuirwood. Their descendants are still extremely xenophobic and isolated (more so than the inhabitants of the Fang), wary of outsiders and outwardly hostile to nonhumans of any kind.

The refugees founded Spandeliyon, sometimes called the City of Pirates by Aglarondans. Despite its name, few pirates settle permanently in the city or even stay in its waters for long. The reason for this is simple: Since her ascension to the rulership of Aglarond, the Simbul has made it all too clear that she will not tolerate piracy in Aglarond's waters. Captured pirates are immediately put to death as agents of Thay. Most pirates feel that Altumbel is simply too close to her domain and choose not to tempt the Simbul's wrath.

## The Coast

*The dark sea heaved and pitched beneath us, threatening to upset our little rowboat. A damp, clinging fog rose from the Sea of Fallen Stars and the sun overhead was a dim, smoky yellow disk which shone only feebly through the chill clouds.*

*I cast a grim glance at Aerilaya, but the silly elven chit was still leaning precariously out over the water, slapping the surface in a curious pattern.*

*"How much longer do we have to put up with this foolishness?" I demanded. "I don't think your 'friend' is going to show up, and if we stay out here much longer, I'm afraid you'll capsize us."*

*Aerilaya shushed me loudly and returned to her slapping. Abruptly, the boat lurched, as if something large had struck us from below. Panic gripped me—the notion of dying at sea, swallowed by some huge malevolent beast has newer held much appeal.*

*But the anticipated sea monster newer materialized—in the way I'd expected, at any rate. A rounded, wide-eyed head broke the surface near our bow.*





Initially, I was appalled. "A seal?" I demanded. "Your friend is a gods-blasted seal?"

Then the creature hoisted itself from the water, hauling itself into our boat with the aid of webbed, humanlike hands. I stared in astonishment as the creature gazed at me, then removed its skin with the ease of a human removing a suit of clothes, and emerged a human-seeming female with long green hair and wide, staring eyes, her pale green skin bright with droplets of cold sea water.

I gaped. "You're . . ." I stuttered. "You're a selkie?"

She nodded, but did not speak. As I looked at her, I fully understood how selkies in their human form could easily steal the hearts of those who saw them.

"This is Nyssa," Aerilaya said. "She's a friend of mine."

We spent quite a long time in that little boat conversing with Aerilaya's friend, and the air of beauty and enchantment which she brought with her did not depart until Nyssa resumed her seal-form and vanished over the side.

"Welcome," Aerilaya said after Nyssa was gone, "to the seas of Aglarond."

— from Talyssa's report

Most of Aglarond's coastline consists of rocky cliffs and occasional white sand beaches fringed with scrub oak or beachgrass. Cities are built along the inlets of rivers or in lowlands between the cliffs on wide beaches or surrounding shoreline. The Aglarond coast is a wild and rocky place, periodically lashed by heavy rains or swathed in cold, clinging mists.

Beyond the rocky extents of Aglarond's coast, the Sea of Fallen Stars drops off sharply into a deep trench. Seasonal upwelling, when warm water rises bringing nutrients up from the depths, provides Aglarond with rich fishing grounds.

Many fish species inhabit Aglarond's waters: hake, tuna, cod, oceanic salmon, sole, halibut, and other edible varieties. Aglarondan fishing vessels rarely come home with empty nets, though the hazards of the high seas are considerable. Violent storms often appear with little warning, and the black, unplumbed depths of the Aglarondan seas harbor many hostile creatures, some of which rise to the surface wreaking terror and havoc upon those unlucky enough to be in the vicinity. Kraken, morkoth,







sahuagin, and dragon turtles have all been encountered in and around Aglarond, along with less malevolent species such as hippocampi, sea lions, and triton. Some reports tell of aquatic elf tribes seen in the area, but these have never been independently confirmed.

Given the ancient and mystic nature of much of Aglarond's territory, it is not surprising that several rare, enchanted species such as selkies, sirines, and marid have also been encountered. The half-elves of Aglarond believe that a great sea-god inhabits the sea nearby, keeping watch over a terrible sea-giant who was imprisoned here centuries ago. Certainly the diversity and rare beauty of Aglarond's coast is unusual, but whether this is due to divine means or not is a matter of individual belief.

## The Fang

This lone, rocky promontory, known as the Fang or South Fang, extends out into the deep waters of the Sea of Fallen Stars. The Aglarondan cities of Findar and Dahst are located along the Fang, although its far reaches are craggy and barren with few good locations for settlements. The remainder of the cape, continually battered by storms and heavy seas, remains largely unsettled save for the huts of a few sheep and goatherders.

The people of the Fang, known colloquially by the rather derogatory moniker Fangers, are surly and suspicious. Most are descendants of humans displaced by the half-elves in the 1060's, and they harbor a generations-long grudge against nonhumans. The Fang harbors neither inns nor friendly houses, for outsiders are not welcome here.

The country is virtually uninhabited at the extreme tip of the Fang, where the water foams vivid blue-green in summer, black in winter, and the vaporous spouts of migrating whales can be seen in the spring. Reefs in this area are treacherous and wrecked many ships before the Simbul declared that a lighthouse must be built there.

The Fang Light now stands at the end of the Fang, a gleaming white tower where a magical light burns day and night. A single keeper tends the light—a wizard named Thymar who treasures the solitude his position provides but never turns away those few travelers who venture into this region. Thymar probably offers the only hospitality that outsiders can find along the Fang's desolate landscape.

The pirate Quelzur Naismen (LE hm Inv14), a renegade Red Wizard who roams the Sea of Fallen Stars, has hatched a plan to take over the lighthouse, extinguish its light, and plunder the vessels which wreck themselves on the reef, but so far he has not yet put his scheme into action.

## Halendos

*We skirted the Yuirwood for several hours, guiding our horses along marshy stream banks and through grassy glades surrounded by stately oaks and willows. At length we reached a vast sylvan meadow, miles across, formed by a great semicircular hollow of the Yuirwood. It was an even greensward, broken here and there by colorful clumps of wildflowers, and with spinneys of cottonwood, blueblossom, and aspen. White cottonwood fluff blew through the air, and gentle birdsong echoed in our ears as we rode slowly, neither daring to speak.*

*The meadow's beauty seemed quite ancient, and almost alive—acutely aware of us as we mowed across it. On several occasions I fancied that I saw quick movement out of the corner of my eye, and twice heard a high, tinkling laughter, faint and far away, as if blown on an errant breeze.*

*"What is this place?" I finally asked. "Is it enchanted?"*

*Aerilaya smiled. "This is the Halendos," she said. "It's very old, and they say it's a fairy glade."*

*—from Talyssa's report*

The Halendos is a vast grassy meadow at the edge of the Yuirwood. A human city was founded here many years ago, but the half-elves burned the settlement to the ground during the war. A small village has since grown up on the site of the old city, but most of the Halendos remains in its original state. It is said that in old days the meadow was a meeting site for the green elves who once lived here, and that a fairy circle lies in its center, now overgrown with grass and flowers. Legends hold that the circle retains much of its power, and each night after moonrise enchanted creatures such as sprites, nixies, sphinxes, unicorns, and swanmays gather here. The circle is also said to draw hostile creatures such as minotaurs, chimerae, and manticores as well, so travelers should be careful of the region after dark.

During the day, pixies and sprites hide in the meadow, occasionally playing harmless pranks on passers-by or lurking at the edge of vision and giggling lightly. Some





trees here are said to harbor dryads, and the famous adventurer Torval Ironhelm was struck dead by a dryad he offended while traveling in the Halendos.

Narrow streams flow through the Halendos, and some are unnaturally filled with fish, frogs, crayfish, and similar creatures. While it might be easy for the hungry traveler to catch his or her dinner in the Halendos's streams, caution should be taken, for nixies live here as well, and some do not appreciate outsiders stealing "their" bounty. Words of appreciation to the nixies and to any other unseen forces in the meadow, spoken once while facing in each cardinal direction, are usually sufficient to forestall any truly dangerous mischief from these creatures.

## The Interior Uplands

*As we rode south from Velprintalar, the country around us grew wilder and less settled, and eventually all signs of human habitation had vanished. This, I noted, less than a day's ride from the settled coastline.*

*"Is the entire interior like this?" I asked Aerilaya.*

*She nodded, ducking to avoid the low-hanging branches of an ancient oak tree.*

*"It used to be much more heavily settled, before the war between the humans and the Cha-Tel'Quessir," the green elf replied, using her people's term for half-elves. "There were many farmsteads here, but they were overrun and abandoned. Look, over there."*

*I turned my gaze in the direction my companion pointed. There, nearly hidden beneath creepers and blackberry vines, lay the shape of an old farm house, its windows empty and dark and its roof partially collapsed. All around, the once-cultivated land had returned to the wild, with vines obscuring old buildings, grasses and thistles growing in luxuriant profusion.*

*I realized that the trail we rode down, now almost completely obscured, had once been a wagon road, with fences on either side. The fences had fallen or were hidden by lush foliage, and the rich fruit trees which had lined the road now grew freely, unpruned, hung with moss and mistletoe. The sun dappled the road ahead, and a cool breeze ruffled the abundant leaves.*

*"It's sad in a way," I said, "but it's also (very beautiful.)"*

*Aerilaya nodded. "I agree." She reached up and pulled two ripe green pears from a nearby tree. "We can at least be grateful that the farmers left us with lunch, however."*

*—from Talyssa's report*

Beyond the Aglarondan seacliffs the land changes to rolling hills, lush farmland, and occasional stands of trees. Willow, white oak, alder, birch, and cottonwood are common, growing thicker and wilder as one moves south from the coast and approaches the close-in reaches of the Yuirwood. The presence of such species as duskwood, silverbark, and the rare weirwood, often home to dryads or other fey species, is evidence of ancient elven inhabitation of the region.

While human and half-elven farms are common within 10 miles or so of the coast, they become rarer and eventually vanish altogether at the fringe of the Yuirwood. Once, farms were common throughout this area, but the half-elven campaign against encroaching humans drove the farmers out and left their farms to decay and return to the land. Houses slowly weathered away, now covered in vines and sprouting moss and grass, fences fell into disrepair, and old fields have gradually transformed into meadows, ponds, or marshes.

Rivers and associated marshland are common along the edges of the Yuirwood as well. Grasses, cattails, rushes, thistles, and marshland plants grow in profusion, and the still waters of the marshes also serve as hatcheries for hordes of voracious mosquitoes, which annoy travelers in the region. Willow, alder, sycamore, and oak rise majestically from the shores of rivers or from grassy islands in the midst of marshland.

The lands between the coast and the Yuirwood are lonely but beautiful places, where some of the fey creatures from the forest have begun to venture once more. Sprites and pixies, brownies and dryads, and nereids and nymphs have all been reported along the edges of Yuirwood and beyond. Less savory creatures such as banshees, greenhags, trolls, and the dreaded annis have also been reported in the region of late, as well as several varieties of lycanthrope. It may be that the wild lands of Aglarond, once thought to be cleared of hostile creatures, are growing hazardous again, although why this is no one knows.

## River UMBER

Originating in Thay and flowing down past the Umbergoth and into the Sea of Dlurg, the UMBER forms a natural barrier between Aglarond and Thay (and Aglarond and Thesk). Though several fish species dwell in the river, most Aglarondans refrain from fishing the UMBER,





fearing that the Thayans might have somehow managed to poison or otherwise taint the waters.

## The Sea of Dlurg

More of a firth or bay than a true sea, the Dlurg lies between Aglarond and Thesk. The cities of Dlusk and Osker and the Theskian settlement of Milvarune lie on the Dlurg and rely on its bounty. One of the richest fishing grounds in the Sea of Fallen Stars, the Dlurg is well sheltered from inclement weather and contains few hostile aquatic species.

## Shyvar Pass

This broad gap, varying from a hundred yards wide in places to 10 miles in others, lies between the Tannath and the jagged extents of Umbergoth. While this might seem like an ideal invasion route into Aglarond, its eastern approaches are guarded by the Umber Marshes and the River Umber itself, so that getting to the Shyvar Pass is a deadly adventure in itself. To the south lies the Watchwall and the fortress Glarondar, with its garrison drawn from the small Aglarondan army. Small patrols of cavalry ride through the pass at regular intervals, making sure that the Thayans aren't up to any mischief, but few Aglarondans take the threat of invasion through the Shyvar Pass seriously.

## Singing Sands

This stretch of wind-blown dunes, dotted with clumps of dry grass and stunted trees, lies along the northern bank of the River Umber. Here, in 1194 DR, an invading Thayan army was met and defeated by the forces of King Elthond. It was not an easy fight, and Aglarondan casualties were heavy, including Elthond himself. The brittle morale of Thayan forces was to blame for their defeat, for several gnollish legions, upon hearing a rumor that the Aglarondans were attacking from the rear, broke and fled at a crucial moment. In the wake of the battle, the women of Aglarond wandered the battlefield, claiming the bodies of the slain, weeping, and intoning singsong funeral chants from which the region got its name.

Singing Sands is of little importance beyond its historical role and the fact that it is regularly patrolled by

Aglarondan cavalry from Emmech. As a possible Thayan invasion route, Singing Sands remains in Aglarondan hands; due to its minimal economic significance, the Theskians are content to leave it at that.

## The Sunglade

*While within the Yuirwood one night, we camped along the edge of a forest clearing, which Aerilaya told me was called the Sunglade. It was much like the Halendos in appearance, though much smaller, but Aerilaya pointed out a circle of ancient standing stones near the center. Despite Aerilaya's admonitions, I approached the circle to inspect the stones and their workmanship. To my surprise, they seemed relatively new, as if they had only recently been quarried, and were covered in elaborate zoomorphic images and very old Espruar runes. Each stone bore an inscription to a different member of the Seldarine, the pantheon of elven gods; but second, smaller ring of stones in the center of the circle bore more mysterious inscriptions asking the aid and protection of such unfamiliar powers as Relkath of the Infinite Branches, Zandilar the Dancer, Elikarashae, and Magnur the Bear.*

*"Who are these?" I asked. "I've never heard of them."*

*Aerilaya looked at me with uncertain and nervous eyes. "They were the gods of this place," she said. "The Yuir worshipped them. It is said that they live still, slumbering beneath the earth of Yuirwood, and will some day return."*

*A brief chill ran up and down my spine. Mind you, I am among the most serious, no-nonsense individuals you would ever want to meet. I believe in the gods, and even worship them from time to time, but I'd prefer it if they just made it rain, kept monsters from eating us all, and otherwise left us alone.*

*In that moment, I felt a presence in the stone circle of the Sunglade—ancient and far away, but very much alive. And the most disturbing thing was the distinct sensation of hostility which washed over me. It was old, and it still slept, but it most assuredly did not like me.*

*Needless to say, I left the circle with great haste and did not return.*

*—from Talyssa's report*

Amid the confines of the Yuirwood is this pleasant, sunny glade, guarded by ancient willows and inhabited by butterflies and songbirds. In the center of the Sunglade is a circle of menhirs, magically protected against aging. This circle was dedicated to the worship of the





Seldarine, but also to those wilder, less predictable spirits that dwelled in the depths of the Yuirwood. The Yuir abandoned the site centuries ago as they retreated into the wood, but their enemies, the trolls and drow, were unable to destroy the site. Those who tried died or vanished mysteriously, so the circle was left alone.

Some half-elven tribes have returned to the circle in recent years and begun to worship the old spirits. Some even go so far as to claim that the spirits – Relkath, Zandilar, Magnar, and others – have begun to stir from slumber and will soon return. Exactly what these lost deities are and what form they will take when they return is anyone’s guess, but many half-elves claim that at least some of them are hostile to humans and might wish to drive the “interlopers” from Aglarond.

## Tannath

Tannath is the collective name for the craggy mountains that help guard Aglarond’s eastern frontier. Tall, rugged fault block mountains, the Tannath are consid-

ered unscalable but are flanked by wide passes: Tannath Gap to the west, and Shyvar Pass, between the Tannath and Umbergoth, to the east. Both passes are protected by the Umber Marshes and the River Umber, so Aglarondan patrols, originating in the fortress of Glarondar, are minimal.

Due to their steep slopes and bare terrain, the peaks of the Tannath have never been settled. Griffons nest at the highest reaches of the mountains, and ancient galebduhr live deep in the Tannath, far from human habitation. The range’s primary function is as an almost impenetrable rampart between Aglarond and Thay, one which can only be crossed by flying troops.

## Tannath Gap

The narrow stretch of flatwoods between Tannath and the River Umber, opposite Singing Sands, is known as Tannath Gap. The Gap’s terrain is soft and damp, covered with blue-needle pine and fir. A few hardy woodcutters and hunters call the Gap home, living in small





cabins or cottages along the Tannath piedmont where the climate is cool and pleasant.

Wildlife includes deer and smaller mammals such as fox, squirrel, badger, raccoon, and opossum. Otters and beavers inhabit streams, while hawks, crows, and herons are all common sights in the skies overhead. Cougar and cath shee, possibly descendants of those kept by the region's original elven inhabitants, are also found in the woods of Tannath Gap.

There are few enchanted and unnatural creatures in the Gap. Some hunters claim that years ago they killed a globular, a tentacled creature which spewed forth various other horrific monsters—a description that matches the dreaded deepspawn, probably planted here by drow or Thayans intent on mischief. Griffons are sometimes seen flying from the Tannath, and some believe that a small clan of werefoxes inhabits the woods, but these may only be wild tales.

The Aglarondans rarely patrol the Gap, since its close-in terrain would be rough going for any invader.

## Umbergoth

The towering ramparts of Umbergoth, the tallest mountain in Aglarond, stand guard over the nation's eastern borders. To the north lies Shyvar Pass, itself guarded by the Umber Marshes, and to the south the Watchwall. Umbergoth itself has never been scaled, and its lofty peak is always clad in snow, even in the hottest days of summer. Griffons, hippogriffs, and giant eagles have all been sighted near Umbergoth, and some stories mention asperii, the rare flying horses also known as windsteeds, occasionally visiting the mountain.

## Umber Marshes

This immense stretch of bogs, shallow streams, swampland, and mudflats lies in a no-mans-land between Thay and Aglarond. As such, they are considered to be Aglarond's first line of defense, for a direct assault on the nation would have to pass through this dismal and dangerous region.

All but impassable, the Umber Marshes are also home to many dangerous animal species including giant leeches, poisonous snakes, hydrae, shambling mounds, and trolls as well as clouds of stinging insects which carry various diseases.

While the Umber Marshes act as an effective barrier against living opponents and have foiled Thayan attacks on several occasions, they hold little terror for Thayan undead troops, who mindlessly march through the region heedless of their own losses.

## The Watchwall

This impressive length of solid stone protects Aglarond's western frontier, stretching from the fortress city of Glarondar to the slopes of Umbergoth. Built during the reign of King Brindor, the wall was raised by the galeb duhr of Tannath and Umbergoth in exchange for an unknown magical service. The wall is sometimes referred to as the "Giant's Wall" due to the popular belief that it was built by giants rather than galeb duhr.

The wall is completely seamless, 30 feet in height and 10 feet wide, unbroken by gate or window. The Watchwall is nothing less than an artificial mountain built to withstand attack. Barracks and other small buildings have been constructed along the eastern side, and units of Aglarond's small army patrol its length. Beyond the wall lies the grim desolation of the Umber Marshes, from which undead legions or other minions of the Red Wizards sometimes emerge.

## The Yuirwood

*The cool green woods closed in around us as we rode. Fragrant firs and delicate-leafed alder crowded together, rising from a rich carpet of underbrush, and sunlight from overhead dappled the forest floor with a weaving pattern of light.*

*"My people once lived here," Aerilaya said, quietly. "The Yuir were wild elves who inhabited these woods centuries ago."*

*"What happened to them?" I asked.*

*She shrugged. "The same thing that happened to most of my people. They died out from disease, warfare . . . perhaps even boredom. Those who did not sail to Eoermeet interbred with the humans who colonized the area and now they are all Cha-Tel'Quessir – half-elves."*

*—from Talyssa's report*

Although the coastal cities are vital to Aglarond's society and economy, the nation's heart lies deep in the shadowy reaches of the Yuirwood. Along its edges,





which are primarily low-lying wetlands, the Yuirwood is composed primarily of cottonwood, alder, and willow. As its elevation gradually rises toward its dark and crowded center, the proportion of dry climate species such as maple, fir, dogwood, and hemlock increases. Shrubs along the forest floor include vine maple, fireweed, goatbeard, sedge, and several different species of fern and berry—blackberry, snowberry, serviceberry, salal, salmonberry, and wild strawberry. Few travelers lost in the Yuirwood risk starvation; for those who prefer redder fare, common animals include squirrel, fox, bear, cougar, lynx, rabbit, badger, skunk, and porcupine.

Yuirwood is an ancient and mystical wood. Although human encroachment drove much of the land's enchantment away, today the Yuirwood may be slowly regaining some of its lost magic under the guardianship of its half-elven inhabitants.

One continuous piece of magic has kept Aglarond safe for centuries, though most are completely unaware of it. In the simplest terms, the Yuirwood simply prevents detection, spying, and location magic from scrying into its depths. It does not block the wood completely from magical sight; a wizard peering at the Yuirwood through a crystal ball still sees the wood, but he cannot spy into any specific location, nor can he magically track any individual in the wood. The wizard is not aware of this obstruction; it appears to him as if there are no significant locations, or that the individual he seeks is not in the wood.

As an extension of this, the peninsula is regarded as an unimportant bit of land with no features of note. The subtle magic of the Yuirwood causes people to simply "overlook," Aglarond as they consider the Realms. This feature has deterred the Red Wizards at various times, as their impression of the land was "not worth conquering." As Aglarond's history indicates, this protection is far from perfect; determined Red Wizards have overcome this elusive effect and proceeded to attack. The magic deters only casual observers, not those with vendettas or set agendas.

The deepest and most remote sections of Yuirwood are truly ancient, holding many signs of the region's original inhabitants. Stone circles and menhir, often overgrown with grass or moss, are sprinkled throughout the wood, and some of these still retain their old magic, glowing unearthly colors in the light of the full moon or

serving as meeting places for sprites, pixies, and other faerie creatures. Although few travelers venture deeply into the Yuirwood, a handful have returned with stories of how some menhir circles create enchanted doorways to other realms like the enchanted island of Evermeet, other elven lands, and even distant worlds.

The insular half-elves of the deep woods do not appreciate visitors, but a few adventurers who have managed to gain their friendship tell of half-elven legends which claim that the ancient forest spirits still live, ready to defend their realm against invasion and even against the encroachment of upstart humans. Many of the stone circles and monuments, these half-elves claim, do lead to other worlds, and sometimes creatures from those other worlds enter Toril through them. It is said that when the humans came the enchantment of the circles faded, but over the last few seasons it has begun to return. This, the half-elves believe, is the source of the enchanted creatures (both good and evil) now returning to the Yuirwood.

## Cities of Aglarond

Aglarond's large cities are located along its seacoast. The half-elven settlements near the Yuirwood are smaller, usually with no more than a few hundred inhabitants, and many of these are only semi-permanent.

Nestled in coves or inlets, hugging the coast beneath towering granite cliffs or perched atop the cliffs themselves, Aglarondan cities are supported by farming, ranching, or fishing. Some structures such as council halls, estates of the wealthy, and boat- and warehouses, are built of fieldstone. Poorer citizens live in thatched-roofed huts, but most homes are constructed along uniquely Aglarondan lines. These homes, crowded along narrow streets in coastal communities, are shingled with dark, weathered wood and roofed with shake or tile. Roofs are steep-sided, often studded with dormers, cupolas, and balconies, and two- or even three-story houses are common.

### Corth

Located along a small cove about 20 miles west-southwest of Velprintalar, Corth is a fishing village with a population of around 500. Its small fishing fleet brings





the community considerable prosperity during the spring and summer months, when outsiders visit to enjoy Corth's white sand beaches and rustic atmosphere. During fall and winter, Corth closes its shutters against the chill north wind and heavy seas and huddles in isolation, its citizens remaining indoors as much as possible and rarely, if ever, venturing onto the heaving gray sea.

Corth Cove is a small, semicircular formation with good shelter from the weather. In the exact center of the cove is a craggy rock which juts above the waves. Old Corth fishermen claim that merfolk hold council there on nights with a full moon. Outsiders who visit the rock claim that this is nothing more than a fairy tale, but old hands insist the merfolk are visible only to those with open minds and true hearts.

Corth boasts several inns, all built in the rustic and charming Aglarondan style. The best of these is the Mermaid's Purse, a narrow, three-story building constructed of gray weathered wood, covered in shingles, with an alarmingly steep roof and dormers in each third-floor sleeping room. Innkeeper Droze was once a fisherman, but he was badly injured in an accident and retired to run this establishment. Rooms are small but very comfortable, and food consists of fish caught in nearby waters, with vegetables and beef occasionally available. Droze entertains visitors with tales of how he once rescued a mermaid and was given three wishes by her grateful king.

## Dahst

Along the desolate east coast of the Fang lies Dahst, a settlement of 300 souls divided between a cliff-top main settlement and a small community of fisherfolk along the beach some 200 feet below, which is accessible via a treacherous cliffside trail.

Few outsiders visit Dahst; its people are provincial and distrustful of outsiders. Many here are descendants of refugees from the war with the half-elves, and harbor a bitter hatred of the Cha-Tel'Quessir. Dahst's connection with Aglarond is therefore only minimal at best, and the village has no representative on the ruling council.

There is also conflict between the fisherfolk of the seashore and the herdsmen of the heights, with each thinking of the other as stupid, unsophisticated, and prone to acts of wickedness.

Not surprisingly, Dahst has no inns or facilities for visitors and wants little or nothing to do with the outside world.

## Dlusk

Dlusk, with a population of nearly 1,000, lies near the mouth of the River UMBER. The town is another collection of weathered wooden buildings and narrow, winding streets. The city serves as a fishing center, with over 100 vessels in its harbor as well as a trade and farming center.

Prosperous and friendly, Dlusk hosts a yearly spring festival which draws visitors from all over Aglarond as well as neighboring lands Thesk and Chessenta. Inns and taverns throughout Dlusk stay open around the clock during the festival, and the city presents many events, including contests, parades, outdoor feasts, performances by minstrels, dancers, acrobats, other entertainers, and more.

Dlusk has many colorful citizens. One such is Old Gebe, a gentleman of uncertain age who gives free hayrides to children and visitors during the spring festival, all the while telling tall tales and singing songs in praise of his two mules, Sara and Corey, and of mules in general. Gebe is a rich source of local legend, gossip, and valuable information about affairs in the Unapproachable East.

## Emmech

This grim stone fortress, originally constructed by King Brindor to counter nomadic raiders from Thesk, has since served its purpose numerous times against the legions of Thay.

Emmech proved its value as a citadel in the Thayan invasion of 1194. Forces based at the fortress sallied forth to meet the Red Wizards' legions at Singing Sands. The battle, though it resulted in an Aglarondan victory, was a hard-fought affair. Without the supplies and support facilities provided by Emmech, King Elthond's army would in all likelihood have perished.

Today, Emmech houses nearly 2,500 Aglarondan troops—a substantial portion of the Simbul's army (most of the remainder are stationed at the fortress Glarondar). A town of 500 has sprung up around Emmech as well,





providing services to the garrison, managing Emmech's small harbor and doing some trading with Thesk.

The fortress itself is a squat, gray mass of stone, ugly but functional, perched on a low hill amid the scattered buildings of Emmech town's inhabitants. Bristling with towers and parapets, its walls fully crenelated, Emmech contains sufficient facilities and storage to keep the garrison and all its townspeople supplied through six months of siege.

Though Emmech's location—somewhat separated from the rest of Aglarond—seems to make it a prime target for absorption by Thesk, the Theskians long ago decided to leave the citadel and its surroundings in the hands of the Aglarondans. History has proved that the settlement lies on a possible Thayan invasion route, and the Theskians are more than content to let Aglarondan forces spend their effort patrolling the area, leaving Theskian citizens to more profitable pursuits.

## Findar

Located on the west side of the Fang, Findar is as isolated and unfriendly as Dahst. Findar is home to the descendants of many refugees from the war with the half-elves, and nonhumans are unpopular here.

Findar lies entirely beneath the sea cliffs, along a nearly mile-wide strip of coastal lowlands. The land here is poor and sandy, sprouting only stunted trees and beachgrass, so the inhabitants of Findar must make their living as fisherfolk. Setting out to sea in small fishing boats, they bring in only large enough catches to keep themselves alive and fed during the stormy winter months.

## Furthinghome

One of the first human settlements in Aglarond, Furthinghome has over 15,000 inhabitants and is one of the nation's most important port cities.

Built around a central circular road and a pleasant cobblestoned public park, Furthinghome contains many very old buildings, built both of stone and the more traditional weathered wood. It also holds a crowded, muddy slum, the largest concentration of poverty in Aglarond. These unfortunate folk live in lean-tos and thatch huts, scraping out livings as herdsmen, small farmers, or beggars.

Furthinghome has a number of glass greenhouses built by wealthy citizens for the cultivation of tropical flowers and herbs. Furthinghome does quite a business in flowers, in fact, and is famous for its dahlias, roses, and tropical orchids.

Furthinghome also serves as a trade city, second in importance only to Velprintalar. Since its port is small and relatively shallow, Furthinghome is visited only by merchants with smaller vessels. These bring in fabric, spices, finished wood products, tools, and weapons in exchange for fish, produce, and the small amount of Yuirwood timber the half-elves allow to be harvested.

One of Furthinghome's most unusual features is the large number of wild peacocks that roam the surrounding countryside, breeding unrestrainedly and often terrifying unsuspecting travelers with their wild, human-sounding shrieks. These peacocks are descended from a small flock imported by the eccentric Lord Ceraut, a Mulhorandi nobleman who lived in Furthinghome several decades ago.

Lord Ceraut's estate, a vast demesne that once boasted extensive gardens, topiary, hedges, fountains, and pleasant graveled pathways all surrounding a fine stone mansion, has been abandoned for many years, and has gone thoroughly to seed. The mansion, said by local children to be haunted, is overgrown with vines and has fallen into disrepair. The once-beautiful gardens have gone completely wild, with many exotic species spreading into the countryside around Furthinghome.

## Glarondar

A black stone fortress raised from beneath the Umber Marshes by King Brindor's galeb duhr allies, Glarondar lies at the southern end of the Watchwall near the edges of Yuirwood and houses over 3,500 troops, the bulk of Aglarond's army. The ever-present threat of Thay makes Glarondar vital to Aglarond's security, and the Simbul sees to it that the fortress is kept in good condition and that its garrisons remain well equipped and supplied.

The fortress itself is built of a shiny black material that looks something like obsidian but appears to be virtually indestructible. The galeb duhr built the fortress at the same time they raised the Watchwall, along with magical assistance from King Brindor and his wizards.







A town of 1,000 has grown up around the western side of the citadel, away from the sickness of the UMBER Marshes. As with the people who live near the fortress Emmech, the inhabitants of Glarondar town are in the business of supplying the garrison soldiers and keeping them entertained. The town lies between the fortress and the edges of Yuirwood and has a large half-elven population, which lives among the humans with few conflicts. Less civilized half-elves from the forest often visit the town to trade and visit with relatives.

### Halendos Village

Located along the edge of the Halendos meadow, built on the site of an old human city destroyed by the half-elves, Halendos is a sleepy community of farmers, herders, and a few shopkeepers. Its citizens are mostly human, though they are strongly influenced by the Yuir half-elves and by the mystical nature of the place where they live. It is said that a higher proportion of children from Halendos grow up to be wizards, and many of the

town's residents are subject to prophetic dreams and other inherent magical abilities.

The Simbul visits the Halendos when she can (usually in the form of a simple farmer or trader), searching for magically talented individuals to take as apprentices and hearing the prophesies of the residents. It is said that one such prophesy warned her of a covert Thayan plot against Aglarond, enabling her to foil the threat before it even came to light.

Outsiders stay at the Horse and Cart, an inn run by the half-elven Langen family, but often feel somewhat uncomfortable and out of place in this small but strangely magical village.

### Ingdal's Arm

*The edge of the Yuirwood loomed before us, all dark trees brightly dappled with sunlight.*

*"There," said Aerilaya. "That's where she lives."*

*Nestled among fruit trees at the very edge of the Yuirwood lay a rambling mansion, slate-roofed and whitewashed. As*





we drew near, a dozen or so sprites flew down from an apple tree to perform intricate aerial maneuvers around us as we rode slowly onward.

*"This house belongs to the Masked One," said a female sprite, hovering in the air a foot or two from my nose. "You'd better have legitimate business with her or she'll turn you into a garden rake or something."*

*"Be off with you!" Aerilaya snapped. "She's a friend of mine – or don't you remember me?"*

*– from Talyssa's report*

The westernmost of Aglarond's cities was the site of the final battle between the half-elves and Aglarond's human settlers. With the defeat of the humans, the modern state of Aglarond was born, where humans and half-elves share power.

Ingdal's Arm lies at the border of Altumbel, the realm to which many humans who refused to share power fled in 1065. It is a small and pleasant fishing village, its population of 1,000 divided equally between humans and half-elves. The woods and meadows beyond Ingdal's Arm are home to small farmers, herdsman, and hunters of various races.

Several prominent adventurers, including the mysterious woman known as the Masked One, have retired here. The Masked One's estate lies along the edge of the Yuirwood nearby, and visitors are discouraged by a tribe of sprites who live with her. Those lucky enough to be granted an audience with the adventuress find her to be gracious and friendly, providing considerable information on current events in the region, especially in Thay, although no one knows can say how she knows so much about that dreaded land. The Masked One lives up to her name and allows no one to see her face. The last individual who attempted to unmask her is said to be currently serving as a teapot in the Masked One's kitchen.

## Mesring

This city of 1,000 is the last of the large farming cities originally founded by human settlers. All others were overrun and abandoned during the war with the half-elves. Today Mesring acts as a meeting and trading center for the farmers and herdsfolk of the surrounding lands. Inns, general merchandise stores, warehouses, and

homes comprise Mesring proper, while dozens of farmsteads lie around the surrounding countryside.

Most Mesringers are human, but about a third are halflings, descendants of hair-foot colonists from Chesenta who came here with the first wave of human settlers. Halfling farms were generally spared the scourge of the half-elves' vengeance since they always maintained good relations with the Cha-Tel'Quessir. The mayor of Mesring is, in fact, a halfling named Tumbo Oakbarrel. That the mayor holds a largely ceremonial function makes little difference to Tumbo, who lives in a pleasant mansion on the edge of town and throws parties in grand style.

## Orithar

Located near the windswept desolation of the Fang's eastern shore, Orithar is not nearly as isolated as Dahst and Findar but does contain a large number of refugee descendants. There is much bitterness toward the half-elves in Orithar, but newer human families are less stem in their resolve and believe that the best thing for the future is to forgive the past. Conflict between these two groups has divided Orithar and made it a tense and unhappy place of late.

Like most settlements in this region, Orithar gains most of its sustenance from fishing, though a few farmers and herders live in the area. New residents wish to open the settlement up to trade, so a few outsiders have begun to visit Orithar, bringing mercantile goods and forcing more provincial villagers to confront the realities of the outside world.

## Osker

A lonely fishing settlement with 700 inhabitants, Osker is a picturesque huddle of steep-roofed, weathered wooden buildings clustered around a central tower. The tower is also built of darkened wood and contains an advanced, intricately constructed clock built by an eccentric dwarf named Snorri Rockhammer, who lived in Osker for a short time several decades ago. The clock is quite a wonder, chiming the quarter hour and presenting a procession of fantastic animals—dragon, mantichore, chimera, giant, unicorn, and pegasus—each day at noon.





## Urst

Located near the edge of the Yuirwood, Urst is a settlement of nearly 1,000, home primarily to fisherfolk and herdsman, as the marshy land surrounding the Yuirwood is unsuitable to farming.

The coastal portion of Urst is another typical Aglarondan village, with narrow streets, crowded wooden houses, a small anchorage, and a fishing fleet. A road rises up a gentle slope south of town to gentle grassy hills, where fieldstone and thatch houses serve as home to the humans and half-elves who oversee the sheep, goats, and cows that graze in the surrounding countryside.

## Urve

Urve is the only Aglarondan coastal settlement with a mostly half-elven population. Human fishermen live in wooden shanties along the waters edge, tending their fishing boats, mending nets, laying out fish to dry, and keeping to themselves. They maintain good, if somewhat distant, relations with the half-elves who live along the edge of the Yuirwood nearby. The half-elves tend orchards and craft artwork, which they trade with the half-elves of the deep Yuirwood, and with the small trickle of merchants who visit Urve.

Like Corth, Urve is a popular vacation spot for Aglarondans and the few outsiders who know of its existence. Several first-class inns serve good food and provide comfortable lodging for reasonable rates.

## Velprintalar

This largest Aglarondan city is home to over 35,000 citizens, and functions as the nation's main link with the outside world. The only major port in Aglarond, Velprintalar is a showcase of Aglarondan architecture, with numerous narrow buildings jumbled together. From above, the city is a maze of streets, steep roofs, gables, and cupolas. Velprintalar is unwallled and has never had to defend itself against invaders.

The Simbul makes her home here in a pleasant green palace when she isn't off somewhere disguised as a bookshelf or baking pan. She meets with the ruling council in the adjoining council hall, but due to her adventurous ways, she is only there for half of the council's meetings.

## Map Key

### 1. Harbor

Aglarondan fishing vessels and the small trickle of foreign trading ships which visit this land make port here.

### 2. Docks

The Velprintalar docks include cranes for offloading cargo and limited drydock facilities. A number of small warehouses also line the waterfront, for storage of off-loaded cargo prior to shipment.

### 3. Beach

Aglarondan fishing vessels are hauled up here at the end of the working day.

### 4. Drying Beach

Nets and the fish harvest are dried on this beach, tended and turned by the children of Aglarondan fisherfolk.

### 5. Nytus the Shipwright

Nytus (NG hm F3) is a retired sailor who became a shipbuilder. His fishing vessels and larger merchant ships are of excellent quality; his skill is known to shipbuilders throughout the Sea of Fallen Stars, who sometimes come to see him for advice or commissions.

### 6. Harbor Light

This gray stone lighthouse contains a magical fire kept burning by the wizard Vuraz (LG hm M5).

### 7. The Paladin Inn

This well-appointed inn is the best in town, catering to noblemen, wealthy merchants, visiting dignitaries, and the like. Rooms are 5 gp per night, which includes fruit and ale for breakfast. Supper is an extra 5 sp and consists of sumptuously prepared fish or fowl with fine Aglarondan wine.

### 8. The Sailor's Home

A modest inn which caters to travelers, mariners, fishermen, and merchants of limited means, the Sailor's Home provides rooms for 2 sp per night, with an extra 1 cp for supper—usually fish, but sometimes poultry or beef. Innkeeper Mharus (NG hm F1) is a respected and friendly man with many contacts in the city.





### 9. Council Hall

The Aglarondan ruling council, which advises the Simbul and handles the daily affairs of the nation, meets here once a month. Each settlement in Aglarond sends a representative to these meetings, which the Simbul attends if she is not off on an obscure mission of her own.

The hall is a rambling, dark structure built of weathered wood in traditional Aglarondan style, with high peaked roofs, gables, chimneys and cupolas, all looking down on the bustling city below. It has been added to over the years and the interior is now quite a maze of halls, meeting rooms, sleeping rooms for visiting councilors or diplomats, storage rooms, and kitchens.

### 10. Simbul's Palace

On a hill overlooking the city lies the palace of the land's ruler, the Simbul. This palace was originally built during the reign of Brindor, first king of Aglarond, but this wooden structure later burned to the ground. It has since been replaced by a structure built of pale green stone imported from Mulhorand. The palace is a delicate

and graceful structure, standing like a fairy castle on the hill above the crowded streets of Velprintalar. Needless to say, the Simbul has augmented the palace with multi-layered protective spells.

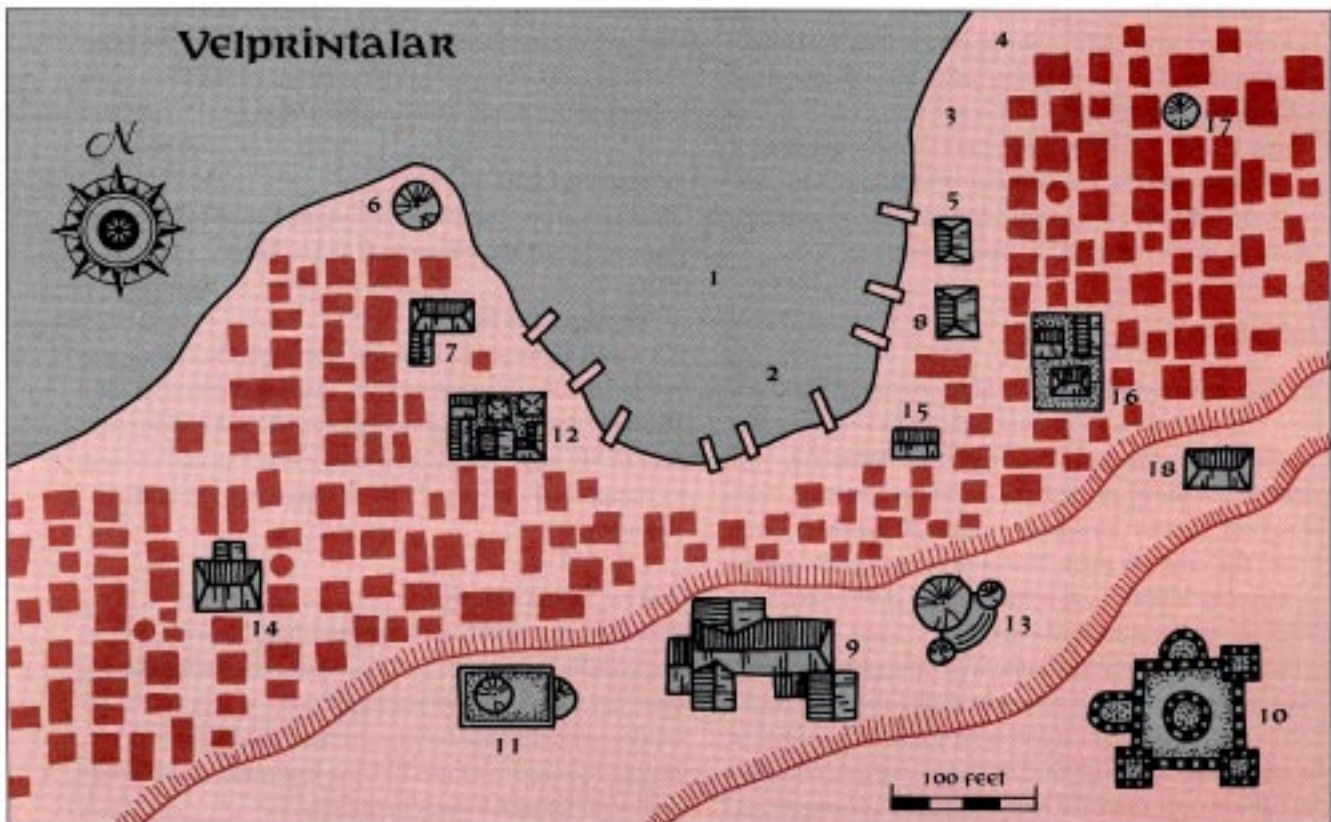
The Simbul lives here when she is in town, which is not terribly often, given her mysterious disappearances and missions against the Red Wizards of Thay. Other occupants include servants, visiting councilors, other wizards, army officers, foresters, and visiting Yuir elves.

### 11. Temple of Chauntea

A dozen Chauntean monks make their home here, leading worship, healing the sick, and brewing a potent ale that is said to include fermented parsley. They are led by Abbot Dalmar (NG hm C7), who is said to have a great fondness (in the eyes of some, perhaps a little too great) for his own ale.

### 12. Marketplace

Here, Aglarondans and some foreigners come to exchange goods. Farmers bring their grains, vegetables, and





fruits; herdsmen bring milk, cheese, fleece, and animals; fishermen trade their catch of hake, tuna, salmon, lobster, crab, and eel; and foreign merchants bring many goods, including cloth, spices, furniture, clothing, and art works. The marketplace is busiest during spring and summer. As the weather cools and the rains come during fall, activity gradually declines, eventually becoming empty and deserted beneath the windy, leaden skies of winter.

### 13. Temple of Selûne

High priestess Dyltharra (CG hef P8) leads services in this white, domed temple. Six lesser priestesses assist her and maintain contact between the Simbul, the Council, other temples of Selûne, and miscellaneous forces of good such as the Harpers.

### 14. Lady Myta's House

Once the residence of an influential half-elf noblewoman, this palatial structure now houses an informal social organization started by her descendants, members of an antihuman faction. Today, half-elven members of this "club" (which has no formal name) meet here, discuss current affairs, and speculate about the possibilities of throwing the humans out of Aglarond and returning to the glory days of the Yuir elves. These individuals, whose nominal leader is the half-elf warrior Guthrae (CN hem F10), stay in contact with other secret antihuman groups in Aglarond and may someday decide that they are strong enough to make a grab for power. Thus far, they are a small minority with little political power.

### 15. Foresters' Hall

This long, low structure, built of rough logs, chinked with clay and decorated with carvings and totemic emblems, is a gathering place for the Simbul's foresters, the elite rangers who patrol the Yuirwood and help keep Aglarond safe from invasion. As most foresters are half-elves, this hall is a haven for elven culture, covered with the ancient runes of the Yuir and with various artifacts found in the depths of the forests. The foresters are not afraid to show their human sides, either, for this hall is the scene of frequent feasting, drinking, and celebrating, often going long into the night and disturbing the hall's neighbors.

### 16. Silverhall

Traditional home of the Silver family, a group of half-

elves who maintained good relations with the humans throughout the nation's early conflicts, Silverhall is one of the oldest structures in Velprintalar. Silverhall is a long, rambling airy building with slender towers, spacious lawns, and extensive grounds, including small fanes, guest houses, and gazebos.

Matriarch Donya Silver (CG hef M11) is an accomplished sorceress and friend to the Simbul, and members of her family serve as soldiers and foresters of the Aglarondan army. The Silvers also maintain trading contacts, caravans, and merchant vessels throughout the eastern half of the Realms.

### 17. Sumcha's Tower

A self-proclaimed "merchant prince" who moved here from Sembia over a decade ago, Sumcha (N hm T12) has maintained this strange tower, along with his extensive family and staff of servants, ever since. Most Aglarondans like him, though they find him a bit strange. He contributes to many charities and has provided assistance to indigent Aglarondans, helped renovate the Council Hall, and even purchased weapons for the Aglarondan army.

What most do not know is that Sumcha is not a merchant at all but was once one of the most accomplished burglars in the Heartlands. Forced to flee after stealing a large cargo of goods which turned out to be owned by the Black Network of Zhentil Keep, Sumcha went underground in one of the most backwater nations he could find—Aglarond. He has since retired from thievery and keeps to himself, trying to avoid the attention of the Zhentarim and their allies. He is a loyal Aglarondan citizen, for he feels that a healthy and independent Aglarond helps him and his loved ones remain safe.

### 18. Barracks

A small unit of Aglarondan soldiery—about 250 footmen and 50 cavalry—are stationed here, mostly for show and what little internal security the Aglarondan council requires. They are under the command of Sir Tyman (CG hem F10), a fighter of considerable experience and courage. The soldiers occupy a large compound consisting of several linked Aglarondan mansions with the usual high roofs and elaborate architecture plus an attached stable and exercise yard.





## III: Rashemen



**T**o the north of Thay lies the cold beauty of Rashemen, land of berserkers. The Rashemaar (a self-given name that distinguishes them from Thay-born Rashemi) are a distant and insular people, much given to excesses in behavior and distrustful of outsiders. Their land is a place both old and mysterious, harboring many strange spirits and magical places. Our informant in this chapter is the dwarf warrior Sigurd of Earthfast, who has traveled to Rashemen on several occasions and has many friends among the berserkers. His account is of great value in understanding Rashemen—land which, along with Aglarond to the south, holds the Red Wizards of Thay in check, preventing their evil from spreading throughout the continent. For their part the Rashemaar eagerly claim this lonely and thankless task, racing to battle the legions of Thay whenever they are foolish enough to cross Rashemen's borders.

—Lhaeo

### Overview of Rashemen

**O**f all the nations in the Unapproachable East, the most isolated and mysterious is Rashemen. A cold, rugged land bordered on the north by the Falls of Erech, on the west by the icy waters of the Lake of Tears, on the east by the High Country, and in the south by Thay, Rashemen is inaccessible to most travelers, and its people are fiercely independent and notoriously suspicious of strangers.

Rashemen is ostensibly ruled by a warrior-monarch known as the *huhrong* or Iron Lord, but the real power in the land lies with the *wychlaran*, or Witches of Rashemen. These mysterious masked women are rumored to wield powerful, twisted magic and to draw sustenance from the land itself.

The people of Rashemen are commonly known as berserkers, but these near-mad warriors make up only part of Rashemen's total society. Most Rashemaar are warriors in any event, loyal to their land, the *huhrong*, and the witches. They are also possessed of an undying hatred for the Red Wizards of Thay, who have invaded their land at least 20 times and have always been driven back in defeat.

Despite Thayan paranoia, the people of Rashemen have never displayed any particular drive to invade or conquer other nations. While they gladly meet challenges like the Red Wizards and the Tuigan Horde as chances to prove themselves in battle, the Rashemaar seem happy enough in their own lands. Their honor-bound system encourages personal disputes enough to satisfy their need to establish battle prowess, and the land provides monsters as further outlets for Rashemaar aggressions. Occasional rumors of Rashemaar invasions—ranging from the Rashemaar as the next horde to the supposed plots and plans of the Witches of Rashemen—may float around the Realms, but only the Red Wizards are paranoid enough to take them seriously. Anyone else has only to look to Rashemen, observe the people there content under the guidance and protection of their witches, and know that such rumors are merely the suspicions of over-worked minds.





## History

**R**ashemen is a much older nation than either Thay or Aglarond. The region spent many years as disputed ground between the now-vanished empires of Narfell and Raumathar. Armies of both lands marched and retreated through Rashemen, and the native Rashemi themselves developed a warrior culture while fighting one or the other of the two warring states.

Years after the collapse of both Narfell and Raumathar, the Rashemi united to form a new nation with the assistance of the mysterious witches, who offered their protection of the new kingdom in exchange for the right to select Rashemen's kings and war leaders. The Rashemi, grateful for the witches' assistance against the land's various enemies, agreed, and the modern nation was formed around the year -75 DR.

The god-kings of Mulhorand (who ruled Thay for centuries), less ancient and ossified than they are today, desired Rashemen as a new province. In -45 DR a massive Mulhorand army marched on Rashemen through a route which was to become familiar to many Thayan armies: the Gorge of Gauros. The berserkers were ready for the easterners, however, and in a series of lightning strikes they sent the imperial army fleeing back across the frontier. The witches used their powers in battle as well, summoning deadly nature spirits to terrify the Mulhorandi.

The Red Wizards ousted the declining empire in 922 DR. The Thayans then turned their greedy gaze north to the frosty plains of Rashemen, which they saw as a convenient jumping-off place for operations in both the east and west. In 934 DR, the Red Wizards moved confidently into Rashemen, calm in the assurance that their powerful magic—which had freed them from the god-kings' theocracy—would shatter the Rashemaar and cow them into meek submission.

For the first time but far from the last, the Thayans' overconfidence proved misplaced. The Rashemaar met the Red Wizards' army along the shores of Lake Mulsantir. After the Thayan army was fully engaged, Rashemaar berserkers in magically piloted witchboats landed behind the Red Wizards' army, striking from the rear and surrounding the Thayan force in a matter of minutes. The spirit magic of the witches proved equal to the Red

Wizards' battle circles as well, and by nightfall the Thayan invaders had perished almost to a man. A pitiful handful of survivors returned to Thay, where the Red Wizards blamed their commanders and immediately began planning another invasion.

Over the years, Rashemen has become something of an obsession for the Red Wizards. Since the land is of limited strategic value and home to a race of violent warriors and mysterious spirits who would surely chafe under the Thayan yoke, the most intelligent Thayan strategy would probably be to pretend that Rashemen never existed. Such logic is lost on the Red Wizards, who have sent raids and invasions into Rashemen no less than 20 times, each ending in defeat at the hands of the witches and berserkers. For their part, the Rashemaar seem happy to oblige the Thayan obsession, for the wizards and their allies provide them with endless opportunities for battle.

The Rashemaar had numerous other opponents to keep them occupied, most prominently the Tuigan horde that threatened Faerûn and swept into Rashemen in 1359. After sacking Citadel Rashemar, the Tuigan moved across the High Country and into Rashemen's interior. His forces pinned by a massive Thayan army poised in the Gorge of Gauros, the Iron Lord Hyarmon Hussilthar was unable to respond immediately, leaving the witches to harass and slow down the Tuigan advance.

Finally, in early 1360, nature itself seemed to turn against the invaders when the Thayan army was snowed in the gorge and unable to advance. The Fangs of Rashemen moved against the Tuigan, meeting them in the epic Battle of the Lake of Tears. Unprepared in camp, the Tuigan were taken by surprise and fell back in disorder only to be struck from the rear by witchboat-mounted forces. The Red Wizards, now the Tuigans' allies of convenience, saved the Yamun Khahan's army by parting the waters of Lake Ashane, allowing the nomads to retreat in relative safety. The Rashemaar were unable to organize a pursuit but were satisfied that the easterners were gone.

The Tuigan were defeated by an alliance of Faerûn nations led by Cormyr some months later, and Rashemen turned to repairing the damage done by the horde. Things swiftly returned to normal, with Rashemen and Thay continuing their endless game of inva-





sion, defense, and retreat. Four more major operations by Thay against Rashemen followed, with predictable results.

Today, the Rashemaar watch developments in Thay with growing concern. It is rapidly becoming obvious that the evil Szass Tam is finally making his move to unite Thay under his rulership. The oldest, most cunning and dangerous zulkir, Tam as the Thayan emperor would be a significant threat to Rashemen and to all of Faerûn. Isolated in their cold realm, with only sufficient forces to defend themselves against the usual bickering, disorganized Thayan armies, the Rashemaar can do little to stop Tam and can only hope that other nations will take action soon.

## People and Society

*Rashemen is known as the Land of Berserkers for good reason. Its people are wild and warlike, extreme in their passions and suicidally brave in defense of their homeland. Those who meet the Rashemaar come away both bewildered and impressed. Skilled they are, as well as intelligent and expressive. But the Rashemaar are also fierce, and seem to enjoy battle for its own sake. Some go so far as to compare the berserkers of Rashemen with such bellicose races as the orcs, unaware of the true reasons for Rashemaar fierceness and their society's constant warlike state. Sigurd the dwarf, who has spent much time with the Rashemaar, can provide the outside observer with many insights into the berserkers' character—that is, of course, after he finishes going on about Rashemaar firewine.*

—Lhaeo

### The Rashemaar

The Rashemaar are descended from the same racial stock as the commoners of Thay. The notion that both nations might be related in some way would be enough to send the average citizen of Rashemen into a murderous rage, but the facts of history speak clearly.

Though ethnically close to Thay, the nation of Rashemen could not be more different than the sorcerous nation. The most obvious point of difference is Rashemen's ethnic homogeneity—only a single human race inhabits Rashemen, rather than toiling under the heel of foreign

conquerors as do Thayan Rashemi. The inhabitants of Rashemen have nothing but contempt for the slavish Thayan commoners and their frail, “unmanly” Mulan masters.

The climate and hardships of Rashemen have created some differences between that land's inhabitants and the Rashemi of Thay. Rashemen natives are taller than their Thayan counterparts, and their skin is paler. Men grow short beards and long hair, traditionally tied up in twin braids. Women wear single braids, with status accruing to women with the longest ones. A traditional punishment for faithless wives is the cutting off of braids, so short-haired women are shunned by other Rashemaar.

The Rashemaar disdain the benefits of “civilization,” and proudly proclaim their devotion to the “warrior ideal.” This means that a Rashemaar fights as often as possible and participates in harsh physical activities such as snow-racing (wearing minimal clothing, or none at all), skiing, wrestling, drinking contests, and the like.

Though Rashemaar society is (at least on the surface) dominated by males, women are allowed to participate in the same vigorous pursuits but are given no special advantages. As a consequence, women who manage to equal or even surpass the accomplishments of their fellow male warriors earn substantial respect from the men and are treated exactly the same as males. All women, in fact, are trained to fight and use weapons and can serve in Rashemen's defense if necessary.

There are many opportunities for battle in Rashemen, even when the Thayans are not attacking. Goblins and trolls from the High Country and human or orcish raiders from the Endless Waste often ravage eastern Rashemen, while tribes of various humanoids roam the wilderness north of the Falls of Erech, sometimes entering Rashemen intent on plunder.

When the land is not being threatened by raiders, there are the many monsters that dwell in Rashemen's own wilderness realms, especially in the High Country and the dark depths of the Ashenwood. Rashemaar nobles enjoy hunting dangerous creatures such as owlbears, trolls, and ettercaps as well as more mundane prey such as bear, cougar, deer, and stag.

Not surprisingly, Rashemen is a strongly status-driven nation, and its people place premium values on individual accomplishment. A great warrior, skilled hunter, or







expert skier gains considerable prestige and is feted and celebrated across the nation. Conversely, those who show cowardice or incompetence in battle or during hunts are ostracized and shunned. Especially craven conduct is punished by the witches, who sentence cowards to exile or even death.

Despite this rather grim outlook, the Rashemaar are actually a very optimistic and friendly race, enjoying socializing, drinking, singing, and feasting, often to the exclusion of important work such as herding or farming. They are initially suspicious of outsiders but are good friends to those who earn their trust. Foreigners are rare in Rashemen, and visitors can expect to get many curious or outright hostile stares.

A unique aspect of Rashemen's culture is the *dajemma*—a journey of self-discovery which is required for all young male Rashemaar (optional for young women). A youth on *dajemma* is expected to go beyond Rashemen's borders and return after a year. Those who return alive (and most do, for *dajemmas* are usually little more than excuses for drinking, wenching, and sightseeing) are considered full adults. Although the heroic nature of the *dajemmas* of old, when noble warriors ventured to foreign lands and fought hordes of wicked monsters and evil warlords, has largely been lost, the journeys today serve the vital purpose of building trade contacts and gathering information on the news of the Inner Sea region.

Traditional Rashemaar dress is somewhat rude: wool trousers, loose shirts, and fur vests for men, and long woolen skirts and linen blouses for women. On special occasions Rashemaar dress colorfully, preferring vests and tunics woven of bright red, blue, and yellow and embroidered in red, white, and green.

Stone and bone carving are common crafts in Rashemen, where most of the nation's smelted iron goes to the creation of weapons and armor. Buttons, needles, utensils, jewelry, and other small items are all carved from such materials, often decorated with complex woven patterns, geometric designs, and runic inscriptions. These items are popular trade goods and are sometimes seen outside of Rashemen as part of collections or being sold as fine art.

### **Berserkers**

Although all Rashemaar—both male and female—consider themselves warriors, the true elite of Rashemen are

the berserkers, those fighters who capable of entering a mad battle-rage terrifying to friend and foe alike.

When a young warrior decides to become a berserker, he or she joins a berserker lodge—a warrior society with an animal spirit totem from which its given fighting style is taken. The fledgling berserker is then trained in the various self-hypnosis and fighting techniques which are used to create the berserker rage. The young berserker is considered a full lodge member when he or she first goes berserk in battle.

The lodges maintain various forts and steads throughout Rashemen. Here, berserkers gather to sing, drink ale and *jhuild* (firewine), and tell stories of valor. Each lodge fields one or more fangs of warriors (see page 73), and their berserkers may be called up at any time by the *huhrong* or the witches, should the nation be threatened or if a particularly powerful or challenging monster or raiding band is abroad in the land.

### **Witches**

Though the land is outwardly ruled by the Iron Lord, the real power in Rashemen resides with the *wychlaran* (which means “wise old women” in *Halardrim*, the lost tongue of this part of the northlands), a secretive cabal of women who have been called “witches” by other folk for so long that they have adopted the name proudly. The witches are highly trained women with a natural aptitude for sorcery.

All Rashemaar younglings are tested for the ability to work magic. The rare males who can work magic are taken to secret holds in the remotest clefts of the Running Rocks and trained by the *vremyonni*, or “Old Ones” (ancient male wizards, kept alive for eons by longevity magic), to be researchers of new spells and crafters of magical items (usually rings, wands, and whips) for the use of the witches. The more numerous females with magical ability are trained by older witches to be loyal to the land and their folk and to wield magic in obedience to elder witches and in perfect cooperation with other *wychlaran*. The concept of rivalry among spellcasters (known to the witches from their observations of other lands) is viewed as self-indulgent insanity; paying for tutoring or fighting other mages to take their spells is also seen as wrong-headed wastefulness. Among the witches, spells are taught freely when it is thought an individual is ready to learn them.





This is not to say that rivalries, factions, and the like are unknown among the witches. Elders (the *Othlor*, or “true ones”) have complete control over lesser witches: the *Ethran*, or “untried” (novices); the *Blethran*, or “sisterkin” (witches learning their craft and as yet of no distinction); and the *Hathran*, or “learned sisterhood” (witches of full, capable power but as yet no acknowledged wisdom or important mastery of magic). The *Othlor* tend to train and advance these lesser witches in accordance with personal loyalty and service.

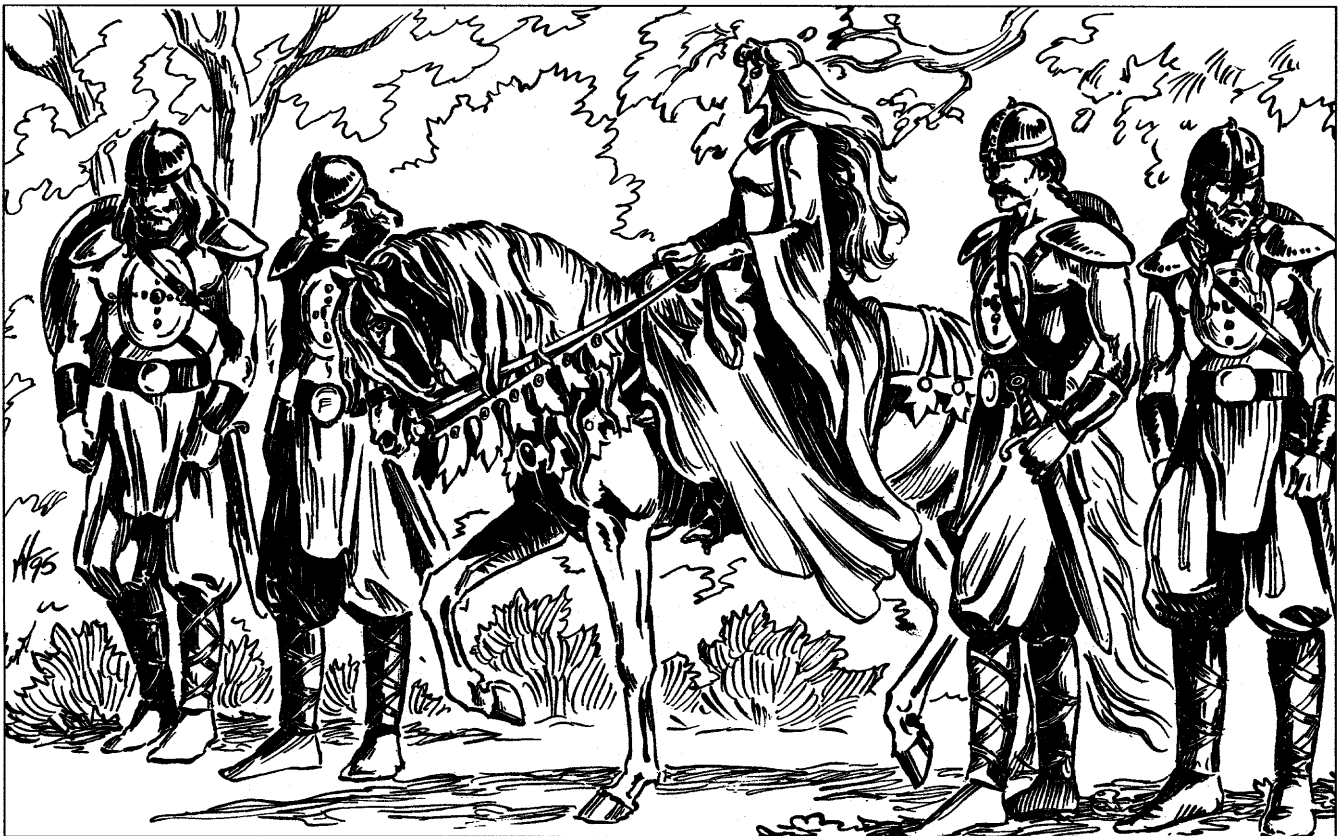
A witch’s word is law; to disobey one of the *Hathran* or *Othlor* is to die. (The insane, the ignorant—“I didn’t know she was a witch”—and outlanders are excused the first time at least.) For a witch to misuse her authority to squander the lives or health of warriors or other citizens just on a whim, or because of temper, is a serious offense resulting in a loss of standing for the witch. Very, very few witches openly behave thus, but many have spell-guarded, self-indulgent secrets hidden away.

## Government and Politics

*Given that Rashemen and Thay are two nations as different as night and day, it is surprising that both are actually ruled by a cabal of powerful spellcasters: the Red Wizards in Thay and the witches in Rashemen. The major difference between the two is that the witches are, of course, relatively benign, while the wizards are known as some of the most evil characters around. Despite this, I’d be careful about throwing around comparisons between the two countries, if I were you. Rashemaar are notoriously quick to grub for their swords, especially if they’ve been tipping a little jhuild . . .*

—from Sigurd’s report

The Witches of Rashemen are considered both the makers and protectors of kings. Since the nation’s founding, the witches have chosen the Iron Lord, or *huhrong*, ruler of the nation, from the wisest and most accomplished warriors in the land. The *huhrong* is always male but rules only at the whim of the witches, who have the right to remove him at will.





Though he is chosen by the witches and is largely beholden to them, an Iron Lord is expected to rule wisely and independently, keeping the best interests of his people foremost in his mind. It is the Iron Lord's responsibility to see to it that travel between cities is reasonably safe, the frontiers are secure, and not too many raiding monsters manage to break out of the Ashewood or cross over the High Country to eat herdsmen and farmers. In times of invasion by enemies such as Thay or the Tuigan, the Iron Lord is Rashemen's supreme military commander, with authority over all save the witches, who nonetheless usually follow his suggestions in battle.

As if all of this was not enough, an Iron Lord is also expected to personify all the greatest Rashemaar virtues. That is to say, he has to be able to outfight, outdrink, outwench, outrun, outski, outswim (and just about every other "out" there is) all of his war leaders. In fact, no huhrong has ever been able to exceed all of his *fyrri*, though many have come close.

The most dominant menfolk lead local communities and are styled *fyrri*, or "Lord," but most defer to the witches who advise them, and none have any real power except over the warriors they train and lead into battle.

## Economy

Rashemen's isolation and climate force its people to be self-sufficient, maintaining themselves with only minimal contact with the outside world. Most Rashemaar make their living as farmers, herders, fishermen, trappers, or artisans, carving stone and bone ornaments and tools.

The Rashemaar mine copper and iron in the mines of Tethkel and in a series of small quarries along the edge of the Running Rocks. Most of the metal mined here is used for weapons or the rare metal utensils and tools reserved for use by the wealthy. Most other implements in Rashemen are crafted from stone or bone.

Popular herd animals include sheep, goats, and rothé (a bred of midget musk-oxen, 4 feet high at the shoulder), and the Rashemaar spend much of their time coming up with breeding programs for stronger and hardier strains.

Fisherfolk ply the icy waters of Ashane, the Lake of Tears, in small dories or larger, lateen-rigged, twin

masted vessels called felucca. They catch hake, trout, salmon, and other hardy cold-water species and trade their catches in the market towns along the lakeshore.

Merchants from neighboring lands trade with the Rashemaar, exchanging cloth, finished wood products and foodstuffs for wool, furs, stone and bone carvings, *sjorl* cheese, and—most highly valued—Rashemaar firewine, which sells for 15 gp or more (depending on where it is sold) per pint in such distant places as Amn, Waterdeep, and Cormyr. Carved Rashemaar statuettes, lamps, and brooches are both popular and valuable outside of Rashemen. In Calimshan, for example, carvings by "the barbarians of the Savage North," are popular among the wealthy and discriminating.

Caravan travel to Rashemen is difficult, so only the most ambitious of trading costers and priakos travel there. The route from the north lies through Narfell or the Great Dale, over the River Erech, and south through wilderness to the trade city of Mulptan. Caravan traffic to or from the Endless Waste, the Horse Plains, Murghom, Mulhorand, and Semphar must travel through Shevel, the largest settlement in the land, and the closest thing to a bustling mercantile city that Rashemen has. Citadel Rashemar once stood astride the eastern trade route, warding off raids by nomads, bandits, and humanoid tribes. Since the fortress' destruction at the hands of the Tuigan, these raids have increased, cutting severely into Rashemen's lucrative caravan business.

## Armed Forces

Each local chieftain leads a band—or fang—of clan warriors, and in times of war all are organized under the huhrong's banner. Rashemaar warriors are ferocious in combat, disdaining most armor, wearing leather or skins and fighting with axes, spears, swords, and short bows. Some warriors fight mounted on small mountain ponies and use hit-and-run missile tactics, for the ponies are not suited to service as shock cavalry.

While all Rashemaar warriors are traditionally called "berserkers," it is the members of the various berserker lodges which make up the elite corps of the Fangs of Rashemen. Each lodge has one or more fangs associated with it, and these invariably form the backbone of any Rashemaar army.





Tactics are not especially sophisticated, and the Rashemaar win battles based on the fanatical strength and individual skill of their warriors rather than subtle strategies. Rashemaar forces generally advance en masse, sometimes with support from pony-mounted missile troops on the flanks. The berserkers, elite forces which other armies would normally hold in reserve, instead advance in the vanguard, often taking heavy casualties, driving themselves into their seething rages and striking the enemy with unmatched fury. The initial attack of the berserkers often opens up holes in enemy lines which the rest of the Rashemaar can exploit, but this is usually at great cost.

It is the support of the witches that prevents the Rashemaar from being just another honor-driven barbarian army that puts on a brave show only to crumple in the face of a disciplined enemy. Witch magic (and the spirits who support them) attack and terrify enemy forces, driving them from the field, while witchboats are used to deliver large numbers of troops behind enemy lines.

## Rashemen's Religion

Worship of "The Three" (Chauntea, Mielikki, and Mystra) is strong in Rashemen, but the Rashemaar refer to these goddesses by other names. (Chauntea is often called Bhalla, Mielikki is known as Khelliara, and Mystra as the Hidden One.) They also venerate a host of local place-spirits, spirit-heroes, and demigods little known elsewhere in Faerûn.

The spirits of Rashemen do not have names (at least none known to the common people) but express their actions through miraculous occurrences, omens, and in extreme cases through their servitors, powerful enchanted creatures such as the wood man. (See the Spellbound MC.)

## The Land

**R**ashemen . . . Now, there's a hospitable land. All craggy mountains, icy dells, and frosty meadows, criss-crossed with bubbling rills and white-foaming rapids, cold blue brooks, and rock-lined creeks. I almost feel at home there, save for the fact that there's a Moradin-cursed sky overhead, full of clouds and winds, with wet things falling from it, not a nice safe rock roof of the sort we have back home. . . .

*In any case, Rashemen is a hard place, home to a hard people. Once you see past the grim, frost-rimed rocks and dark, low-hanging trees to the real soul of the place, you see what a truly beautiful land Rashemen really is, and what a great people live there.*

—from Sigurd's report

Rashemen is an isolated and distant land known to other Faerûn inhabitants primarily through legends. The land is itself believed to be alive, and each thing there—each tree, rock, river, and lake—is said to be the repository of great and ancient magic. Many are believed to house guardian spirits that oversee the object's existence and welfare. Visitors in Rashemen should walk lightly for fear of treading upon a protected flower or pebble and summoning up an ancient and angry spirit of vengeance.

To most outlanders, Rashemen is a mysterious, rugged land where hardened berserker warriors, led by fell witches, manage to hurl back the huge and magically led hosts of Thay time and time again. A wandering Rashemaar (on dajemma, for example) is often treated with respect and even awe.

Travel in Rashemen is difficult during the harsh winter months. Reindeer- or horse-drawn sleds, skis, and snowshoes are the rule during cold seasons, while during the brief but beautiful summer, travel is on horseback or afoot. The roads of Rashemen are not paved or maintained, but are simply popular routes worn into ruts or bare, hard-packed earth by generations of travelers. Some rivers, particularly the Tir and Rasha, remain largely ice-free for most of the year; these form an important route for travel within Rashemen.

The Rashemaar don't allow outlander wizards to dwell in their realm and discourage any visitor from using magic while in Rashemen. Outlanders are permitted to





dwelling in Mulptan (Rashemen's northern trading gateway) and Shevel (the largest city in the realm). Non-Rashemaar aren't permitted to settle elsewhere; the few found living in the forests or smaller settlements have been adopted into the ranks of the Rashemaar by a ceremony requiring the support of at least four witches of any rank and a local chieftain.

## Ashane

*I don't mind telling you that I detest the water. Unfortunately, a boat across the Lake of Tears is the most direct route into Rashemen. When I visit there I hire a boat that sails from Kront to Immilmar with me in the back, heaving my guts out all the way. The only other route into Rashemen is north from Narfell over the River Erech, and then south, but this route is mostly wilderness and longer than Clangedin's beard, so the lake voyage is worth a few hours' discomfort.*

*Humans might find Ashane beautiful. It's deep, blue, very cold, and carved—so I'm told—by an ancient glacier. Though a few fishing villages scrape out a living along its shores, Ashane's primary function is to discourage casual visitors to Rashemen and to frustrate merchant caravans.*

*—from Sigurd's report*

Ashane, known as the Lake of Tears in honor of all the battles fought along its shore, forms Rashemen's western frontier. Fed by glacial lakes to the north, few fish species can tolerate Ashane's icy waters. Immilmar and Kront are the only major cities along the lake, but a number of small fishing hamlets lie along the eastern shore as well, their inhabitants working hard to obtain a catch from the schools of cold-water hake, trout, and salmon.

On the Rashemen side of the lake the lakeshore is relatively unsettled, lined with thick growths of fir and pine. This would be one of the most singularly tranquil and restful places on the continent were it not for the presence of owlbears, water trolls, and other hostile creatures which disturb visitors' repose.

The Rashemaar claim that Ashane is protected by a variety of enchanted aquatic creatures—nereids, water weirds, nixies, and the like—all under the rulership of a great water-spirit whose name is known only to the witches.

## Ashenmood

Along the shores of the Lake of Tears and occupying a goodly portion of central Rashemen lies the Ashenwood wilderness, an ancient forest of fir, pine, ash, and aspen. By ancient tradition the Ashenwood has never been settled, for it is a realm of great place-magic. Here the very stones and trees are the repose of mighty spirits, which can either impart wisdom and guidance or visit dreadful vengeance upon those who enter the forest. The Rashemaar venture into Ashenwood on hunts or magical quests, but only after paying proper honor to the mighty powers which dwell there.

Hunting and traveling in the Ashenwood is not for the faint-hearted. Forest trolls, owlbears, stirges, green hags, ettercaps, and other foul creatures share the woods with more ordinary beasts such as badgers, porcupines, skunks, stags, rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, and foxes. The ancient powers of the forest sometimes walk here as well, either in their own form or through their servitors. One such is the being known as the wood man, a monstrous apparition alluded to by Rashemaar mothers to frighten their children into obedience.

## The Central Plains

The Central Plains of Rashemen bloom in late spring and summer, breaking out into seas of colorful wildflowers, green trees, and cool brooks. For the remainder of the year, the plains are chill, bleak places, frost- or snow-bound and home to herds of reindeer and caribou. They are inhabited by widely separated homesteads where hardy Rashemaar families live and work, ride out the cold, and revel in the beauty of summer.

Other inhabitants of the plains include mice, voles, foxes, wolverines, and coyotes. Wolf packs also come down from the High Country to stalk the reindeer and caribou herds. Especially harsh winters also call down ice trolls (adventurers should note that the Rashemen variety of ice troll is considerably more powerful and dangerous than the relatively weak ice trolls found along the Spine of the World, on the Great Glacier, and elsewhere) and even white dragons, which prey on the isolated Rashemaar farms until driven out by the huhrong's warriors.





## Citadel Rashemar

*In the distance, I saw the tumbled remnants of a mighty fortress silhouetted against a rolling gray sky.*

*"That was once our greatest fortress, Citadel Rashemar," said Ygsvar, my guide. "The easterners destroyed it—the horse people who called themselves the Tuigan. They smashed the castle and slew everyone in it. We took vengeance upon them on the shores of the Lake of Tears, and made widows of many Tuigan women. We defeated them, but nothing can restore our fortress, or the lives of those who perished there. We have not returned, and have left the caste to the beasts and fell creatures."*

*I looked back toward the ruins. Crows circled overhead, and a chill wind made me shudder. I chose to go no closer.*

*—from Sigurd's report*

This imposing citadel once held a garrison of over 2,000 Rashemaar warriors dedicated to protecting caravans and repelling bandit raids. In 1359 DR, the invading

Tuigan hordes bypassed Rashemar on the way west, leaving a force of 5,000 to besiege the fortress. The citadel held out valiantly for over three months before falling. The garrison, along with hundreds of Rashemaar who had taken refuge within Rashemar's walls, were mercilessly slaughtered. The Tuigan army was defeated a month later and driven from Rashemaar soil, but the damage was already done. The Tuigan horde had savaged the land, and the nation's most powerful citadel was reduced to a pile of shattered stone.

Citadel Rashemar was not rebuilt. It remains today in the same condition in which the Tuigan left it, but now it is the haunt of foul creatures: goblins, giant spiders, annis, and similar abominations. Over the years, the usual rumors have sprung up, of great treasure stored in the dungeons and labyrinths that lie beneath the fortress, and of wandering spirits, the surviving remnants of those who died in battle here, and so on. Bands of adventurers sometimes visit the ruins hoping that some of the legends prove true.





## The Falls of Erech

The River Erech winds along the glacial highlands above Rashemen, through the icy lakes known as the Teardrops, and finally plunges down hundreds of feet at the Falls of Erech, a roaring veil of white that marks the northern extent of Rashemaar influence. The falls are a truly picturesque sight, and those youths departing on dajemma are expected by tradition to encamp by the falls for at least one night and to cast offerings to the gods and spirits of Rashemen into the falls themselves. Although this story would normally draw many treasure hunters to seek the precious gems, coins, weapons and armor collected at the foot of the falls, it is known that both the Rashemaar and their guardian place-spirits take a dim view of such activities and waste little time in seeking retribution.

The falls are said to be guarded by great magic that punishes those who rob the river's wealth, and which rewards any who pay it proper obeisance with good fortune and long life.

## The High Country

*Above us rose a range of rugged, worn hills, brown but striped white with snow, still Eying unmelted even in the late spring.*

*"That is what we cull the High Country," Ygsvar told me. "It is like a wall around our country. Beyond lies the Endless Waste, where the Tuigun came from."*

*As we passed through the deep furrows between the hills of the High Country, I heard wolves howling in the distance, and once we found the remains of a Tuigun warrior, his proud scaled armor scattered across a wide urea, a rusting lancehead buried in the ground nearby.*

*"We should move quickly," Ygsvar said. "They say that the Tuigans' ghosts still haunt the passes. Whether that's true or not, there are more substantial inhabitants here, as well. It's best we not meet them at night."*

*For the tenth time that day, I checked to make certain that my axe was still slung at the ready, and followed Ygsvar in silence.*

*—from Sigurd's report*

Ancient, dark hills ring Rashemen to the east and south. These are wild places that harbor many secrets. Old

stone monoliths crouch at the top of hills, places of wild magic and strange occurrences. Tribes of kobolds and goblins lurk in the valleys and ravines, and wolves—both benign ordinary wolves and the rapacious and evil winter wolves—inhabit the region in large numbers, descending from the hills to prey on caribou and reindeer. The ghosts of the Rashemaar and Tuigun who died in the passes and at nearby Citadel Rashemar are also said to wander here, seeking solace or calling out for vengeance. One tale tells of a wanderer who was confronted by a Rashemaar spirit. After overcoming his initial terror, the wanderer spoke to the spirit and was amazed to learn that it only wanted to send word to his mortal wife that he had, indeed, perished in the war, but that he still loved her.

Not surprisingly, the High Country is sparsely inhabited, with a few small huts scattered here and there. It is home to a grim breed of high country hunters who survive each year only by the barest margin. The hunters are a superstitious folk who fear the ancient monuments, carrying many amulets and charms to ward off the spirits. They are highly distrustful of strangers, whom they usually assume to be wizards intent on stealing souls or enslaving the innocent.

## Immil Vale

A deep earthen seam that lies along the northern edge of the Running Rocks, Immil Vale is a place of eternal springtime, which remains warm and green even in the depths of icy Rashemen winters. Grass, flowers, ash, and aspen grow here in abundance, and crystalline creeks run freely, flowing merrily even when temperatures throughout the rest of Rashemen are well below the freezing point. Many colorful bird species nest here, twittering in the trees while deer, lynx, and many species of small mammals scurry through the underbrush below.

Although Rashemaar legend holds that the goddess Mystra blessed the region with protection from the cold, the real cause is the large number of natural hot springs in the region, coupled with a small amount of natural volcanic activity. Various vents and fumaroles emit clouds of steam, often wreathing the valley in mists and further bolstering its reputation as an enchanted place.





Despite this somewhat mundane explanation for its climate, many parts of Immil Vale are truly enchanted, protected by the nature spirits and place-magic which is found throughout the rest of Rashemen. One well-known example of this is the massive moss-covered stone near the center of the Vale. Those who camp in the stone's shadow are blessed with prophetic dreams and some are said to be visited by beautiful fey spirits. Some tales caution not to spend too much time near the stone, for the spirits have been known to fall in love with mortals, spiriting visitors off to their secret realms where a single day is a year in the mortal world.

## Lake Tirulag

*At length we came to a deep glacial lake, with water as blue as ice and just about as cold, as I discovered when I put a toe in. Like most dwarves, I'm not too fond of swimming in any event, so I was both shocked and horrified when I turned back to Ygsvar, only to see my guide happily stripping off his clothes and plunging with a whoop into the cold water.*

*I made miscellaneous noises for a few moments before I finally managed to spit out, "What in the name of Haela's flaming sword do you think you're doing, you lunatic?"*

*Ygsvar waded out of the water, his normally pale skin now tinged with blue.*

*"It's wonderful!" he bellowed. "You should try it!"*

*I took a glance at the water. It was still deep, and still very cold.*

*"I think," I said carefully, "that I would rather tell an orkish chieftain that he runs like an elf. I'd die just as quickly, but at least I wouldn't suffer."*

*— from Sigurd's report*

This cold lake is fed by the River Tir and harbors very hardy trout and a unique species of crayfish, both of which are caught by fisherfolk from the city of Tinnir, which lies along its shores. The lake's other major function appears to be as a place where Rashemaar, both male and female, can prove their strength and hardiness by swimming in its icy depths with minimal—or most often—no protection. As the Rashemaar are a strong race to begin with, there are few casualties from these swims, but a few perish from heart attacks on rare occasions.

Many Rashemaar vessels also traverse the lake, fishing or pulling up crayfish traps or bound to and from Mulsantir, Taporan, and the Lake of Tears. Ordinary Rashe-

maar give wide berth to unmanned witchboats, which are sometimes seen here moving mysteriously through the still waters.

Many legends surround the lake, dealing with the usual collection of guardian spirits and magical places. Great treasure is said to lie at the bottom of the lake, but it is believed to be guarded by an ice dragon, a being of solid ice, which is all but completely invisible to mortal sight.

## The Mines of Tethkel

The major source of Rashemaar mineral wealth lies in these deep shafts. The mines yield a small but steady stream of iron ore, which is smelted and formed into weapons, sled runners, tools, utensils, and ornaments in the forges of Urling and Immilmar. A small community of miners lies around the main shaft, a group considered even more raucous, undisciplined, and savage than most Rashemaar—which is saying a great deal. The miners themselves claim to have the highest consumption of firewine in the entire nation.

The miners believe that they have no choice. Winters in the High Country are harsh, and many predators and hostile species seek to drive the intruders out of their hills. Kobolds often dig into the mines on raids, goblin wolfriders from the Endless Waste descend on the town, and bands of winter wolves roam the hills, searching for easy prey. All combine to make the miners a wild group, and the region of the mines one of the wildest places in all of Rashemen.

## The North Country

The extreme northern portion of Rashemen resembles the Central Plains in most ways, but it is always spoken of separately, mostly because of the many ruins which may be found here. Remnants of ancient Narfell and Raumathar, these ruins often harbor forgotten magic or, in rare cases, forgotten treasure and enchanted items. These objects are, as one might expect, still protected by guardian spirits, spells, and the usual collection of monsters, but this serves only as encouragement for the brave or foolhardy to seek them out. Rashemaar nobles are especially fond of exploring the North Country, and fatalities on these expeditions keep the Rashemaar noble class from becoming overpopulated.







## River Ashan

This short river originates in an underground spring deep beneath the Ashenwood, finally reaching the surface, flowing through the forest and out into Ashane. It is a swift-flowing river, rushing and foaming over its rocky bed, surrounded by frost-covered trees in winter and lush green in summer. Due to its location and swiftness, it is not extensively used by the Rashemaar, and remains wild and undisturbed.

## River Rasha

The Rasha and the Tir form a major route of transportation and commerce through central Rashemen. In most places the Rasha (which, like the Ashan, originates beneath the Ashenwood) is broad and relatively slow flowing, allowing passage by ordinary Rashemaar vessels as well as pilotless witchboats. The Rasha joins the Tir just north of Lake Tirulag.

## River Tir

The Tir is also broad and easily traversed, and it is one of the major travel routes to and from eastern Rashemen. The city of Taporan lies along the Tir, where the river is still relatively swift and wild.

## The Running Rocks

Slicing through the center of Rashemen, the Running Rocks are a range of solid granite mountains rising up like the fists of stone giants. Cut by an intricate network of crevasses and ravines, the Running Rocks harbor a few copper and iron mines, but the region is avoided by most Rashemaar due to its mystical reputation and the fact that hostile creatures such as trolls, bheur and, on rare occasions, drow, have been sighted there.

Known to few save the witches, the Running Rocks harbor secret strongholds inhabited by the vremyonni, whose researches provide the witches with new spells and magical items. The handful of male Rashemaar who





prove to have magical ability are taken here, where they serve the ancient wizards as apprentices and take the places of those who finally die. (See “People and Society,” above, for more details on the witches, Old Ones, and their secret culture.)

## Urlingwood

*As we rode in silence down the Urling road, I gazed into the depths of the forest west of us. I felt an uncertain dread as I did so, as if simply looking at the trees might visit terrible disasters upon me.*

*“Is that the Urlingwood?” I asked.*

*Ygsvar nodded. “Stay out of it. That is the exclusive domain of the witches, and outsiders aren’t welcome. Most of them live in Urling city, but they go there to perform their ceremonies and rituals. The witches are not bud women, mind you . . . they help keep our land free. But they value their privacy and anonymity, and are quick to punish anyone who violates it.”*

*I shrugged, turning away from the wood.*

*“They have nothing to fear from the likes of me,” I replied. “I try to stay out of witches’ affairs.”*

*—from Sigurd’s report*

A dense and wild forest, Urlingwood lies between Mulptan and Shevel and just west of Urling. In many ways the heart of Rashemen, Urlingwood contains powerful and potent place magic as well as numerous guardian spirits.

The witches spend a great deal of time in Urlingwood, communing with the many powers that live there, making offerings and performing rituals of binding. Here, too, the witches brew the potent jhuilid, or firewine, the potent amber drink which is said to instill bravery and martial skill in warriors.

Outsiders are strictly forbidden to enter the Urlingwood. Any who do meet with instant oblivion at the hands of the forest guardians and their minions. The witches themselves are benevolent and affectionate toward the inhabitants of their land but brook neither interference nor attempts to make them share their power. The huhrong and his warriors also realize this and try to head off trouble by actively patrolling the border of the woods and keeping visitors out.

## Cities of Rashemen

*Those Rushemaar—I’d wondered why I’d developed a soft spot for them. I finally decided that it was because of their homes. Built in mounds of earth, in crevices, or underground so you’d barely notice that there was a house there at all, these cozy little nooks suggested to me that the Rashemaar must have some dwarven ancestry somewhere along the line (their capacity for ale and firewine was another sign of this, but I didn’t learn about that until later). Cull me a sentimentalist, you Harpers, but I can’t help but have at least a passing fondness for a race of humans who like to live underground.*

*—from Sigurd’s report*

Most Rashemaar live in the countryside, away from the cities. Here, widely separated homesteads are traditionally built to blend in with the surrounding countryside. Rashemaar houses built of roughly hewn stone crouch in hillside dugouts roofed over with grass and wildflowers, or lie in rocky niches. Other houses are made of logs and located deep in dark forests or constructed like low knolls in forest clearings, sporting discreetly hidden doors and windows.

The cities of Rashemen are relatively small, with houses, inns, and other structures built of dark stone or wood. The Rashemaar of the countryside generally hold city-dwellers in disdain, considering them soft and spoiled by the benefits of urban living.

## Immilmar

Lying along the cold shores of the Lake of Tears, Immilmar is the capital of Rashemen and home to the huhrong—the Iron Lord who, along with (and with the permission of) the witches, rules the land.

Surrounded by numerous Rashemaar mound-houses and dwellings built in woods or rocky clefts, Immilmar is a combination of traditional naturalistic Rashemaar architecture and influences from the outside world. The central portion of the city is built around the huhrong’s citadel, which was itself built around a fortress of ancient Narfell. Wood and stone houses and buildings surround the citadel, but the further away one moves the more “Rashemaar” the homes become.

Rashemaar peasants from up and down the shores of the lake come here to sell fish, buy equipment, and trade stories, and several small inns cater to such visitors.





## Map Key

### 1. Ashane

The cold waters of the Lake of Tears stretch out into the distance, often dotted with small fishing boats. Water trolls sometimes emerge from the lake to do mischief on shore, so the Rashemaar must always be on guard.

### 2. Waterfront

The Immilmar waterfront bustles with river and lake traffic. Merchant vessels travel to and from the lake settlement of Kront from here, and fishing vessels sail from Immilmar or make port here to sell their cargoes.

### 3. The Guardian Witch

This inn caters primarily to fisherfolk, who stay here while selling their catch or while their vessels are repaired. It is a warm and pleasant place, and each evening the fisherfolk gather to drink, eat, or trade stories and fishing tips. Innkeeper Green Huldra (CG hf F6) lost an eye in a fishing accident and opened the inn soon thereafter. She is over 60 years old, and her 10 grandchildren (three young men and seven young women ranging in age from 6 to 21) assist her in the kitchen and tending bar.

### 4. Temple of Chauntea

The worship of Chauntea is popular in Rashemen, though outside of the cities most Rashemaar know her as Bhalla. This is an “official” Chauntean temple, tended by a staff of clerics under the leadership of Brother Shad (CG hm C5). He keeps tabs on the worship of Bhalla in Rashemen, making certain that it never deviates too far from official church doctrine. The church is concerned that Rashemen’s extreme isolation and the alternate naming of their goddess could lead to the creation of a Chauntean cult and possibly fall into the ways of wickedness, seduced by another goddess masquerading as the beloved mother herself. Shad doesn’t think this is likely to happen, but he continues to send reports home nonetheless. When not engaged in his intelligence gathering job, Shad leads worship services, heals the sick, and ministers to the poor of Rashemen, making him and his fellow brothers both popular and respected despite the fact that they are foreigners.

### 5. Owlbear Berserker Lodge

The hot-blooded Owlbear berserkers maintain this long house, decorated with ancient shields, totemic carvings, and the skulls of various creatures defeated by lodge members. Nonberserkers (especially foreigners) should be careful in the vicinity of the lodge, lest grandmaster berserker Ythar Wolfmaster (CN hm F15) and his followers appear, bellowing insults and invitations to fight. Those outsiders who acquit themselves well against the Owlbears (winning a wrestling match, showing skill with spear or bow, drinking huge quantities of ale or firewine) are invited to a feast with the berserkers—an invitation which they may regret when they awaken the next morning, victimized by a splitting headache and the desire to crawl somewhere out of the light.

### 6. Communal Longhouse

The elders responsible for the daily running of Immilmar meet in this large, if plain, longhouse every 10 days and when important crises confront them. All citizens of Immilmar are free to attend these meetings, which can become noisy and occasionally violent. When the elders are not meeting, the longhouse functions as a community center for meetings of various guilds, parties, feasts, and religious festivals.

### 7. City Market

This public square is covered by a great peaked and carved roof, supported by dozens of elaborately carved and painted poles. The wind still blows through the market, but those who are familiar with the weather take care to build sturdy shelters during bad weather months.

Most who come here to trade are Rashemaar, though a number of sturdy outsiders also do business in Immilmar. From small booths, carts, or blankets spread on the ground, the Rashemaar sell produce, dairy products, fish, lumber, bone and stone carvings, wooden art objects, boxes, chests, clothing, cloth, and many other items. Even during heavy snows, a hardy few continue to come here, trading winter products such as furry animal pelts.

### 8. Huhrong’s Citadel

This grim fortress lies brooding above the city. It is crafted of iron and stone, and legend holds that the





witches utilized the services of powerful water and earth spirits in its construction. Whatever the truth of the matter, the fortress is virtually impregnable—any enemy would do well to simply starve out a besieged garrison, rather than rely upon costly assaults on its walls.

The Iron Lord of Rashemen lives here with his family, advisors, and commanders. He is counseled (and, in reality, overseen) by three Hathran witches, who give him advice or, if necessary, orders. Lord Yvarrg Bearkiller, like most of his predecessors, is pragmatic about his role but sometimes objects (not loudly) to the witches' dominance. He lives here with his wife Nytharri and his children, the eldest of which is the troublesome princeling Fyldrin of Eleven Chairs.

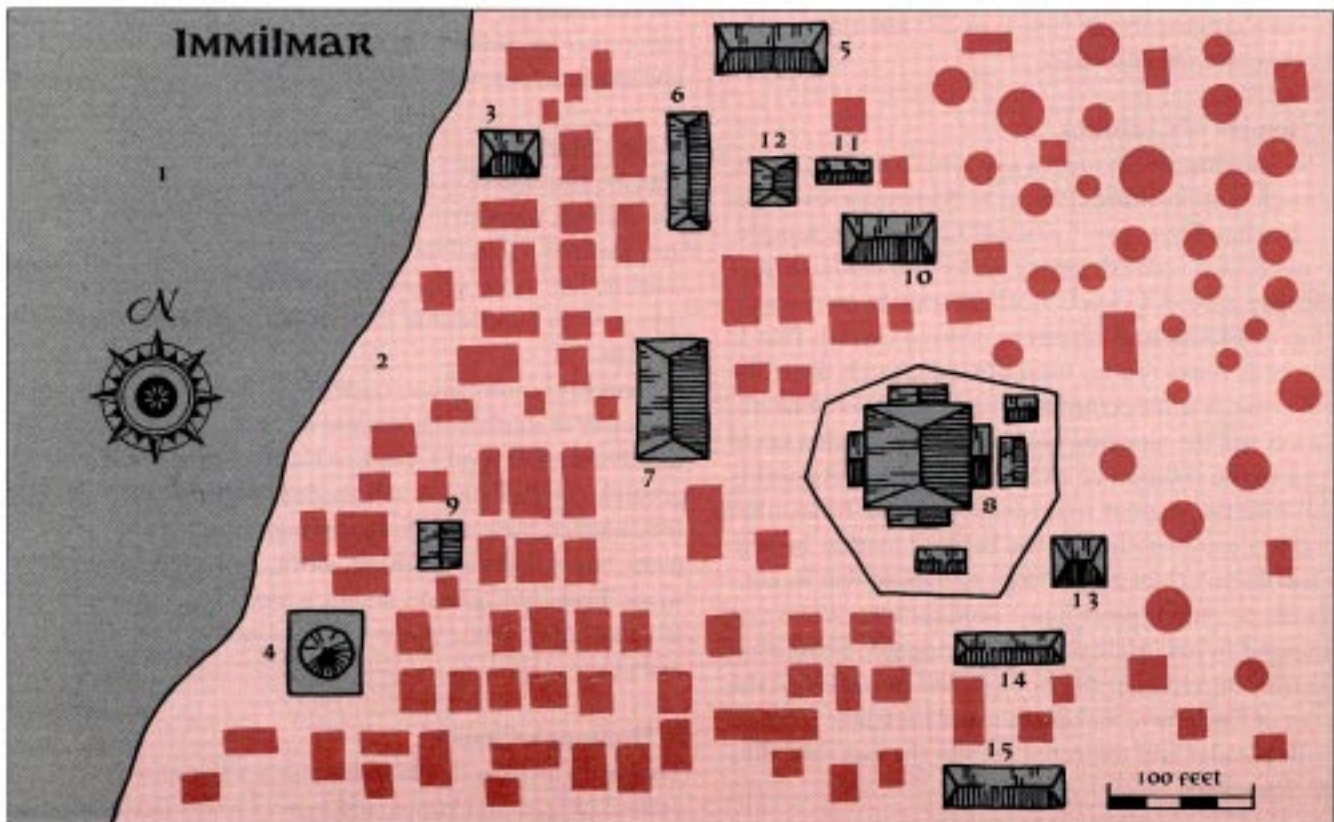
#### 9. Blackstone House (foreign merchant's inn)

Named for the shiny black granite from which it was originally constructed, Blackstone House is an inn which caters primarily to foreign merchants. Innkeeper Varro (CG hm F8) is a Rashemaar who enjoys the com-

pany of outsiders, though he even more enjoys the gold which they provide. He maintains stocks of several creature comforts, including wines and ales from several lands and a larder sufficient to duplicate (or at least approximate) cuisine from a dozen nations. Rooms here are not cheap (3 gp a night, plus 5 sp for meals), but foreigners appreciate Varro's efforts and patronize him faithfully.

#### 10. Carvers' Hall

This low stone building houses the Immilmar artisans' guild. Dormitory rooms house visiting artists, meeting halls enable them to maintain contact and exchange information, and large workrooms equipped with tools and raw materials allow them to create artwork in a pleasant environment, with their peers present for advice and guidance. Guildmistress Davyrra (N hf F2) maintains some skill as a hunter and warrior but has devoted most of her 50 years to the creation of better and more beautiful stone and wood carvings.





### 11. Goblin Berserker Lodge

The Goblin berserkers, one of the smaller lodges in Rashemen, maintains a longhouse here for its members. Like the Owlbear lodge nearby, it is often the scene of raucous celebration and much mock fighting and loud boasting. Owlbears and Goblins have been known to engage in violent brawls on occasion, and lodge master Yuthrim (CG hm F8) is currently nursing a headache from being pounded against a lodge-pole by a drunken Owlbear berserker.

### 12. Armorer

Tholli Ironweaver (CC hm F10) is one of the most skilled weaponsmiths in Rashemen. His chain mail and broad swords are used throughout the land and fetch high prices (double normal book costs). They are sturdy and extremely well made (+2 to all saving throws for equipment), and the witches often commission him to make weapons for eventual enchantment.

### 13. Sleighs and Skis

This large workshop and house is home to Dana Grayrunner (NG hf F5), builder of sleds, sleighs, and fine skis. She works closely with Tholli Ironweaver, for he often makes runners for her sleighs. Like Tholli, her items are often purchased by the witches for enchantment.

### 14. Livery

Zytha the Lame (NG hm F2) was wounded in battle over a decade ago and settled down to run this stable and livery, where he happily cares for horses for 1 cp per night. He also sells and trades the beasts, specializing in sturdy Rashemaar ponies that are bred for resistance to the land's harsh conditions (a typical pony costs around 150 gp).

### 15. Witches' Hall

This whitewashed longhouse, with crossbeams carved in the shape of dragons, hounds, and unicorns, is the exclusive domain of the witches. Non-witches caught trespassing here are either slain immediately (if the violation was blatant) or exiled from Rashemen with their memories of the land magically removed (if the violation was inadvertent or minor). In either case, the witches are quite merciless and neither discuss nor revoke their decisions once made. Othlor Fydra Night-

Tree (CN hf M16) leads the contingent of witches in Immilmar and acts as supervisor to the trio of Hathran who advise the Iron Lord.

## Mulptan

Rashemen's northern trading "gateway," lies about five days' ride south of the Falls of Erech and is, with the eastern trade settlement of Shevel, one of the few truly cosmopolitan centers in Rashemen. Foreigners may travel freely and even settle within Mulptan, and many do.

Here, Nar nomads rub shoulders with merchants from Impiltur, Damarans bearing moonstone trade bars, and independent traders of uncertain nationality and ancestry. The great trading field outside of town is always crammed with tents and pavilions, and here foreign traders bargain for the goods of Rashemen. The city itself lies within strong stone walls, a legacy of ancient times when raiders from the north swept down into Rashemen. Today raiders are fewer, and they rarely annoy Mulptan.

The great Rashemaar Ydrass and Vrul family clans are most common in Mulptan. The two are ancient rivals, each seeking to out-do the other in feats of martial prowess, athletic skill, hunting, art, and other fields. It is a friendly rivalry, and although blood has been spilled on a few occasions over the years, the competition between the two clans has improved both for the better, producing some of the most accomplished warriors, hunters, and artisans in Rashemen.

## Mulsantir

This settlement of several hundred Rashemaar, located where the River Mulsantir flows out of the Lake of Tears, would probably be a peaceful fishing community were it not for its location close by the hated land of Thay. The Red Wizards' legions have laid siege to the city on no less than five occasions but have been driven off each time by a combination of Rashemaar strength of arms and the magic of the witches.

Mulsantir lies behind solid stone walls, raised magically by the witches. These walls have withstood the ravages of Thayan siege engines and sorcery and remain unscathed, as angular and shining gray as the day they were created. Inside, Mulsantir is a city of rugged stone





buildings and broad dirt streets that turn to a morass of mud in the fall and freeze solid in winter. Mulsantir also boasts a fleet of fishing boats which ply the waters of Ashane, the River Mulsantir, and the northern reaches of Lake Mulsantir.

## Taporan

Taporan is a settlement of around 1,000 souls along the swift upper reaches of the River Tir. The rivermen of Taporan are largely responsible for traffic on the Tir, transporting goods and travelers along the river in flat-bottomed punts or riverboats. They are known even to other Rashemaar as a brave, often reckless breed, fond of songs and drinking, though rarely while on duty. Passage along the Tir from Taporan to Ashane costs 1 gp, while the return trip, against the current and involving the use of oars, sails, and tow from land, is 3 gp per person. Shorter trips are priced proportionally.

Taporan itself is a jumbled city of stone buildings and cobbled streets with an extensive waterfront where boats are moored and rivermen visit raucous ale-houses and exclusive berserker lodges. The Goblin and White Dragon berserkers maintain the largest lodges here, and the rivermen have a much higher percentage of berserkers than most other Rashemaar groups.

## Thasunta

This so-called “City of Warriors” is located midway between Tinnir and Shevel, and it contains lodges for a dozen major berserker houses and countless minor ones. Country-born Rashemaar suspend their normal disdain for city-folk when it comes to Thasuntans. The mere fact that one hales from this city earns some degree of respect, since all inhabitants are thought to be berserkers. (This is not true; Thasunta has many non-berserker inhabitants, but most do little to dispel the myth.)

Though Thasunta has its mundane functions as a stopping point along the Shevel-Tinnir road and as a mercantile center for surrounding farmers and ranchers, its primary function as a reserve for elite warriors and its strategic location along traditional Thayan invasion routes makes it vital to Rashemen’s defense. The berserkers of Thasunta stand ready to fight for Rashemen

at an instant’s notice, should the witches or the Iron Lord call. Thasuntan berserkers played an important role in the Battle of Ashane, holding the Tuigan Horde in place while other warriors attacked the invaders from the rear.

## Tinnir

Tinnir lies in a wooded vale along the shores of Lake Tirulag. Its pleasant whitewashed buildings house a community of Rashemaar fisherfolk, who make their living catching the hardy fish which live in the lake’s depths.

Some river traffic stops here as well, and the Lakeside Inn caters to those who stay overnight. This old, multi-story structure has many legends surrounding it. It is owned by Vrulla the Gray (NG hf C1), a friendly woman fond of telling those stories to travelers. The best known tells of how the goddess Bhalla (Chauntea) once visited the inn and blessed some of its rooms, granting those who sleep in them wondrous dreams and good fortune in love. No one knows exactly which rooms were blessed; some claim that the blessed rooms change each night, so getting one is a gamble for overnight guests. Alternatively, some legends claim that Malar, one of Chauntea’s arch-enemies, cursed some of the rooms, visiting nightmares and bad luck upon guests. These rooms are also said to change each night.

## Shevel

The easternmost trade city of Rashemen is also its largest settlement. A walled, traditional-looking Faerûn city built by a succession of trading costers and occupants, Shevel is usually as much of Rashemen as outsiders see. The city bustles with activity at all times of the day and night, with caravans coming and going and merchants trading Rashemaar timber, artwork, weapons, firewine, and furs for eastern spices, horses, fabric, woodwork, and other exotic trade goods. Caravans are bound to or from the Horse Lands, Mulhorand, Semphar, and occasionally even points further east. Since the destruction of Citadel Rashemar, caravan traffic has grown more dangerous as raids by bandits and humanoids in crease, providing more work for mercenary guards and caravan guides.





The distinctive nature of Shevel's architecture and inhabitants springs largely from the fact that, along with Mulptan, it is the only city in Rashemen where outsiders are allowed to settle without permission from the witches. Several small communities exist in Shevel: Mulhorandi merchants, adventurers from Cormyr, Thayan refugees, expatriate Mulhorandi, and many others—even a small handful of Tuigan, survivors of Yamun Khahan's ill-fated invasion. The Thayans invariably try to infiltrate Rashemen through this city but rarely get any farther than Shevel's walls.

## Urling

The city of Urling itself resembles nothing less than a small evergreen and alder grove, dotted here and there with grassy mounds. These are the homes of Urling's inhabitants, constructed as traditional Rashemaar buildings—low mounds of rough-hewn stone, roofed over with earth and sprouting grass, flowers, and even small trees.

Urling is home to a majority of Rashemen's witches, who use the nearby Urlingwood to perform various rituals and bindings with the nature spirits and to commune with the land itself. Outsiders are not strictly forbidden here—there is a single inn, the Green Chapel, which caters to travelers—but they are discouraged from staying longer than a day or two. Visits to Urlingwood by anyone but the witches are punishable by immediate death.





## IV: ROLE-PLAYING IN THE UNAPPROACHABLE EAST



Known as a place of mystery, danger, and sudden, nasty death, it surely comes as no surprise that the lands of the Unapproachable East are perfect for adventuring. Whether exploring the depths of the Yuirwood, hunting trolls with Rashemaar berserkers, or battling the endless schemes of the Red Wizards and their foul minions, the possibilities inherent in the eastern realms are both numerous and varied. This chapter provides rules to make adventures here unique: guidelines for role-playing the unusual characters who live here—the Rashemaar berserkers and witches, and the foul Red Wizards themselves; the secret spells of the Red Wizards; and strange magical items found nowhere else.

### Character Kits

The following are various kits available to characters and NPCs in the Unapproachable East. For the most part, they are only available to characters born in these nations, but the DM is of course free to modify and relax restrictions as suits the individual campaign.

#### The Red Wizard

**Description:** Red Wizards rule the ancient land of Thay and are one of the most evil and corrupt forces in Faerûn. The Red Wizard kit is designed to be used only as an NPC class due to its inherently evil nature. Despite this, there are PC role-playing applications for the Red Wizards. A character could conceivably be a former Red Wizard or the apprentice of a Red Wizard who gave up that life and now travels Faerûn, hoping to escape his or her Thayan heritage. Such individuals would be compelled to conceal their identities and risk attack from the many enemies of the Red Wizards as well as the Red Wizards themselves.

To become a Red Wizard a character must be of evil alignment and must have Int and Cha of 14 or higher. In addition, the wizard must meet the requirements of whatever school of magic he or she chooses to specialize in.

**Preferred Schools:** The Red Wizards are all specialist wizards; their very power structure is, in fact, based upon the various magical schools. Necromancy is more popular in Thay than elsewhere, due to the wizards' evil nature and their morbid fascination with the undead. In addition, Red Wizards tend to favor spells from the Elemental Fire school and often have a full arsenal of flame-based magic.







**Barred Schools:** There are no schools specifically barred to Red Wizards, although Greater Divination is considered somewhat unglamorous and is consequently unpopular.

**Role:** The Red Wizards rule Thay with an iron fist. Their word is law, and the effects of their schemes are felt throughout Faerûn and beyond. All Red Wizards are nobles and thus considered far above other Thayans in standing. Red Wizards compete constantly against each other for power in Thay, and most aspire to the position of zulkir.

**Secondary Skills:** No special secondary skill is required for Red Wizards.

**Weapon Proficiencies:** Required (choose one): Dagger, dart, quarterstaff, whip.

**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Bonus: Astrology, spellcraft. Recommended: (General) agriculture, artistic ability, etiquette, language (modern); (Wizard) ancient history, herbalism, language (ancient), reading/writing.

**Equipment:** Red Wizards may buy any equipment they desire.

**Special Benefits:** All Red Wizards specialize in a magical school, hoping to eventually become the leader of that school. Their intensive training in their magical specialty gives them the following benefits.

Red Wizards gain two additional spells per spell level, if the additional spells are taken in the specialist's school. They also receive a +2 bonus when making saving throws against spells in that school. Other characters suffer a -2 penalty on saving throws against a Red Wizard casting spells within his or her school. They also receive a bonus of 25% when learning spells from their schools. All other benefits are as outlined for non-Red Wizard specialists in the *Player's Handbook*.

Zulkirs, as representatives of their schools and the masters of their specialties, find these benefits even further enhanced: three additional spells per level, +3 to saves and -3 to opponents' saves against spells of their specialty school.

In addition, while ordinary specialists are forbidden to use magical items of their opposition schools, Red Wizards may do so with some caution (see "Special Hindrances").

Red Wizards begin play with more money than normal for mages (see "Wealth Options"). They re-

ceive a +3 reaction modifier from any other Thayan and may demand food and lodging from commoners anywhere within Thay. This food and lodging is provided free, upon pain of death, by any non-Red Wizard in Thay.

**Special Hindrances:** As specialists, Red Wizards may not learn spells of their opposition schools. In fact, their opposition schools are even more effective than usual against them; Red Wizards suffer a -3 penalty to saving throws vs. such spells (this supersedes the -2 penalty above). They also have a penalty of -25% when learning spells not of their primary school.

When using magical items of their opposition schools, Red Wizards are subject to the following penalty: There is a 25% chance that the item simply will not function, or (at the DM's option) cause a *wild surge* as detailed in the *Tome of Magic*. Since most Red Wizards view wild magic as anathema (being most proud of their precise mastery of magic), many choose not to tempt fate by using such items.

Red Wizards are hated Faerûn over and are likely to be attacked as soon as they are so identified. While most of them are arrogant enough not to care, this disadvantage makes it crucial for adventuring expatriate Red Wizards to hide their identities and origins.

**Wealth Options:** A Red Wizard receives 1d10x10 plus 100 additional gp as starting funds.

**Races:** Only humans (and usually only those of Thayan Mulan descent) can be Red Wizards.

## Rashemaar Berserkers

**Description:** Though the Rashemaar are collectively called "berserkers" by outsiders, there is actually a small, elite group of specialized fighters which the Rashemaar themselves call berserkers. Though such fighters are not unique to Rashemen (the Norlanders of the Moonshae isles have their own berserkers, for example), the berserkers of this land have a number of specialized features found nowhere else.

Rashemaar berserkers use a variant of the Berserker kit originally published in *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*. The following is based upon the original handbook material, modified for use in a Rashemen setting.

Rashemaar berserkers are legendary fighters who can enter a mystical battle frenzy through various acts of self-







hypnosis and the use of jhuuld. Rashemaar berserkers must have Strength and Constitution ability scores of 15 or more.

**Role:** Berserkers are dedicated to the land of Rashemen and defend it before their own lives. They are also bound to obey the witches and to be at the forefront of the Rashemaar armies.

**Secondary Skills:** Rashemaar berserkers may choose their skills from the following list: Farmer, Fisher, Forester, Hunter, Trapper/Furrier.

**Weapon Proficiencies:** Rashemaar berserkers may not start play with a proficiency in any ranged weapon (thrown axes, knives, bows, crossbows, and so on). Suitable (but not required) weapon proficiencies for a berserker are broad sword, axe, spear, and warhammer.

**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Bonus Proficiency: Endurance. Recommended: (General) animal handling, animal training, direction sense, fire-building, riding (land-based), weather sense; (Warrior) blind-fighting, hunting, mountaineering, running, set snares, survival, tracking; (Priest, costs double slots) herbalism; (Rogue, costs double slots) jumping.

**Equipment:** Berserkers may not use their starting gold to buy armor heavier than chain mail. Once they have adventured in the outer world, berserkers can use any type of armor without penalty.

**Special Benefits:** Berserkers receive a +5 reaction adjustment bonus from other Rashemaar, and a +3 from other nations or tribes which have berserkers themselves.

The other benefit a berserker receives is the ability to go berserk. At any time, the berserker may choose to go berserk. This takes a full turn (10 combat rounds). In that time, the character is growling, moaning, uttering imprecations, biting his shield—it's impossible to be quiet when trying to go berserk. Berserkers may also be fighting during that time, meaning that they can start to go berserk on the round the fight begins, fight for 10 full rounds and then be berserk on the eleventh round.

A berserker can begin to go berserk before combat, even if there is no fight currently going on. At the end of a full turn of preparation, the character can enter the berserk stage instantaneously. If there's no enemy in sight yet, the character can hold the berserk until combat is engaged. If no combat takes place within five more

full turns, the berserker automatically reverts to normal and suffers the ordinary consequences for coming out of a berserk (described below). The character can come out of a berserk state once the last enemy is down. (The enemy must literally be down on the ground, even if still alive and surrendering; the berserker stays in his frenzied state and continues fighting so long as there are enemies still obviously alive.) Once the fight ends, the berserker must come out of the berserk state. Note that it is possible to "fake out" berserkers by playing dead until the berserk state has ended.

For these reasons, berserking is a more appropriate reaction when the characters are about to attack or be attacked by a foe they know about. If the characters are jumped by a small party of orcs, it's usually not worth the effort to go berserk; the consequences and effort outweigh the benefits.

While berserk, the character has phenomenal endurance and resistance to pain and some forms of magic. Only while berserk, berserkers gain the following benefits:

(1) The character gets +1 to attack rolls, +3 to damage rolls, and +5 additional hit points.

(2) Immunity to the wizard spells *charm person*, *friends*, *geas*, *hypnotism*, *irritation*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *scare*, *sleep*, and the clerical spells *charm person or mammal*, *cloak of bravery*, *command*, *enthrall*, and *symbol*.

(3) A +4 to save against the wizard spells *blindness*, *charm monster*, *confusion*, *hold person*, and *Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter*, and the clerical spell *hold person and hold animal*. Berserks who fail a saving throw against *charm monster* simply count the caster as an ally; they neither come out of the berserk nor obey the caster's commands.

(4) The *emotion* spell does not affect the berserker unless the caster chose the *fear* result. If *fear* was chosen, the berserker gets a normal saving throw; if successful, there is no effect. If the berserker fails, he or she is prematurely snapped out of the berserk state, with all the normal effects of coming out of the berserk. (There is no other *fear* effect, however.) The *fear* spell has exactly the same effect.

(5) Being berserk offers no real protection from finger of *death* except that the spell effects do not take place until the character has come out of berserk. Berserkers who save don't suffer the 2d8+1 damage until they snap





out of the berserk state. Berserkers who fail to save die immediately upon coming out of the berserk state.

(6) The berserker is immune to KO results from the Punching and Wrestling rules and suffers only half damage from bare-handed attacks.

**Special Hindrances:** The berserker has hindrances as severe as all those benefits. At all times, the berserker character receives a -3 reaction from all NPCs (except for other Rashemaar and characters from tribes which have berserkers in them, as described above). While berserk, they have the following penalties:

(1) The character can use no ranged weapons.

(2) A character's Wis and Int scores are at -3. All proficiency checks are at -3.

(3) The character must fight each opponent until that opponent is down. Once an opponent is felled, the berserker must move to attack the next nearest enemy. The berserker must keep fighting until all enemies are down.

(4) If another character enters his or her field of vision or tries something he can interpret as attack (drawing a weapon, shoving the berserker out of the way of an attack), the berserker must make an Intelligence check (keeping in mind the Int penalty noted above). If the roll is successful the berserker realizes that the other character is not attacking and need not respond. If he fails the roll, the berserker counts the offending character as an enemy and must fight accordingly.

(5) The character is *temporarily* unaffected by the clerical spells *aid*, *bleed*, *cure light wounds*, *cure serious wounds*, *cure critical wounds*, *heal*, *regenerate* (and *wither*). Though such spells may be cast when the character is berserk, the berserker does not gain the benefits of those spells until *after* the berserk has ended.

(6) The *taunt* spell is automatically successful and causes the berserker to abandon the current enemy and rush to attack the taunter.

(7) When the character comes out of berserk status he is subject to several consequences. The 5 bonus hp are lost (note that this could drop the berserker below 0 hp). The berserker collapses in exhaustion as if hit by a *ray of enfeeblement*, with no saving throw possible, and remains unconscious one round for every round he was berserk. The berserker also suffers the effects of any spells which were delayed until the end of the berserk episode (*finger of death* and healing spells).

**Wealth Options:** A berserker gets 5d4x10 gp for starting gold.

**Berserker Lodges:** The berserkers of Rashemen are organized into lodges, each with a special ability or gift. Some of the most prominent lodges and their bonuses are listed below; DMs are encouraged to create new ones. The listed benefits begin only after the character has joined the lodge, of course.

- *Ettercap.* Those accepted into the Ettercap lodge undergo extensive physical training, providing them with an additional +1 hp per level while berserk (these are lost in the same manner as described above for the normal +5 hp granted while berserk).
- *Goblin.* Goblin lodge berserkers gain an additional +1 to hit and damage when berserk in groups of four or more.
- *Ice Troll.* Berserkers from the Ice Troll lodge go through an intensive training regiment toughening themselves in cold weather, providing a natural -1 to their normal AC.
- *Snow Tiger.* Snow Tigers wear cloaks made from the skin of a real snow tiger and fight with tiger's claws—a weapon crafted from the actual talons of the beast. Tiger's claws inflict 1d6 points of damage each. When Snow Tiger berserkers fight with two tiger's claws, the first attack is at no penalty while off-hand attacks suffer an attack penalty of -2, rather than -4.
- *White Dragon.* White Dragon berserkers are given a weapon known as a dragon's fang. This is a club with a long, curved point, something like a military pick, crafted from the actual tooth of a white dragon. This weapon is one-handed, +1 to hit, and inflicts 2d4 points of piercing damage. High ranking berserkers periodically go out on quests to slay white dragons, or to at least find their skeletal remains, in order to obtain more dragon's teeth to create the weapons.

The White Dragons are probably the best known lodge in Rashemen and maintain the land's largest ale-hall in the city of Thasunta.





## Rashemaar Witches

**Description:** The witches are known throughout the Realms to wield “strange” spells (that is, magic different in effect from that employed by most wizards), but they learn and cast these in the same manner as mages of other lands.

To become a witch, a character must have Int, Wis, and Cha of 14 or higher and must be of nonevil alignment. Witches must also be females of Rashemaar descent. (Males with spellcasting ability are recruited by the witches as *vremyonni*—see below.)

**Preferred Schools:** Witches prefer the enchantment/charm, conjuration/summoning, and illusion/phantasm schools of magic. Rashemen’s witches can function as specialist wizards, though they are not required to.

**Barred Schools:** No magical schools are barred to Rashemaar witches.

**Role:** The witches, or *wychlaran* (literally “wise old women”), are the true rulers of Rashemen, though they choose male lords to lead their armies and deal with questions of daily rulership. Witches are respected almost to the point of worship in Rashemen, where their word is law, and the penalty for disobedience to a witch is swift death at the hands of any Rashemaar nearby.

The witches do not wield this power foolishly, and are tolerant and protective of their subjects. They are divided into several orders, corresponding roughly to levels of experience: the *Othlor*, or true ones, are the highest-ranking witches, and membership is limited to witches of 15th level and higher. The next highest rank, that of *Hathran* (“learned sisterhood”) is for witches of levels 10-14; the rank of *Blethran* (“sisterkin”) is for witches of levels 3-9; and the lowest rank, *Ethran* (“un-trying”) is limited to witches of 1st and 2nd level.

**Secondary Skills:** Rashemaar witches must take one of the following secondary skills: Farmer, Forester, Hunter, Scribe, Woodworker.

**Weapon Proficiencies:** Required (player’s choice): Dagger, dart, knife, quarterstaff.

**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Bonus Proficiencies: Herbalism, spellcasting. Recommended: (General) artistic ability, languages (modern), weather sense, weaving; (Wizard) ancient history, astrology, languages (ancient), reading/writing, religion; (Priest, double slots) healing.

**Equipment:** Witch player characters may spend money on any equipment they choose.

**Special Benefits:** The Witches of Rashemen are more than just spellcasters of a particular nation; on their home soil the land itself (and the many spirits therein) grants them their powers. While within Rashemen, witches do not need to select or memorize their spells in advance. All spells known to the characters (those recorded in their spellbooks) are available at any time. Spell level limitations still apply, so a 3rd-level witch can only cast two 1st- and one 2nd-level spell per day. In addition, Rashemaar witches do not need material spell components while casting in Rashemen (verbal and somatic components are still required). Outside their own country they lose these powers, memorizing spells and using spell components in the same manner as other wizards.

Rashemaar witches also have the potent ability to *spellmeld*. A formidable counter to the Red Wizards’ casting circles, a *spellmeld* is a ritualistic combination of two or more witches’ magical abilities. In order to *spellmeld*, the participating witches engage in a wild, leaping dance which must center on a single object derived from one of the four elements: Earth, Air, Fire, or Water. As an Air “object” is rather hard to come by, these dances usually center on a large rock, a bonfire, or a stream or pool.

A *spellmeld* must include at least two witches, one of whom must be 6th level or greater. The second witch touches the first as they leap and cavort, sacrificing any one memorized spell of her own (of any level or type). The sacrificed spell is lost and its energy passes into the magic created by first witch, with the following results. The first witch’s spell takes effect for (spellcaster’s choice) double normal damage or doubled duration, range, and area of effect. If no saving throw is allowed for the spell, it takes effect for only normal duration and area of effect, but inflicts twice the maximum possible normal damage.

A third witch joining a meld causes the damage to be trebled or affords trebled duration, range, and area of effect. A fourth witch causes damage to be four times normal or quadruples duration, range, and area of effect. A fifth melding witch causes damage to be five times the norm or five times duration, range, and area of effect. A sixth witch—the maximum number possible—makes





damage six times the norm or six times the duration, range, and area of effect of the spell.

Note that these augmentations aren't cumulative. Multiple melds are very rare unless the witches are fighting a hostile army or are defending a stronghold together, but legends of the power they can unleash have spread far across the lands about the Sea of Fallen Stars, and few folk care to challenge a witch.

Regardless of location, Rashemaar witches can *cause horror* (effects identical to a successful *fear* spell) three times per day, affecting all creatures of fewer Hit Dice or levels than themselves within 100 feet. (Beings of equal or greater Hit Dice are immune to this effect.)

Finally, witches are highly respected within Rashemen and may ask for virtually anything from Rashemaar citizens: food, lodging, financial assistance, and the like. Witch characters should take care not to misuse their powers, and to only use them in the pursuit of the best interests of Rashemen. Those who make unnecessary demands or otherwise abuse their status are harshly dealt with by higher-ranking witches, who may imprison or exile them from Rashemen.

**Special Hindrances:** Within Rashemen the casting time for all witch spells is doubled, as the witch draws on the power of the land and spirits to form her spell. Outside the country, casting time is normal. As noted above, the witch must also memorize her spells as normal when she travels beyond Rashemen. The *spellmeld* ability works only with other witches, and so is of little use to the lone witch traveling outside Rashemen's borders.

By tradition, witches neither craft magical items nor research new spells. While they are not forbidden to do so, those tasks are the province of the vremyonni. A witch who devotes the time required for such work may be questioned by her superiors about her dedication to Rashemen; after all, if she is occupied in crafting a magical item or researching a new spell, she cannot be actively guarding Rashemen against the Red Wizards and other threats.

All witches must go masked while traveling in Rashemen. They need not wear masks in private or when meeting with other witches in the Urlingwood or similar places forbidden to outsiders. Witches must also obey the orders of any higher-ranking witches and must swear never to use their powers for personal gain or for any

purpose contrary to the best interests of the land of Rashemen.

There are no "renegade" or "outcast" witches, so any who travel beyond Rashemen only do so with specific tasks or missions. They travel incognito, often concealing their identities from all but their closest companions. Finally, such a witch is required to return to Rashemen once each year or so, to report her findings in the outside world, learn new spells, and receive new assignments from the elder witches.

**Wealth Options:** Rashemaar witches have normal starting wealth.

**Races:** Only Rashemaar human females may become witches.

### The Vremyonni

The vremyonni are a group of hermetic wizards who perform spell research and craft magical items for the witches. They dwell deep in caves and clefts of the Running Rocks, living lives of ascetic isolation, uninterested in anything save their researches. Vremyonni are not given a kit since their role is exclusively as NPCs.

All young Rashemaar are tested for magical aptitude. Girls who show skill in spellcasting are taken in by the witches, while the few boys who show talent are sent to be apprenticed to the vremyonni. Parents, by tradition, have no choice in the matter; magically skilled children are taken regardless of their feelings. Parents are compensated with farm animals, buildings, equipment, or orphaned children given in exchange. Such is the esteem in which the Rashemaar hold their witches that all accept this arrangement, and few complain.

Once taken in by the vremyonni, young males are trained in the sorcerous arts and serve as apprentices and assistants. Once a young man reaches the age of 20, he is given a choice: Stay with the vremyonni and learn their secrets or depart Rashemen permanently, bound by *geas* never to reveal the Old Ones' secrets. About half choose to stay, while the remainder wander the world as traveling sorcerers or settle in distant lands. Those who stay begin to learn the deepest secrets of Rashemen's magic and may eventually become one of the vremyonni themselves once they have mastered the theories and intricacies of magic—at the age of 70 or older.

The vremyonni are kept alive by longevity spells and potions. They are as loyal to the witches as other Rashe-





maar and take great pride in their role as researchers and teachers. Young witches are often brought to the Old Ones' caves to be taught spellcraft, and even older and more accomplished witches find the old men's researches invaluable.

Any vremyonni encountered in the campaign must be an NPC. The Old Ones keep to their caves and develop potent magic and never leave. A typical Old One is at least 75 years old and is 15th level or higher. He knows few offensive spells, and many of his enchantments are obscure, esoteric, or experimental in nature. A vremyonni is a useful source of information and can pass on many fascinating facts about history, culture, magic, and current events in exchange for vows of secrecy. Should visitors prove uncooperative and wish to plunder the Old Ones' secrets or reveal their existence, the witches instantly come to their defense and deal extremely harshly with such enemies.

A possible involvement for the vremyonni in an ongoing campaign is to have a PC be a former student of the Old Ones who chose to leave. This character's background should be secret to all save his player and might serve to create many interesting plot elements or adventures, especially if something unusual occurs such as the PCs master calling on his old pupil for help or in similar crises.

## New Spells

The Red Wizards of Thay are feared both for the strength of their magic and the unique—and often cruel—nature of their spells. If there is a spell to inflict pain and suffering, a Red Wizard learns it; if the spell does not yet exist, he or she creates it.

Note that spells of a distinctly cruel nature should be available to evil characters only. Heroes who invoke such spells may be subject to sudden alignment changes—and all concomitant effects.

Though the mages of Aglarond and the Witches of Rashemen also employ unique spells (the former creations of the Simbul, the latter gifts from nature spirits and their own link with the land), those are far less conspicuous than the spells of the Red Wizards. The following section reveals Thayan spells PCs are most likely to encounter and, if unlucky or incautious, experience for themselves.

## First-Level Spells

### Circle

(Evocation)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S

Duration: Special

Casting Time: See below

Area of Effect: One wizard

Saving Throw: None

This spell makes the spellcasting battle circles of the Red Wizards truly dreaded. A circle consists of a wizard and his apprentices and allied wizards, all of whom must be Red Wizards.

Through use of this spell, the apprentices and allies add their power to that of the Red Wizard, allowing him to cast spells as if his level were increased by an amount equal to the total levels of the members of his circle. All members of the circle must be members of the caster's school or its allied schools. Allied schools are defined as the schools on either side of the wizard's school, as shown under "The Schools of Magic" in Chapter 3 of the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide*. (An illusionist's allied schools are alteration and enchantment/charm, for example.)

Note that the *circle* spell only increases the number of spells the wizard can cast. It does not allow a wizard to cast spells of a higher level than normal. A 12th-level wizard with a circle of three 3rd-level and three 1st-level apprentices is effectively 24th level in regard to the number of spells he may cast, but he may still only cast spells of level six or lower. He also does not gain increased damage, duration, or any other spellcasting factors for the additional spells. A wizard may have as many apprentices in his circle as desired but can never more than double his effective level.

To cast this spell, the apprentices join in a circle with the wizard in the center. All participants must have previously memorized the *circle* spell (save the wizard who is to receive the spell's benefits) and must cast it simultaneously. This takes a number of rounds equal to the level of the highest apprentice in the circle. (In effect, circles with lower-level apprentices are larger, but cast the *circle* spell faster.) The apprentices are stripped of all their memorized spells and their spell slots are transferred to the wizard.





The wizard in the center of the circle must be fully rested to receive the full benefits of the *circle* spell. Once the spell has been cast, the wizard then memorizes whatever additional spells he desires to the maximum number of new slots. If the wizard leaves the circle, or if it is disrupted in any way (an apprentice killed or the circle broken by an attack), any remaining unmemorized spells are lost, though spells memorized before the circle was broken are retained.

After the spells are memorized, the wizard may leave the circle. All spells memorized while in the circle are retained until cast.

### **Detho's Delirium** (Enchantment/Charm)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1 round + 1 round/level

Casting Time: 1

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

The caster of this spell touches a being who is drugged, drunken, unconscious, or sleeping. The caster then speaks the verbal component and rings a small silver or brass bell.

The subject receives a saving throw vs. spell at -2; if the save is failed, the being begins to speak. He speaks at random, in all languages known to him and on random, rambling topics. He cannot hear questions and cannot be forced by mental or magical control to give specific answers. While the person speaks, there is a 25% noncumulative chance per round that he reveals names (but not truenames), passwords, words of activation, codes, directions, and other useful information. Note that the speaker rarely identifies such fragments of speech for what they truly are. Dreams, rumors, jokes, and fairy tales may be mumbled by the speaker, not merely factual information.

If the affected person is awakened at any time, the spell is broken.

### **Know School** (Divination)

Range: 120 yards

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1 round

Casting Time: 1

Area of Effect: One target

Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell the caster may determine the school of another spellcaster. This spell only functions on other wizards who are specialist mages; it produces no results on priests, spellcasters without schools, or creatures without spell ability.

The target is unaware of the divination unless he or she has some means to detect or prevent magical scrying. The material component of this spell is a small tube of paper or vellum.

While this spell is of nominal use in other lands, the Red Wizards have found it indispensable. Before almost any action, prudent Red Wizards determine their enemies' opposition schools and their greatest areas of weakness.

### **Nybor's Gentle Reminder** (Enchantment/Charm)

Range: 10 yards

Components: V

Duration: 1 round

Casting Time: 1

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

This spell is quite popular with slave overseers and those wishing to make their servants work a little faster. Victims receive a sharp, agonizing pain, which immobilizes and prevents them from taking any action for one full round. All saving throws made by the victim during this round are at a -2 penalty. The spell inflicts no actual physical damage.







## Second-Level Spells

### Create Enchanted Tattoo

(Alteration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1 day/level each

Casting Time: 1 turn

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: None

Red Wizards often bear enchanted tattoos on their faces and shaved heads. This spell allows the creation of such tattoos. The exact nature of the tattoos is determined by the caster, and the tattoo's effect is based upon the level of the caster. Only one tattoo may be created by this spell, although multiple applications are possible.

A wizard of levels 3-6 can inscribe the following tattoos: +1 to any one saving throw (vs. death magic, vs. wands, and so on); +1 to attack rolls; and -1 to AC. A wizard of levels 7-12 may inscribe all of the lower level tattoos, plus the following: +1 to all saving throws; one extra attack every two rounds; and one extra spell of 1st, 2nd, or 3rd level (only one spell, and only one level, not one of each).

Wizards of level 13 and higher may inscribe all of the above tattoos plus the following: 5% magic resistance; +1 to any one attribute; and +1 level of casting ability (this increases the caster's effective level, but not the total number of spells—an 11th-level wizard raised in casting ability in this manner casts spells as a 12th-level wizard in terms of range, area of effect, and so on, but does not gain access to the increased number of spells or to 6th-level spells until he actually becomes a 12th-level wizard).

There are several restrictions on the number and type of magical tattoos which an individual may bear. An individual may never have more than three enchanted tattoos, and none of these may be of the same type. The wizard must also have a modicum of artistic talent, to sketch the desired tattoo. Some skin artists in Bezantur and elsewhere have prospered solely from their natural artistic talent and the use of this spell.

### Dazzle

(Evocation)

Range: 10 yards + 1 yard/level

Components: V,S

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting Time: 2

Area of Effect: 2 yard radius sphere

Saving Throw: ½

This spell creates a blinding flash of light in its area. Everyone within the area of effect is subject to a -4 penalty on attack rolls, proficiency checks, and initiative rolls. Thieves acquire a -20% penalty to all abilities. Effects of this spell last for 2d10 rounds; a successful saving throw vs. magic halves this time.

### Preservation

(Alteration/Necromancy)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1 day per level of caster

Casting Time: 2 rounds

Area of Effect: One medium-sized creature

Saving Throw: None

This spell preserves meat and other foods as if it had just been killed. It does not work on cooked food. It can be used on dead people to keep them intact until they can be *raised* (the time preserved does not count toward the time elapsed before raising) or spoken to. It can also be used on a zombie, lich, or similar undead to keep the body from rotting.

The material component of this spell is a pinch of salt.

### Protection from Poison

(Abjuration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1d10 + 2 rounds

Casting Time: 2

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: None

By use of this spell, the wizard becomes immune to one form of poison. At the time of casting, the wizard must choose to be protected against one of the following poi-



son types: Contact, Ingested, Inhaled, or Injected. Poisons of types other than the one chosen still affect the wizard normally. Note that any poison already in the wizard's system is unaffected by this spell.

The material component of the spell is a sprig of belladonna.

## Third-Level Spells

### Fire Lance

(Evocation)

Range: 100 yards

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting Time: 3

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: ½

This spell creates a burning lance of flame that leaps from its caster's hand, hitting automatically and inflicting 1d6 points of damage per level of caster, to a maximum of 10d6.

The material component is a lit torch in the caster's hand or one fire source of at least torch size within 30 feet of the caster. Casting this spell extinguishes a torch-sized fire source but only diminishes it slightly if the fire is larger.

Despite its disadvantages when compared to the ever-popular *fireball* (only one target affected and a fire source required), *fire lance* is a fashionable Red Wizard spell. Unlike a *fireball's* effect, the victim's clothing and possessions are untouched by the flame. This enables the caster to torch a victim without worrying that magical items will be destroyed in the conflagration.

### Nybor's Mild Admonishment

(Enchantment/Charm)

Range: 10 yards + 1 yard/level

Components: V,S

Duration: 2d4 rounds

Casting Time: 3

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

This "improvement" on *Nybor's gentle* reminder causes intense pain in its victims and incapacitates them for 2d4 rounds. Victims may take no action during this time other than lying on the ground and writhing in pain. All saving throws made by victims during this time are at a -3 penalty.

### Proof from Teleportation

(Abjuration)

Range: 0

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 2 hours/level

Casting Time: 2 turns

Area of Effect: 10 yard radius/level

Saving Throw: None

This spell secures an area from magical intrusion by means of teleportation, *gates*, or *dimension doors*. The area extends out from the caster 10 yards per level in all three dimensions and is not impeded by walls, doors, or other surfaces.

When in operation, the spell prohibits the use of *teleport* spells (including *teleport without error* and *mage tunnel*) into the region. *Dimension doors* will also not function within the proscribed region. Attempts to use these spells to enter or leave the affected area fail completely.

In order to use *gate* spells or similar magic that opens portals into other planes, the caster of the *gate* must make a saving throw vs. spell. Failure indicates the spell fails but is expended anyway. Success allows the use of the *gate*. Further attempts require additional saving throws.

Spells that tap the Ethereal Plane (such as *vanish*) and items such as *armor of ethereality* function normally, as do ethereal creatures. Other extraplanar creatures also function normally, though they may not *gate* or *teleport*.

The *proof against teleportation* spell can be discontinued at any time by its caster. It may also be brought down by a *dispel magic* in the standard fashion. A *limited wish* or *wish* allows a *teleport* to function within the secured area.

The material component of the spell is 2 lbs. of sugar, salt, or other granular material stuffed into a 1-lb. sack and dropped at the center of the spell's area of effect.





### **Resist Energy Drain**

(Abjuration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S

Duration: 1 turn/level or one attack

Casting Time: 3

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: None

This spell gives the subject a saving throw vs. death magic any time he is attacked by undead that drain energy levels. If the saving throw is made, the undead cannot steal the life energy of the subject. The spell is good for only one such attack, regardless of whether the saving throw is made or not. This does not work against any sort of attack besides the touch of an undead.

### **Trap Spellbook**

(Alteration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S

Duration: 1 day/level

Casting Time: 3

Area of Effect: One book

Saving Throw: None or ½

*Trap spellbook* is a dedicated form of *explosive runes*. As its name implies, the spell is used by the Red Wizards primarily to protect their spellbooks, but may be placed on a book of any sort. As with *explosive runes*, there is only a 5% chance per level of magic use experience of the reader to detect the trap, and thieves have only a 5% chance. Trap detection by spell or magical device always detects this spell.

This spell inflicts 1d6 points/level of the caster (to a maximum of 5d6) upon anyone other than the caster who opens the book upon which it is cast. In addition, the spell does no damage to the book itself and renews itself upon closing. The wizard may voluntarily remove the runes; otherwise, they may only be removed with a *dispel magic* or similar means.

## **Fourth-Level Spells**

### **Beltyn's Burning Blood**

(Alteration)

Range: 10 yards/level

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 3 rounds

Casting Time: 4

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

By means of this spell, a mage can cause any creature who is presently bearing open, bleeding wounds (for example, one who has been damaged by edged weapons recently and whose wounds have not yet been dressed or healed) to suffer 3d4 points of additional damage per round by causing a subtle, temporary change in the victim's blood that causes it to become corrosive to adjacent tissue.

The subject must have blood to be affected, and any creature immune or resistant to fire or corrosive damage cannot be affected. Once the spell is cast, the caster does not have to concentrate on the spell. It continues to work as the caster performs other actions. No attack roll is necessary and the victim need not even be in sight of the caster as long as the victim is within range. Astral or ethereal subjects cannot be affected.

The spell causes no damage if the subject's saving throws are successful in each of the three rounds of the duration. If one saving throw is made, the subject still can take damage during the other two rounds of the duration. The spell continues to burn even if the victim moves out of range.

Targets who have altered their shape or entered other objects (such as a tree or stone) are still vulnerable to this spell as long as they are bleeding. Creatures who have powers of regeneration are only affected as long as they have open wounds. Any magical curative spell or regeneration ability staunches the flow of blood and negates the spell.

The material component of the spell is a pinch of saltpeter and the presence of exposed blood.





## Disfigure

### (Alteration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S

Duration: Permanent

Casting Time: 4

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

Victims of disfigure must save vs. spell to avoid being horribly transformed, covered in scars, boils, welts, warts, and other deformities, instantly reducing their Cha to 1. This renders the character so repulsive that any viewer must save vs. spell or be unable to bear the character's presence. Those failing the save may attack if normally inclined to be suspicious or hostile, while those normally inclined to be helpful or friendly simply leave in disgust. Neutral creatures have a 50% chance to do either.

This spell is used as punishment, to insure the loyalty of retainers, or to punish rivals. The spell may only be removed by a *limited wish*, *wish*, or *remove curse*. *Dispel magic* has no effect.

## Negate Magical Weapon

### (Abjuration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1d4 + 4 rounds

Casting Time: 1 round

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: None

The subject of this spell is not affected by the magical abilities of enchanted weapons. A *broad sword +1*, for example, simply becomes an ordinary broadsword. This spell affects all magical elements of an enchanted weapon. Such items as *nine lives stealer*, *defender*, *holy avenger*, and so on still inflict damage but function as normal weapons of their type.

This spell does not negate powers which do not directly affect the caster. An intelligent sword that allows its bearer to *fly*, *detect magic*, or provides spell-like abilities such as *strength*, *levitation*, or *telekinesis* is unaffected. If the special ability affects the caster— *charm person*, *ESP*, and so on—it is negated.

*Negate magical weapon* also does not affect a weapon's

special purpose powers. If a wizard casts *negate magical weapon* on himself but is attacked by a weapon whose special-purpose is to defeat wizards, the weapon's special purpose powers (blindness, confusion, paralysis) still function. The weapon's normal magical bonuses are still negated, however.

## Fifth-Level Spells

### Create Chosen One

#### (Alteration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Permanent

Casting Time: 1 hour

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

Only wizards of evil alignment may cast this spell, which consists of a series of magical rituals and torments intended to turn a normal human (of up to 3 HD) into a maddened, murderous creature known as a chosen one. Victims must be bound and helpless in order for the spell to work. After its casting is completed, the victim must save vs. death magic or be transformed into a chosen one under the control of its creator. See the Spellbound *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*® booklet for full information on chosen ones and their creation and abilities.

### Fiendform

#### (Alteration)

Range: 0

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1d4 + 1 turns/2 levels

Casting Time: 1 round

Area of Effect: The caster

Saving Throw: None

Only wizards of evil alignment may learn this spell, which grants its caster the form and abilities of a randomly selected creature from the Lower Planes. When cast, roll 1d100 on the following table to determine the form which the wizard takes. (If the DM does not have access to the PLANESCAPE™ *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*, roll randomly for one of the fiends listed in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL*™.)





Die Roll	Form
01-15	Tanar'ri, alu-fiend
16-30	Tanar'ri, bar-igura
31-40	Tanar'ri, cambion
41-45	Tanar'ri, succubus
46-60	Tanar'ri, chasme
51-55	Tanar'ri, nabassu
56-60	Tanar'ri, balor
61-65	Tanar'ri, vroock
66-75	Yugoloth, dergholoth
76-85	Yugoloth, mezzoloth
86-90	Yugoloth, yagnoloth
91-95	Yugoloth, arcanaloth
96-00	Yugoloth, nycaloth

Unlike *polymorph* or similar spells, *fiendform* grants its caster many abilities of the creature rolled, including special attacks and defenses, immunities, Armor Class, and hit points. *Fiendform* does not grant abilities based on Intelligence, innate magical abilities, magic resistance, or the ability to *gate* in other extraplanar entities. The caster also gains the vulnerabilities of the form, as determined by the type of fiend rolled.

After the spell expires, the caster returns to his or her original form. Any damage suffered while in *fiendform* remains when the caster takes his original form. If the caster is slain while in fiend form, he or she must save vs. death magic or be slain when in normal form as well. In that event, the character reforms as a manes in the Abyss and is not restorable by any means. Even if the saving throw is successful, the caster immediately reverts to normal form with 0 hit points and lies in a coma for 3d10 hours.

The material component of *fiendform* is a crystal statuette of a fiend (of any type) worth at least 3,000 gp. The statuette shatters when the spell ends; it is left behind when the spell is cast and if prematurely shattered the spell ends immediately.

## Sixth-Level Spells

### Acid Rain

#### (Alteration)

Range: 30 yards

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1 round/level

Casting Time: 6

Area of Effect: 5' circle/level

Saving Throw: ½

This spell creates an intense storm of burning, corrosive acid over a circle 3 feet in diameter for each level of the caster (a 12th-level wizard can cast the spell in a 36-foot-diameter circle). The acid inflicts 6d4+6 points of damage per round as long as the target remains within the area of effect. In addition, equipment must save vs. acid each round that it is exposed to the spell, or be destroyed (see DMG, Table 29).

The material component of this spell is a vial of strong acid.

### Animate Dread Warrior

#### (Necromancy)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Permanent

Casting Time: 1 turn

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: None

This spell creates an undead creature known as a dread warrior (see the *Spellbound MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM* for full statistics).

The spell requires the corpse of a fighter of at least 4th level who has been dead for less than one full day. After casting, the corpse rises as a dread warrior under the control of the spell's caster.

### Imbue Undead With Spell Ability

#### (Necromancy)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Special

Casting Time: 1 turn

Area of Effect: One undead creature

Saving Throw: None





The wizard using this spell grants an undead creature the use of a particular spell the wizard has learned. That spell is left with the creature and can be used by the creature. A ghoul can be invested with a lightning bolt or a skeleton guard with a dimension door and the location of its master's throne room.

Once this spell has been given to a creature, it remains with that creature until it discharges the spell or is destroyed. The wizard who provides the spell loses use of one spell of that particular level until the spell is discharged or the undead creature is destroyed. (If a *fireball* is imbued into a skeleton, for example, the wizard has one less 3rd-level spell available to him.) A wizard can imbue as many different undead as he has *imbue* spells or spells to give away. No spells above 5th level can be imbued to an undead creature. No more than a single spell can be imbued to a single undead creature at any time.

Once discharged, the spell takes effect as if it was cast by the wizard—no material, verbal, or somatic materials are required, and the casting time of the released spell is 1.

The material component of imbue is a small scroll of paper upon which is written the name of the imbued spell in squid ink.

## Seventh-Level Spells

### Nybor's Joyful Voyage (Alteration)

Range: 1 foot/level

Components: V,S

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting Time: 7

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

By use of this spell, a wizard teleports another individual 1d100 miles in a random direction, as determined by the following chart.

Die Roll	Direction
1	North
2	South
3	East
4	West
5	UP
6	Down

Transportation is instantaneous, and the individual is often faced with hostile conditions at his or her arrival point—water, solid rock, and so on. Those unfortunate enough to be transported upward fall to their deaths unless some magical intervention such as *feather fall* is used, while those transported downward can only hope to materialize in a cavern or air pocket, rather than being encased in solid rock.

This spell was invented by the Zulkir Nybor to deal with troublesome peddlers. The "joyful" nature of Nybor's voyage refers to the joy of the spell's caster rather than that of its target.

### Nybor's Stern Reproof (Enchantment/Charm)

Range: 10 yards + 1 yard/level

Components: V,S

Duration: 2d6 rounds + 1 round/level

Casting Time: 1

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

This spell inflicts stabbing pains even greater than *Nybor's gentle reminder* and *Nybor's mild admonishment*. Victims are incapacitated and may take no actions for 2d6 rounds. In addition, the caster may elect to continue inflicting pain for a number of rounds less than or equal to his or her own level. All saving throws made by the victim during this time are at -6.

When the spell is first cast, its victim must also make a saving throw vs. death magic. If this roll is a failure, the victim dies instantly from the agony inflicted by the spell.

### The Simbul's Synostodweomer (Alteration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S

Duration: 1 round

Casting Time: 7

Area of Effect: The caster

Saving Throw: None

Created by the Simbul and adopted by the Red Wizards for its usefulness, this spell allows the caster to transform the energy of another spell memorized by the caster into





healing magic. The *synostodweomer* is cast, followed by another spell of the caster's choosing. The second spell does not take effect, although any material components it requires are consumed or altered in the usual manner for that particular spell, and the spell still vanishes from the caster's mind.

Any being touched by the caster regains 2 hit points for every level of the transformed (second) spell (so a 9th-level spell would give an injured being back 18 hit points). This spell does not grant extra hit points, but "excess" points conveyed can have special effects. An excess of 5 points cures any one disease possessed by the injured creature, and an excess of 7 points banishes all effects of poison. If both afflictions are present, the caster must choose which to cure unless there is enough of an excess—12 points—to cure both. A *synostodweomer* does not affect lycanthropy. If the recipient is neither diseased nor poisoned or there are not at least 5 extra points conveyed, the excess curing is simply lost.

The healing capability endowed by the *synostodweomer* must be used within three rounds or both it and the second, transferred spell are lost and wasted. Healing can only be granted by direct flesh-to-flesh contact.

Only spells memorized by the caster of the *synostodweomer* can be transformed into healing energy by this spell. It cannot transform spells from scrolls or spell-like magical item functions or abilities.

## Eighth-Level Spells

### Flensing

(Alteration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Special

Casting Time: 8

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Special

This horrifying spell actually strips the flesh from its victim. Developed by the Red Wizards for torture and interrogation, it may only be learned by spellcasters of evil alignment. *Flensing* takes four full rounds to be effective. On the first round, the victim suffers great pain and disfiguring tearing of his or her flesh but no actual damage.

On the second round, the victim sustains 2d6 points of damage (a successful saving throw vs. spell halves this damage but does not stop the spell), and on the third round the victim takes 2d10 points of damage (which can also be halved with a successful saving throw vs. spell).

On the fourth round after casting, the victim must save vs. death magic or die instantly as the very flesh is torn from his or her bones. Victims of this spell often give in during the first round of casting and tell the Red Wizards what they want to know. On occasion, however, the wizards let the spell complete its gruesome work even after they have gotten the required information.

*Flensing* also causes extensive disfigurement to its victims. If the spell was stopped on the first round, the victim must save vs. breath weapon to avoid losing 1-3 points of Charisma permanently. If the spell is stopped on the second or third round, the victim must successfully save or lose 2d4 points of Charisma permanently. If the victim survives the fourth round he or she must again save vs. breath weapon to void the permanent loss of 2d6 points of Charisma. The victim's Charisma may never be reduced below 1 in this manner. Charisma points may be restored by regeneration.

The material component of *flensing* is an onion that must be peeled, one layer per round of the spell.

### Nybor's Wrathful Castigation (Enchantment/Charm)

Range: 10 yards + 1 yard/level

Components: V,S

Duration: 3d6 rounds + 1 round/level

Casting Time: 8

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

*Nybor's Wrathful Castigation* is the most feared spell created by this sadistic Red Wizard. Like his other spells, it causes wracking pain and violent convulsions, but this version incapacitates victims for 3d6 rounds, plus an amount determined by the caster at the time of casting, equal to or less than his or her level. All saving throws made by the victim during this time are at -6.

In addition to its other effects, the spell's victim must make a saving throw vs. death magic each round that





the spell is in effect. These saving throws are made normally, without the -6 penalty. If any roll is a failure, the victim dies from the agonizing pain that the spell inflicts.

### **Unlife**

#### **(Necromancy)**

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Permanent

Casting Time: 8

Area of Effect: One creature

Saving Throw: Negates

Used only by evil wizards, this spell enables the caster to transform a single victim into an undead creature under his or her control. The caster touches the subject, who must then save vs. death magic. If the save fails, the subject instantly dies and is transformed into an undead creature under the control of the caster.

The exact type of undead depends upon the level of the victim. Individuals of levels 1-3 become skeletons (50%) or zombies (50%). Those of levels 4-6 become ghouls, those of levels 7-8 become wights, and those of level 9 or higher become wraiths.

Using this spell, the caster can control a number of undead creatures equal to his or her level.

The material component of this spell is dirt from a freshly dug grave.

## **Ninth-Level Spells**

### **Mage Tunnel**

#### **(Alteration)**

Range: Special

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Special

Casting Time: 9

Area of Effect: Special

Saving Throw: Special

Szass Tam developed this high-level transportation spell, then discovered its use in kidnaping or in sending

away unwanted visitors. When cast, *mage tunnel* opens up a magical passageway between the caster and an area known to the caster no more than 1,000 miles away, through which the caster may freely travel. The only restriction on the spell is that the destination must be out-of-doors and in a location with which the caster is familiar.

Szass Tam uses his *mage tunnel* for kidnaping as well as travel. In such cases, the tunnel is cast to appear next to the victim. Anyone within 5 feet of either opening must then make a successful surprise roll or be immediately drawn into the tunnel, sucked through it, and expelled at the other end. Furthermore, the victim at the opposite end of the *mage tunnel* must roll for surprise with a -2 penalty, since the appearance of this spell is usually totally unexpected. The caster himself is not affected by this, need not roll to resist the suction, and may enter the tunnel or not at his discretion.

*Mage Tunnel's* material component is a 1" length of copper tubing engraved with silvered runes.

### **Spell-Lash**

#### **(Alteration)**

Range: 0

Components: V,S

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting Time: 4

Area of Effect: 25-foot radius

Saving Throw: ½

This spell is used by Red Wizards who are in danger of death or capture. It completely destroys the wizard's body (although the wizard's essence may be protected by means of a *clone*, *magic jar*, or similar spell) and inflicts explosive damage on all within a 25-foot radius. The amount of damage inflicted is equal to 1d4 times the level of the caster. A 25th-level wizard would, for example, inflict 25d4 points of damage upon all individuals and objects within 25 feet should this spell be used.

Needless to say, *spell-lash* is not used very often, but when it is the results are nothing short of spectacular.







## New Enchanted Items

Magical items of Thay, Aglarond, and Rashemen are only rarely encountered outside of those nations and are even more rarely found in the hands of someone foreign to those areas. The Thayans are notoriously protective about their magical items, fearing that their own vicious creations will be turned against them. The Simbul's Children and her foresters are similarly careful with the items entrusted to them, and the witches and berserkers of Rashemen are not in the habit of outfitting outlanders with their own unique inventions. Nevertheless, the following items are some of the more common ones of the Unapproachable East, and descriptions are provided so that the wary traveler may know in advance precisely what resources those he encounters may have.

### Miscellaneous Magical Items

#### Berserker Blade

A *berserker blade* is a weapon crafted by weaponsmiths of the Rashemaar berserker lodges and given to a prominent berserker in recognition of age, accomplishment, or a remarkable act of bravery.

*Berserker blades* vary in abilities, but most are enchanted swords that grant an additional bonus when a wielder is berserk. Typical bonuses are +1/+3 when berserk, +2/+4, and +3/+5. DMs may use the following tables to determine a blade's type and its bonus.

d100 roll	Type	
01-15	Axe	
16-25	Scimitar	
26-50	Short sword	
51-75	Broad sword	
76-00	Long sword	

d100 roll	Bonus	XP Value
01-70	+1/+3	800
71-90	+2/+4	1,200
91-99	+3/+5	2,000
00	DM's choice	varies

Especially rare *berserker blades* are said to provide especially high bonuses such as +4/+6 or even +5/+7, but these may well exist only in legend. Special purposes or abilities in such blades are likewise usually a matter of legend.

#### Circlet of the Wilderness

XP Value: 6,000

This rare item is usable only by rangers. A *circlet of the wilderness* grants its wearer the following powers: *animal friendship*, *pass without trace*, and *speak with animals* continuously; *animal summoning I* and *cure light wounds* 3 times per day; and *animal summoning II* and *cure serious wounds* once per day. Wearers also have the ability to predict weather without error up to 24 hours in advance. Aglarondan rangers who have proven their loyalty to the Simbul are sometimes rewarded with a *circlet*.

#### Ebon Lash

XP Value: 350

Created by and for the Red Wizards, *ebon lashes* are short, enchanted black whips. They strike in combat for 1d6+1 points of damage and require any struck to save vs. wand or be incapacitated by pain for 2d4 rounds. The wielder of an *ebon lash* may also *dominate* (as the 5th-level wizard spell *domination*) anyone the whip has hit once per day.

#### Enchanted Masks

The Witches of Rashemen wear masks to conceal their features. Some of these masks are enchanted, and a few are powerful unique items. The more common types are listed here, while unique masks are described in this section under their own heading.

XP Value: 800

Mask of disguise. This item enables the wearer to change his or her face (only) to resemble another humanoid individual. This change is at will and lasts as long as the wearer desires. Observers are allowed to make an Int roll at a -8 penalty in order to detect the illusion.

XP Value: 1,000

Mask of immunity. This rare mask conveys complete immunity to the following spells: *charm person*, *confusion*, *fear*, *hold person*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *sleep*, and *slow*.





*XP Value:* 800

*Mask of language.* This mask's wearer gains complete fluency and comprehension of 1d6 randomly determined languages. The effects last only as long as the mask is worn. If the individual wearing the mask is already literate, the ability to read and write in the languages are also conveyed.

*XP Value:* 500

*Mask of nightseeing.* This mask confers infravision ability as described in the DMG, Chapter 13.

*XP Value:* 1,000 per + 1 level of protection

*Mask of protection.* This item functions in a manner similar to a *ring* or *cloak of protection*. Each plus improves an individual's AC by 1, so a *mask of protection* +1 improves AC 10 to AC 9. Each plus also provides + 1 to an individual's saving throws. Use the following table to determine a *mask of protection's* bonus.

d100 roll	Bonus
01-40	+1
41-75	+2
76-85	+3
86-95	+4
96-00	+5

*XP Value:* 2,000

*Mask of true seeing.* Individuals wearing this mask have the ability of *true seeing* as the 6th-level wizard spell. It penetrates normal and magical darkness, reveals secret doors, illusions, invisible objects, polymorphed or otherwise changed items, and so on. The wearer cannot detect alignment. The mask's range is 60 feet.

*XP Value:* 800

*Mask of water-breathing.* This mask allows its wearer to breathe normally while submerged in oxygen-bearing liquids.

### **Jhuild (firewine)**

*XP Value:* None

The dark reddish brew (not to be confused with the Old Empires drink called firewine) is made by the witches from grapes and fruits specially grown on plantations near the city of Urling, with various herbs added for in-

creased potency. While it is not truly an enchanted item, its effects are certainly close.

Jhuild is generally considered to be the national drink of Rashemen. The land's berserkers are said to consume considerable quantities of firewine before going into battle, and it is said to both increase ferocity and bolster morale.

Each pint of jhuild consumed has the following effect: It increases morale level of NPCs by 1 (maximum increase of 5), decreases Wisdom by 1 (maximum decrease 5, to a minimum of 1), and adds + 1 to all damage rolls—all for 2d4 hours after consumption. These effects may be avoided with a successful Con roll, but the roll must be made for each pint separately and is at a cumulative penalty of -1 for each pint consumed.

Once the 2d4 hour period has elapsed, the drinker immediately falls into a deep sleep for 3d4 hours and awakens with a throbbing head, thick tongue, and a miserable desire to crawl under a rock. This is all considered part of the price the Rashemaar pay for being the fiercest warriors in Faerûn, and no one complains (at least not much).

Firewine sells for 1 gp per pint within Rashemen and at least 15 gp per pint in other lands, with the price increasing the farther one goes from the land of the berserkers. A single bottle of jhuild, containing about two quarts, is said to have brought 100 gp at an auction in Waterdeep, for example.

### **Nyskar's Nightblades**

*XP Value:* 1,000

The creation of an ancient Red Wizard, *nightblades* are given to especially close or trusted minions of the wizards. They appear as short, cruelly curved and barbed black swords, inscribed with silver or brass runes up and down their length. A *nightblade* functions as a short sword +2/+3 vs. good-aligned creatures, and any victim hit by one must save vs. spell or lose 1 point of a randomly determined attribute per hit for 1d10 days. If any attribute is reduced below 1 in this manner, the character dies.

### **Robe of Rukhyon**

*XP Value:* 1,500

The *robe of Rukhyon* makes its wearer immune to *clairvoyance*, *clairaudience*, *ESP*, and all other spells that provide covert observation. One is currently in the possession of Zulkir Aznar Thrul.





### Shaporyl's Mask

XP Value: 4,000

Probably the most celebrated and famous of the enchanted masks of the Rashemaar witches, this mask has the following powers: charm person and *scintillate* (as a *robe of scintillating colors*) 3 times per day; confusion once a day; and dominate once a week. *Shaporyl's mask* is currently in the possession of the Othlor witch Yhelbruna.

### Silver Skis

XP Value: 1,500

These items are highly prized by the Rashemaar. They allow free movement downhill in snowy or icy conditions and allow their wearer to automatically avoid all obstacles. Such items are especially useful when escaping from pursuers but are considered unsporting by the Rashemaar if used in ski racing.

### Spirit Shield

XP Value: 1,500

Another Rashemaar enchanted item, a *spirit shield* functions as a *shield* +2, provides its bearer with a +2 to all saving throws, and reduces all attacks on the bearer by 1 point of damage each. The witches claim that the shield's powers arise from the powerful spirits bound to it.

### Snowshoes of Swiftness

XP Value: 1,000

The Rashemaar have developed these enchanted items that allow normal movement in snow-covered terrain. Anyone wearing *snowshoes of swiftness* ignores the movement penalties for snow and ice listed on Table 73 of the DMG.

### Thayan Bombard

XP Value: 500 (light), 1,000 (heavy)

These enchanted cannons are built by the Red Wizards and come in two sizes, light and heavy. Both shoot spheres of burning fluid created by the wizards, which explode in a fireball-like burst. Heavy bombards inflict 10d10 points of damage, and light ones 5d10 points.

Heavy bombards have an effective range of 120-480 yards and cannot be depressed sufficiently to hit at less than their minimum range. Light bombards have a range of 250 yards and can hit targets at any range.

Bombards are used in naval combat. A ship hit by a heavy bombard must make a seaworthiness check or be hulled. A hulled ship sinks in 1d10 turns unless repairs are made. Light bombards also cause damage, but the seaworthiness check is made at + 10%.

The main drawback of bombards is their weight. A heavy bombard weighs over 1,000 pounds, and a light 500. They are usually placed in permanent positions such as fortresses, but the magically constructed and strengthened Thayan vessel Red Scourge mounts 24 light bombards.

### Vampiric Dagger

XP Value: 3,000

A *vampiric dagger* hits for 1d4 points of damage as a normal dagger does, but it requires anyone who takes damage from it to save vs. spell to avoid an additional 1d4 points drained from their bodies. These extra points are then added temporarily (until lost) to the hit points of the dagger's wielder. The wielder may never gain more than the maximum possible number of hit points for his or her level in this manner.

### Vryll's Whip

XP Value: 1,500

Used by the Rashemen witches, *Vryll's whip* causes 1d4+1 points of damage when it hits, and can project a *ray of enfeeblement* 3 times per day.

### Wand of Whips

XP Value: 5,000

A *wand of whips* is usable only by mages. When activated, it shoots forth a whip-shaped field of white, shimmering, magical force to a maximum (horizontal and vertical) range of 25 feet. The wielder of the whip names, looks at, or concentrates upon a single target creature. The whip then attacks this creature, striking once per round as *Quaal's feather token* (see the DMG): + 1 to attack and damage rolls, inflicting 1d6+ 1 points of damage per strike and binding its opponent fast if a save vs. spell is not made after each successful strike. A bound opponent suffers no further damage but may not move or attack and must save vs. wands in order to speak (cast a verbal spell, call for help, and so on).

Each charge lasts 1d4+1 rounds, and the whip can attack each round. A *wand of whips* can be recharged.





### Witchboat

XP Value: 5,000

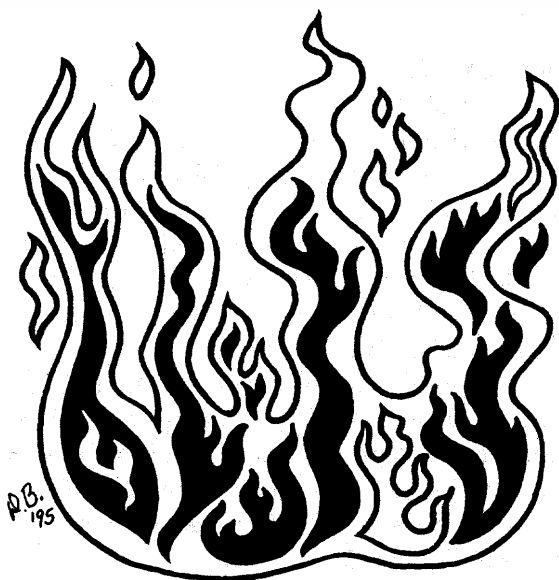
Witchboats are small (12' long), pilotless vessels that ply the rivers and lakes of Rashemen. Created by the witches, they can move effortlessly at a speed of MV 6, both up- and downstream. They are characteristically used to carry couriers or agents on special missions, as troop transports, or for the witches themselves when they need quick and reliable transportation.

The witches create their boats in the depths of the Urlingwood, far from the prying eyes of outsiders. They function only when directed to do so by a witch and lose their enchantment if taken outside of Rashemen's borders. They are a common sight on Rashemen's waterways, moving mysteriously through chill waters, carrying robed and masked witches or important individuals all across the nation, and are an important link in communication and trade throughout Rashemen.

### Witch Shield

XP Value: 2,500

Created by the Rashemaar witches and used by their warriors in battle, a *witch shield* functions as a *shield +2*, allows its bearer to go berserk at will (without the requisite 10-round wait and even if the user is not a berserker), and provides immunity to *charm*, *dominate*, *hold person*, and *sleep* spells.



## ARTIFACTS

Two important artifacts have been brought to Thay and are currently being used by the Zulkir Szass Tam in his cunning scheme to gain absolute power over the Red Wizards. They are described below.

### Death Moon Orb

The Death Moon Orb is a gleaming black and violet sphere whose colors swim uneasily, like oil on water, and which appears to actually absorb the light around it. When it is nearby, an aura of gloom and sadness descends. If looked at long enough, the negative image of the moon's surface can be seen glimmering faintly on the orb.

**History:** Centuries ago, the wizard Larloch, sorcerking of Netheril, created a powerful artifact with which he intended to control the minds of his court, reveal his enemies' plans, and summon powerful beings from the Outer Planes. The artifact served him well, and he ruled for many years, eventually becoming a powerful lich.

Larloch even survived the collapse of his empire and "lives" to this day in the depths of Warlock's Keep. No less than 16 Red Wizards have braved the depths of the Keep, seeking Larioch's treasures and magic; so far, only Szass Tam has emerged unscathed.

At Warlock's Keep, Szass Tam sealed a mysterious bargain with the extremely powerful lich and returned with several important enchanted items, among them the *Death Moon Orb*. He used the powers of the orb to free the tanar'ri lord Eltab, then to imprison him on *Thakor-sil's Seat*. Today, Tam strives to inscribe the last of the nine *Runes of Chaos* upon the seat to permanently bind Eltab to his will, and he uses the Death Moon Orb to battle his enemies for control of Thay.

**Campaign Use:** As noted, the Death Moon Orb is currently in the possession of Szass Tam, one of the most evil and dangerous individuals in Faerûn, and it is being used to further his wicked schemes. It will probably be lost in the course of the *Runes of Chaos* adventure, in which case it may find its way into the hands of another powerful evil wizard, who might turn its powers to his or her own ends.





#### **Powers:**

- *Constant:* The orb functions as a *crystal ball with ESP* and *clairaudience*.
- *Invoked:* The orb has the following powers, which can be invoked only by its possessor: *animate dead and domination* (3 times a day), *charm person* (5 times a day), and *mass charm* (once a day). Additionally, the possessor may summon one *tanar'ri*, *yugoloth*, or *baatezu* and compel it to perform one task. Only one such creature may be summoned at any one time. If the creature summoned is of 5 HD or less, the orb may not be used for summoning for another 10 days. If the creature is 5-10 HD, it may not be used again for summoning for a month; if it is of 10 HD or more, the Orb may not be used for summoning for an entire year. Once the task is completed, the creature returns to its plane of origin. (Szass Tam used this power to compel Eltab to sit in *Thakorsil's Seat* and, thus imprisoned, not return to his plane of origin.)
- *Curse:* The alignment of user of the orb eventually shifts to chaotic evil. It also compels its user to greater and greater acts of evil, until the user is infamous as a monster of complete wickedness and cruelty. Such individuals invariably perish in some fashion unless, like Tam and Larloch, they continue on as undead creatures and don't care what anyone else thinks of them.

#### **Suggested Means of Destruction:**

- The orb must be devoured by a *tarrasque* or *great feyr*.
- The orb must be transported to *Arborea* or another *Outer Plane* of good and destroyed by one of the gods who dwell there.
- The orb can be destroyed with high magic spells that can be cast only by the powerful high mages of the elven isle of *Evermeet*.

#### **Thakorsil's Seat**

The *seat* is one of the numerous enchanted items brought back by Szass Tam from his visit to *Warlock's Keep*. It is a massive stone throne with an elaborately keyhole-carved back, arms in the form of snarling dragons, and feet in the form of claws grasping spheres. Once the first of the nine *Runes of Chaos* are created using the *ritual of twin burnings*, a great, nine-sided crystalline pyramid appears around the throne, imprisoning its occupant. The occupant cannot leave by any means,

so long as at least one rune is in existence, although an outside agency can destroy the runes and set the prisoner free.

**History:** When the *baatezu* lord *Orlex* ruled the ancient kingdom of *Yhalvia* (which may have been located on another world altogether), a band of renegade wizards, led by the archmage *Thakorsil*, created this item to imprison and enslave the creature. Unfortunately for them, the device required extensive acts of evil magic (the sacrifice of good-aligned individuals, for example) in order to function, and after imprisoning *Orlex* and enslaving him with the *Runes of Chaos*, the council of wizards created a regime every bit as cruel and evil as *Yhalvia's* former ruler, and they were themselves displaced. *Orlex* was banished back to the planes, while *Thakorsil's Seat* was lost and presumed destroyed.

The seat finally came to rest in the horde of the sorcerer-king *Larloch*, who never actually used it. In his fateful meeting with Szass Tam, *Larloch* decided that the seat might serve the *zulkir* well. Tam returned to *Thay* and freed *Eltab*, compelling him to take the seat and reimprisoning him by creating the first *Rune of Chaos*. Since then, Tam has created seven more *runes* and is close to completing the spell, permanently enslaving *Eltab*.

**Campaign Use:** *Thakorsil's Seat* is a truly terrible item which should never be allowed to fall into the wrong hands. Unfortunately, Szass Tam is about as "wrong" as one can get in *Faerûn*, and he intends to use its fell powers to his advantage.

Unless destroyed or sent to another place, the seat may well find its way into the hands of another evil power such as *Zhentil Keep*, and the horror of the *twin burnings* ritual and the enslavement of powerful beings will begin once more. As this could lead to a continent-wide conflagration that might rival the *Tuigan* invasions or the *Time of Troubles*, DMs should think very carefully about letting the seat loose in their campaigns.

**Powers:** The *seat* was created as an instrument of enslavement. Originally intended for good—the imprisonment of evil beings—it ended up with the exact opposite effect, allowing the permanent enslavement of beings of virtually infinite power, and the corruption which accompanies it.

Fortunately, the seat has a number of limitations that make it difficult to use. First, the being to be enslaved





must be compelled to sit on the throne. If the creature is held involuntarily or tricked into sitting, it receives a single saving throw vs. spell when the ritual of *twin burnings* begins and is magically bound to the throne and unable to move if the roll is a failure. Creatures magically compelled to sit (such as those controlled by the Death Moon Orb) receive no saving throw. Victims with a natural magic resistance are also allowed to roll to avoid the effects of the ritual.

Once the creature is bound by the creation of the first rune of *chaos*, it must remain in the *seat* but receives a saving throw each time the *ritual of twin burnings* is performed and another rune created. Each of these subsequent saving throws is at a cumulative penalty of -1 (-4 for the fifth *rune*, for example).

When the ninth rune is created, the spirit of the creature's spirit is permanently bound to the *seat*. It may physically leave the seat, but it is completely enslaved

to the seat's owner. No further saving throws are allowed; the enslaved creature can only be freed by the use of multiple *wishes*, the intervention of the gods, the destruction of the seat itself, or some other extreme circumstance.

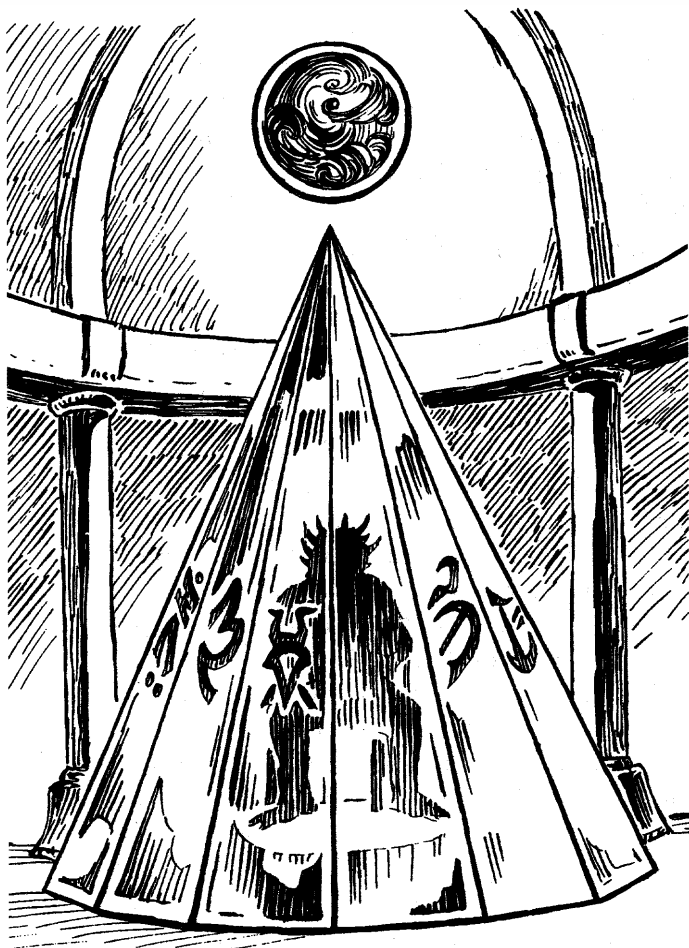
The throne's other drawback is that the *ritual of twin burnings* is long and involved, and requires the sacrifice of successively more powerful victims. The first rune requires the sacrifice of a good-aligned human or humanoid of 1st level or higher, the second rune requires the sacrifice of a good individual of 2nd level or higher, and so on. The throne's creators rationalized this evil as being to the end of a greater good, but in the end they were corrupted by the wickedness they had created.

Prior to the creation of the last rune of chaos, the other runes are vulnerable to destruction or removal. Any damage or disfigurement destroys a *rune*, and destroyed runes must be replaced using the *ritual of twin burnings*. If all the runes are destroyed prior to the creation of the last one, the throne's occupant is freed. After all nine runes have been created, they can only be removed with the destruction of the chair.

While the seat is active, it has an additional, inadvertent effect that also works to Szass Tam's advantage. The seat sends out magical "interference" which prevents the use of any divination spells (*clairvoyance*, *ESP*, *detect evil*, etc.) within 200 miles. Magical items which duplicate such effects, such as *crystal balls*, *amulets of ESP*, and so on, are also rendered useless. This magical damper field has effectively blinded the Simbul's magical observation, forcing her to send agents directly into Thay to gather intelligence.

#### Suggested Means of Destruction:

- *Thakorsil's Seat* can be permanently destroyed only by the blow of a weapon wielded by a greater god or goddess.
- The *seat* must be transported to the Abyss and plunged into the forge of the balor prince Vrr'maal.
- A circle of 100 mages of at least 10th level must continuously cast destructive spells at the seat for 100 days.





# Appendix I: NPCs By Region

## Thay

### Zulkir Szass Tam

(Lich Male Necromancer 29)

Str 11; Dex 14; Con 0; Int 19; Wis 16; Cha 18

Armor Class: 0

Move: 6

Hit Points: 64

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d10 + paralysis or by spell

THACO: 9

Alignment: NE

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Defenses: +1 or better magical weapon to hit; immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *enfeeblement*, *polymorph*, *cold*, *electricity*, *insanity*, death spells

Special Weakness: Can be turned by priest

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, staff, whip

Magical Items: Many (see below)

Age: 264, Ht: 6'0", Wt: 98 lbs.

Hair: Black, Eyes: Gray

Spells: 10/10/10/10/9/9/9/9/9 (includes bonus spells)

Szass Tam is one of the most powerful liches in Faerûn. In over two centuries as a member of the undead, he has gained a deep and abiding understanding of death and its creatures.

Outwardly, Tam is not terribly lichlike. He appears as a tall, skeletally thin human with pale skin, dark eyes, thinning black hair, and a beard. This is the result of applications of the *preservation* spell, which he uses to keep his body from decaying. Sometimes Tam lets himself go for too long and he begins to smell of death and his body starts to desiccate, but the oversight is always corrected. Because of this preservation, Tam does not cause *terror* as a normal lich but retains all other lich abilities.





It should be assumed that after centuries of magical research and exploits, Szass Tam has access to virtually any common (and many uncommon) magical items or spells he desires.

Tam has been driven over the centuries by two desires. First, to destroy Rashemen; second, to end the squabbling of the Red Wizards and unite Thay under his rulership. His hatred of the Rashemaar springs from an incident in 1159, when the witches defeated his army and wounded him so badly that he was forced to become a lich. Tam's ambition to rule Thay (like many Red Wizards) has been with him practically since boyhood.

Tam has been cautious, slowly building his power and slapping down those Red Wizards who seem bent on ruling Thay themselves (as he did with the Zulkir Maligor; that tale is chronicled in the novel *Red Magic*). Recently, his plans have finally begun to come to fruition. The full details of his plot are discussed in the adventure *The Runes of Chaos*.

### **Tharchioness Thessaloni Canos**

(Human Female Fighter 17)

Str 17; Dex 16; Con 12; Int 15; Wis 13; Cha 15

Armor Class: -4 (*plate mail* +2, *boots of speed*, shield, -2 Dex)

Move: 24 (*boots of speed*)

Hit Points: 96

Number of Attacks: 2

Damage: 1d8+2 (*sword of wounding*, +1 Str)

THAC0: 4 (2 with Str and weapon)

Alignment: LE

Magical Items: *Boots of speed*, *helm of telepathy*, *plate mail* +2, *sword of wounding*

Age: 50, He: 5'2", Wt: 125 lbs.

Hair: Black, Eyes: Brown

The tharchioness of Alaor is a skilled military commander and sailor. She has held this position for decades despite many conspiracies to replace her, and despite the death of her brother Mikal, who was one of her strongest allies. She remains neutral in the conflict between Szass Tam and the other zulkirs, but the time may come when she is required to make a choice between the two groups.

### **Novaad Hylassra**

(Human Male Cleric 15)

Str 11; Dex 12; Con 11; Int 15; Wis 17; Cha 17

Armor Class: 4 (*chain mail* +1)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 60

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d6+3 (*mace* +3)

THAC0: 12 (9 with *mace*)

Alignment: CE

Magical Items: *Brazier commanding fire elementals*, *chain mail* +1, *mace* +3, *pipes of the sewers*

Age: 52, Ht: 5'6", Wt: 200 lbs.

Hair: White, Eyes: Brown

Spells: 8/8/7/6/4/2/1 (includes Wisdom bonus)

Hylassra is the high priest of Kossuth in Thay. As might be expected from a Thayan cleric, Hylassra is wicked, cruel, and corrupt. He is also a devout follower of his god, the lord of the fire elementals.

Given the volatile nature of Thayan internal affairs, Hylassra does not dabble in politics, preferring instead to gain power and influence within his faith and among Kossuth's followers outside of Thay. He is happy to tend to the spiritual needs of the Red Wizards but steadfastly refuses to back any of their diverse factions, particularly in the current fight between Szass Tam and his rivals.

Hylassra possesses, among other things, a special *brazier of commanding fire elementals*. This item, a gift from Kossuth himself, is usable by priests instead of mages, unlike most braziers of this nature.

### **Zulkir Lauzoril**

(Human Male Enchanter 22)

Str 8; Dex 15; Con 12; Int 18; Wis 14; Cha 18

Armor Class: 5 (*ring of protection* +4, -1 Dex)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 35

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d4 (*enchanted dagger*, see below)

THAC0: 14 (13 with *Shazzelurt*)

Alignment: NE

Magical Items: *Carpet of flying*, *ebon lash*, *Shazzelurt* (*enchanted dagger*), *stone horse*

Age: late 40s, Ht: 5'9", Wt: 145 lbs.







Hair: Blond with gray streaks, Eyes: Green  
Spells: 8/8/8/8/8/7/7/6 (includes bonus spells)

Handsome and distinguished, Lauzoril remains the undisputed Zulkir of Enchantment and Charm, and he leads the Imperialist Red Wizard faction. Though he opposes the poorly planned, disastrous imperial forays of the past, Lauzoril has allowed the Zulkir Aznar Thrul to persuade him to commit troops to a new invasion of Rashemen. Lauzoril has his doubts about the wisdom of this expedition, and especially his direct involvement in it. He has prepared several escape hatches should the invasion fail.

Lauzoril opposes Szass Tam's attempts to unite the nation. His considerable intelligence and cunning makes him one of Tam's most powerful enemies, and he has survived no less than five assassination attempts over the past two years.

Lauzoril carries an enchanted dagger named *Shazzelurt*. It is a wavy-bladed weapon of rather poor steel but a keen edge, with a guard of iron curved into a flame motif. Its grip is red-dyed leather wrapped in gold wire.

*Shazzelurt* is neutral evil, has an Intelligence of 16 and an Ego of 15, and communicates by speech (Common, Thayan, and Gnoll). It is +1 to attack, can detect magic in a 10-foot radius if the bearer so wills it while touching the hilt, and in like manner can locate object in a 12-foot radius. When it is unsheathed, it can *read magic* and also detect secret doors in a 5-foot radius at the bearer's will. *Shazzelurt* can *heal* its bearer once a day and has a special purpose: to slay bards. Any bard struck by *Shazzelurt* is disintegrated unless he successfully saves vs. spell.

### **Zulkir Lallara Mediocros**

(Human Female Abjurer 21)

Str 9; Dex 16; Con 12; Int 17; Wis 15; Cha 16

Armor Class: -2 (*bracers AC 0, -2 Dex*)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 30

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d4+ 1 (*staff of withering*)

THAC0: 14 (13 with *staff*)

Alignment: CE

Magical Items: *Bracers AC 0, cube of force, ring of regeneration, staff of withering*



Age: 49, Ht: 5'10", Wt: 145 lbs.

Hair: None, Eyes: Green

Spells: 8/8/8/8/8/7/7/7 (includes bonus spells)

Though chaotic and unreliable (she is as interested in inflicting new torments on her slaves and prisoners as she is in affairs of the nation), the Zulkir of Abjuration is an influential and useful ally of Szass Tam in his struggle to unite Thay. She is currently searching for a way to increase her intelligence in order to gain access to 9th-level spells.

A devoted scholar and collector of enchanted items, Mediocros is also something of a decadent, indulging in many excessive luxuries in the privacy of her several manses throughout Thay and beyond. (She is known to have at least one residence in Amn.) Though she is powerful and skilled in the sorcerous arts, Mediocros is also somewhat flighty, often breaking off important tasks to rush off to some new sybaritic excess at one of her homes. When she brings herself to work, she can be a potent ally.





### Zulkir Mythrell'aa

(Human Female Illusionist 20)

Str 9; Dex 17; Con 8; Int 18; Wis 13; Cha 14

Armor Class: 8 (-2 Dex)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 24

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1-2 (whip)

THAC0: 14

Alignment: CE

Magical Items: *Ring of spell turning, rod of cancellation, wand of illusion, wand of negation*

Age: 60, Ht: 5'1", Wt: 95 lbs.

Hair: None, Eyes: Green

Spells: 8/8/8/8/8/7/6/6/5 (includes bonus spells)

Mythrell'aa dwells in a tower in the city of Bezantur and serves as the Zulkir of Illusion. She is a mysterious and antisocial woman who rarely fraternizes with her fellow Red Wizards. No one knows exactly how she stands regarding Szass Tam's efforts at unification; most assume

she is neutral. (Should Tam's plans in the adventure *Throne of Deceit* succeed, she will declare her support for the necromancer in light of Nevron's and Lauzoril's humiliating defeat.)

There is no doubt that, like all Red Wizards, the zulkir is a wicked and dangerous person, but few know exactly what sort of wickedness she practices. It is known that she employs seemingly mindless servitors—living beings whose wits have been destroyed by Mythrell'aa's magic. Those who delve too deeply into the wizardess' personal affairs run the risk of becoming servitors themselves.

### Naglatha

(Human Female Enchanter 10)

Str 12; Dex 13; Con 15; Int 17; Wis 11; Cha 17

Armor Class: 7 (ring of protection +3)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 22

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d4 (dagger) + poison (2d4)

THAC0: 17

Alignment: NE

Magical Items: *Ring of human influence, rod of terror*

Age: 32, Ht: 5'1", Wt: 97 lbs.

Hair: Black, Eyes: Black

Spells: 6/6/5/4/4 (includes bonus spells)

Naglatha is, as far as the rest of Faerûn knows, a highly successful Selgauntan merchant and trader in curios and antiques. In reality she is one of the Red Wizards' best hidden agents and the leader of most covert operations since the death of Alzegund the Trader. The former chief of foreign activities was found murdered four years ago (and some suspect that Naglatha was responsible for Alzegund's death, but nothing has been proven). She has several alternate identities, the best known being "The Black Flame," a mercenary recruiter who always wears a black cloak and mask embroidered with leaping flames. She also controls a network of spies and informants in Selgaunt and beyond, and coordinates assassination, extortion, and intelligence operations throughout the Inner Sea region.





### Zulkir Nevron

(Human Male Conjurer 24)  
Str 7; Dex 11; Con 15; Int 18; Wis 14; Cha 15  
Armor Class: 5 (*robe of the archmagi*)  
Move: 12  
Hit Points: 40  
Number of Attacks: 1  
Damage: 1d6+3 (*staff of striking*)  
THAC0: 13 (10 with *staff*)  
Alignment: NE  
Magical Items: *Ring of wizardry* (doubles 1st through 3rd level spells), *robe of the archmagi*, *staff of striking*  
Age: 77, Ht: 5'6", Wt: 180 lbs.  
Hair: Gray, Eyes: Blue  
Spells: 16/16/16/8/8/8/8/7 (includes bonus spells and *ring of wizardry*)

Nevron replaced Sabass, the former Zulkir of Conjunction/Summoning, when Szass Tam's campaign of assassination virtually eliminated the Researchers faction and Sabass along with it. Nevron stepped in to fill the void and is now one of the most aggressively expansionist zulkirs in Thay. Despite the fact that he has Szass Tam to thank for his current position, Nevron hates the Zulkir of Necromancy and has allied with Lauzoril, Zulkir of Enchantment, to oppose him.

Currently, Nevron is working with Lauzoril and Aznar Thrul, the scheming Zulkir of Invocation, to perfect a new plan for invading and at least partially conquering the troublesome nation of Rashemen. Nevron's legions are very powerful and include many enchanted creatures, and he feels that this invasion will succeed where the previous ones have failed.

### Regnearoz the Whip

(Human Male Thief 13)  
Str 16; Dex 18; Con 13; Int 14; Wis 9; Cha 6  
Armor Class: 4 (leather armor, -4 Dex)  
Move: 12  
Hit Points: 44  
Number of Attacks: 1  
Damage: 1d8+3/+4 vs. good creatures (*Nyskar's nightblade*, +1 Str)  
THAC0: 14 (12 or 11 with *nightblade*)  
Alignment: CE  
Magical Items: *Ebon lash*, *medallion of ESP*, *Nyskar's*



### *nightblade*

Age: 36, Ht: 5'9", Wt: 178 lbs.  
Hair: Black, Eyes: Green

This infamous slaver is active throughout the Inner Sea and beyond. His minions engage in many different forms of slave-taking in such diverse regions as Amn, the Sword Coast, Sembia, and Impiltur. Some of Regnearoz's followers engage in wholesale slave raids using small fleets of pirate vessels or nomadic tribes, while others seek out highly attractive or skilled individuals to mislead or kidnap for later sale.

Regnearoz sells slaves throughout Faerûn, but his most enthusiastic and profitable clients are in Thay, where the entire economy is driven by slavery.

A darkly handsome, erudite man with impeccable taste in clothing, food, music, and social companions, Regnearoz is nonetheless a thoroughly evil man who justifies his foul occupation with statements such as, "If I don't sell slaves, someone else will, and they will be far crueller than I." His activities have earned him a





huge fortune and he maintains residences all across the continent, all well guarded and stocked with numerous luxuries.

### **Zulkir Druxus Rhym**

(Human Male Transmuter 24)

Str 11; Dex 15; Con 13; Int 18; Wis 12; Cha 14

Armor Class: 9

Move: 12

Hit Points: 27

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d10 (enchanted dagger, see below)

THAC0: 13

Alignment: NE

Magical Items: *Devourer* (enchanted dagger), *ring of shooting stars*, *staff of thunder and lightning*

Age: 62, Ht: 5'8", Wt: 175 lbs.

Hair: None, Eyes: Black

Spells: 8/8/8/8/8/8/8/7 (includes bonus spells)

This wizard grew tired of the staid Researcher faction and quit several years ago. Today, he supports Szass Tam's more active faction which seeks to overthrow the other zulkirs and unite Thay as an empire.

Rhym has embraced Tam's cause wholeheartedly and will gladly serve under the necromancer when Tam is in charge. To this end, he coordinates many of Tam's activities, both within Thay and beyond. In a recent plot, for example, Rhym succeeded in wiping out a dozen Researchers at a catered banquet by transforming the cream filling of the dessert pastries into poisonous scorpions.

Rhym possesses a potent arsenal of enchanted items, chief among them the dagger *Devourer*. This weapon strikes for 1d10 points of damage in melee, may be thrown and return as an *axe of hurling*, discharges a 10-die *lightning bolt* three times per day, and allows its possessor to *teleport without error* once per day.

### **The Tharchioness**

(Human Female Illusionist 13)

Str 11; Dex 17; Con 15; Int 17; Wis 14; Cha 18

Armor Class: 7 (-3 Dex)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 30

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d6 (staff)

THAC0: 16

Alignment: LE

Magical Items: *Ebon lash*, *robe of scintillating colors*

Age: 34, Ht: 5'3", Wt: 118 lbs.

Hair: None, Eyes: Green

Spells: 7/7/7/6/6/4 (includes bonus spells)

Born Dmitra Flass, the woman today known only as the Tharchioness has ruled the tharch of Eltabbar for over a decade. Originally she was constantly overruled by the many powerful Red Wizards in Eltabbar and left the day-to-day running of her realm to her autharchs. Now more confident of Szass Tam's patronage, she rules with considerably more authority. Her spies seek out the agents of those zulkirs who oppose Tam and ruthlessly exterminate them, while her autharchs today are primarily concerned with overseeing the rebuilding of Eltabbar after its devastating earthquake.

The Tharchioness' greatest accomplishment is her recent marriage to Selfaril Uoumdolphin, the High Blade of Mulmaster, after a long correspondence and a courtship punctuated with numerous spectacular tiffs and violent arguments. While she spends most of her time in Thay, the Tharchioness visits Selfaril thrice yearly, and she maintains a large staff of Red Wizards at the Thayan embassy in Mulmaster to promote Thayan interests and to counteract the presence of the Zhen-tarim.

Beyond Thay's borders, the Tharchioness is known as the "First Princess of Thay" for her beauty and noble bearing; this title is viewed with amusement by her fellow Red Wizards, and it has yet to be seen whether the Tharchioness will let the title and her new connections provoke her into a grab for greater power within Thay itself.

### **Tharchion/Zulkir Aznar Thrul**

(Human Male Invoker 23)

Str 13; Dex 12; Con 17; Int 18; Wis 13; Cha 15

Armor Class: 4 (*ring of protection +4*, *staff of power*)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 43

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d4 (*vampiric dagger*) or 1d6+2 (*staff of power*)

THAC0: 13 (11 with *staff*)





Alignment: CE

Magical Items: *Manual of golems*, *ring of protection +4*, *robe of Rukhyon*, *staff of power*, *vampiric dagger*

Age: 55, Ht: 6'3", Wt: 175 lbs.

Hair: None, Eyes: Black

Spells: 8/8/8/8/8/8/8/6 (includes bonus spells)

Aznar Thrul is a serious competitor with Szass Tam for the title of the most evil and powerful individual in Thay. The only Thayan currently serving as both tharchion (of the Priador) and zulkir (of Invocation/Evocation), Aznar Thrul rules his tharch with cruelty and savage efficiency and constantly plots to increase his power within Thay. He hates Szass Tam, seeing him as an obstacle on his road to absolute power, and opposes him surreptitiously at every turn. Despite his access to incredibly powerful destructive spells, Thrul prefers to work through pawns rather than risk his life and reputation.

Thrul realizes that if the zulkirs continue to perpetuate their petty rivalries, Szass Tam will invariably win. To this end, he has formed a temporary alliance with the Zulkirs Lauzoril and Nevron, with the twin aims of finally conquering Rashemen and reducing Szass Tam's political power and influence. Of course, he intends to dispose of both Lauzoril and Nevron as soon as they have outlived their usefulness, but for now he masquerades as their friend and has mediated at several meetings between the two wizards. Thrul realizes that he cannot afford to antagonize Szass Tam too much, and so he restrains his present allies from openly acting against the Zulkir of Necromancy.

The current plan for the invasion of Rashemen involves the legions of his two allies which, if successful, will eclipse Szass Tam. If the invasion is a failure, Thrul is not much worse off, for his involvement is limited; all the negative consequences of defeat will fall on the Nevron and Lauzoril. (See the adventure *Throne of Deceit* for more details on the invasion and its connection to the power politics of Thay.)

Thrul gained his position after defeating the former tharchioness of Bezantur, Mari Agneh, both politically and magically. Though many opposed his being both a tharchion and a zulkir, his combination of threats, blackmail, and canny political double-dealing assured Thrul of his position. Mari Agneh remains alive in his citadel, now a mindless slave for the amusement of the



sadistic tharchion and his guests.

Thrul always remains at maximum hit points through the use of his *vampiric dagger*.

### **Zulkir Yaphyll**

(Human Female Diviner 19)

Str 9; Dex 15; Con 12; Int 18; Wis 17; Cha 15

Armor Class: 4 (*Cloak of protection +2*, *ring of protection +3*, Dex -1)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 38

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d6+3 (*staff +3*)

THAC0: 14 (10 with *staff*)

Alignment: LE

Magical Items: *Amulet of perpetual youth*, *cloak of protection +2*, *ring of elemental metamorphosis (fire)*, *ring of protection +3*, *staff +3*

Age: 65, Ht: 5'4", Wt: 130 lbs.

Hair: None, Eyes: Blue

Spells: 8/8/8/8/6/6/6/4 (includes bonus spells)





Though she appears no more than 30, Yaphyll has remained young through the use of an *amulet of perpetual youth*. Once an imperialist and ally of Lauzoril, Yaphyll has recently switched sides, joining her good friend Lalara Mediocros as a supporter of Szass Tam.

Yaphyll is dedicated to Szass Tam as her rightful ruler. She acts as a moderating influence on Mediocros, keeping her on track when important things must be done. She is also useful due to the fact that her support of Szass Tam is not widely known, allowing her access to many potential rivals who might not otherwise associate with her. Her assistance in secretly opening the gates of the Imperialist Red Wizard Nyklos Thrannul to Szass Tam's undead legions was invaluable to his cause and greatly appreciated by Tam's vampire followers.

## Other Thayan NPCs

- *Tharchion Pyras Autorian* (Thaymount) (LE hm 0): Once a minor functionary in the Thayan civil service, Autorian is now a figurehead tharchion put in office by Szass Tam and his supporters. Tam is the real power on Thaymount, and Autorian simply does what he is told. He is otherwise an undistinguished bureaucrat with little experience or skill.
- *Karl Blackhammer* (LG dm F8): Karl has served as a slave in Thay for nearly 10 years. In that time, he has gathered many allies among other dwarven slaves and now plans to lead his people to freedom. To this end, he has engineered the creation of several tunnels in the Thayan gold mines which can be made to collapse on his command, thereby providing access to the Underdark. Though a journey through that deadly realm is a hazardous undertaking, Karl and his dwarves agree that remaining in Thay is much worse, and that if they do not survive the journey, they will at least die free dwarves.
- *Tharchion Milsantos Daramos* (Thazalhar) (LN hm F14): Daramos is a veteran warrior who claims that his primary duty is service to Thay. Secretly he opposes Szass Tam, but he is bright enough not to admit it.
- *Tharchion Dimon* (Tyraturos) (LN hm (former) C5): One of few tharchions not completely given up to evil, Dimon was once a cleric of Waukeen and administers his tharch with great expertise. He stays out of politics and is generally left alone as long as the taxes keep flowing.
- *Gray Falasia* (CE hf T7): A Thayan agent in Aglarond and the Sea of Fallen Stars, Falasia poses as a mercenary adventurer, giving her access to many regions. She serves the Red Wizards (and, more specifically, Szass Tam) by gathering information on Aglarondan readiness, the whereabouts of the Simbul, and Aglarond's internal politics as well as by committing the occasional assassination when required to.
- *Tharchioness Nymia Focar* (Pyarados) (CE hf F9): Focar's major interest is maintaining her personal fortune by skimming profits from Thayan mining operations and overcharging adventurers who wish to travel into the Sunrise Mountains. She is vain, petty, and greedy, and opposes Szass Tam.
- *Tharchioness Azhir Kren* (Gauros) (NE hf F15): A powerful supporter of Szass Tam, Kren hates Rashemen and all Rashemaar, hoping that a unified Thay will allow her to eventually crush the witches and their berserker armies. She is a skilled warrior who has fought many battles against the berserkers.
- *Tharchion Invarri Metran* (Delhumide) (LE hm F11): An intelligent and sensible man, Metran oversees his tharch with considerable skill. He supports Szass Tam in his drive for imperial power and unified rule.
- *Tharchion Hezass Nymur* (Lapendrar) (NE hm C8): Nymar is a corrupt cleric of Kossuth, puppet to a faction of powerful Red Wizards. He does as he is told, maintaining Lapendrar as a successful and prosperous realm. He realizes that his life of luxury will end if Szass Tam comes to power, so he backs the necromancer's rivals.
- *Tharchion Homen Odesseiron* (Surthay) (LE hm Inv7/F12): A grizzled veteran of many raids and battles with the Rashemaar, Odesseiron personally dislikes Szass Tam, who he feels never lent sufficient support to his military campaigns. He is brave and





skilled, and his troops are highly seasoned, so Szass Tam has left him alone for the time being.

- *Moredryss Vrinn* (CE ef (drow) T9): This drow woman works for various Red Wizards as a hired killer. She has recently been employed by the anti-Tam faction and is now in action against the necromancer's allies. Already a young Red Wizard has been mysteriously killed, and Tam suspects Vrinn's involvement in the crime.

## Aglarond

### Trovar Halaern

(Half-Elf Male Ranger 15)

Str 16; Dex 15; Con 17; Int 16; Wis 18; Cha 16

Armor Class: 7 (leather armor, -1 Dex)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 85

Number of Attacks: 2

Damage: 1d8+1 (sword, +1 Str) or 1d6 (arrow)

THAC0: 6

Alignment: CG

Magical Item: *Circlet of the wilderness*

Age: 65, Ht: 6'1" Wt: 18 lbs.

Hair: Brown, Eyes: Gold

Halaern is the Simbul's chief forester. He is a lean and handsome half-elf who enjoys the peace of the forest. He shuns the assistance of magical items save for his *circlet of the wilderness*, which provides all the enchanted assistance that Halaern feels he needs.

Usually found roaming the Yuirwood, Halaern stands ready to serve the Simbul whenever she calls and leads her foresters with great bravery. He is currently searching for lost sites of the Yuir elves, whose history fascinates him. Though he has no particular dislike of humans, Halaern prefers the company of his own kind and favors a return to the ancient ways of the Yuir.

### The Masked One

(Human Female Mage 24)

Str 11; Dex 12; Con 18; Int 19; Wis 17; Cha 18

Armor Class: 2 (*bracers* AC 2)

Move: 12



Hit Points: 35

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d6 (staff)

THAC0: 13

Alignment: NG

Magical Items: *Amulet of life protection*, *bracers* AC 2, *periapt of proof against poison*, *wand of paralyzation*, *wand of polymorphing*

Age: ?, Ht: 6', Wt: 140 lbs.

Hair: Black, Eyes: Blue

Spells: 5/5/5/5/5/5/5/4

Not much can be said for certain about this enigmatic Aglarondan sorceress. It is known that she maintains a cottage near the edge of the Yuirwood and is relatively hospitable as long as visitors respect her privacy. Those who pry too far—or worse, attempt to remove or see beneath her mask—have a tendency to vanish suddenly or to experience a sudden change in lifestyle, outlook, or species. Transformation into a useful household item for a decade or so is one such punishment, as is sudden





transportation to a distant and hostile climate such as (so one story goes) the surface of Toril's moon.

Though her exact nature is not known, the Masked One has dispatched with one common rumor—that she is an exiled Rashemaar witch, as indicated by her mask and secretive manner. She is neither Rashemaar nor witch, she says, though she respects the wychlaran and their culture greatly.

The most popular current rumor is that she experienced a magical mishap or was cursed, and though the remainder of her body is graceful and attractive, her face is so hideous as to drive normal mortals mad should they look upon it. The Masked One has not confirmed this particular rumor, but since it prevents anyone from trying to penetrate her disguise, she says nothing to deny it, either.

The Masked One's actions against obnoxious guests are rare flares of temper. The rest of the time she is a loyal Aglarondan citizen (although she was apparently not born here) and friend to the Simbul. Her intervention during a recent Thayan incursion helped turn the tide of battle in the Aglarondans' favor.

### Rubyn Thalasar

(Half-Elf Female Ranger 12)

Str 14; Dex 16; Con 16; Int 13; Wis 16; Cha 17

Armor Class: 4 (*leather armor +2, -2 Dex*)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 70

Number of Attacks: 3/2

Damage: 1d8+3 (*Thaemaskhusha, broad sword +3*)

THAC0: 9 (6 with *Thaemaskhusha*)

Alignment: CG

Magical Items: *Boots of striding and springing, cloak of elvenkind, leather armor +2, Thaemaskhusha* (enchanted elven broad sword)

Age: 55, Ht: 5'6", Wt: 103 lbs.

Hair: Blond, Eyes: Green

One of the Simbul's foresters, Rubyn is a skilled fighter and ranger, admired and well liked throughout Aglarond for her constant efforts on the Simbul's behalf. She is friendly and quick with a joke but nurses a deep hatred of the Thayans, who killed her husband and child 20 years ago.

Rubyn carries the elven blade *Thaemaskhusha*. Unknown to all, this weapon is a lost elven treasure once

wielded by the hero Lafarallin, and the bladesingers of Evermeet might one day demand its return to its "rightful owners." Rubyn is unaware of any powers the blade may hold, aside from its attack and damage enchantments.

### Other Aglarondan NPCs

- *Brenna Graycloak* (NG hf M9): A member of the Aglarondan council, Brenna was one of a party of adventurers who, years ago, traveled into Thay and ended up destroying Zulkir Maligor as a pawn of Szass Tam. Brenna yearns for revenge against Tam and will gladly aid any party seeking to thwart his plans.
- *The Simbul* (CN hf M30): The ruler of Aglarond is one of the famous Seven Sisters and certainly one of the most powerful spellcasters in all the Forgotten Realms. She is often an absentee ruler, leaving many decisions to the Aglarondan council and going off on various missions, particularly against the Red Wizards of Thay. She is said to be a potent shapechanger, capable of taking a wide variety of forms, and is a major supporter of the Harpers. (See *The Seven Sisters* supplement for full information on the Simbul and her abilities.)
- *Thael* (NG hef R5): Thael is a young and serious member of the Simbul's foresters. Highly aware of her half-elven heritage, she longs to return to the glorious days of the Yuir elves. She is cool toward humans and tends to hide the human side of her character. Thael has recently begun attending meetings with similar-minded half-elves at Lady Myta's house in Velpintalar.
- *Evenyl Tharnian* (CG hf M10): A prominent Aglarondan wizard, Evenyl is a friend of the Simbul and is often encountered beyond Aglarond's borders on important missions.
- *Aldrin Three-Horns* (LG hm R9): This Aglarondan forester has discovered an ancient Yuir stone ring and has made contact with beings from several Outer Planes. These beings wish access to Toril, and Aldrin is seriously thinking about providing it.







## Rashemen

### Iron Lord Thydrim Yvarrg Bearkiller

(Human Male Fighter 21)

Str 18/00; Dex 15; Con 18; Int 13; Wis 14; Cha 16

Armor Class: 6 (leather armor, *spirit shield*)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 155

Number of Attacks: 2

Damage: 1d10+6 (two-handed sword, +6 Str)

THAC0: 1

Alignment: NG

Magical Items: *Amulet vs. undead* (9th level), *spirit shield*

Age: 48, Ht: 6'4", Wt: 285 lbs.

Hair: Black, Eyes: Blue

Lord Thydrim Yvarrg was given his place as Iron Lord of Rashemen by the witches after his predecessor, Hyarmon Huzzilthar, grew too old and weak to govern. Like many other huhrrongs before him, old Hyarmon was taken to the Urlingwood by the witches (one of the few cases where non-witches are allowed into the forest) and—so the story goes—kept in comfort until he died.

Thydrim has served Rashemen well, earning the nickname of “Bearkiller” for his exploits as a hunter, and he has slain more than his share of foreign raiders and Thayan warriors. Sometimes he chafes at the witches’ supervision, and he has expressed discontent at ruling under their thumbs. So far, the witches do not seem to mind, but they might consider removing Thydrim if his complaints and rebelliousness start to affect his rulership.

### Nythra of Seven Rivers

(Human Female Mage 12)

Str 10; Dex 12; Con 14; Int 18; Wis 17; Cha 15

Armor Class: 10

Move: 12

Hit Points: 28

Number of Attacks: 1

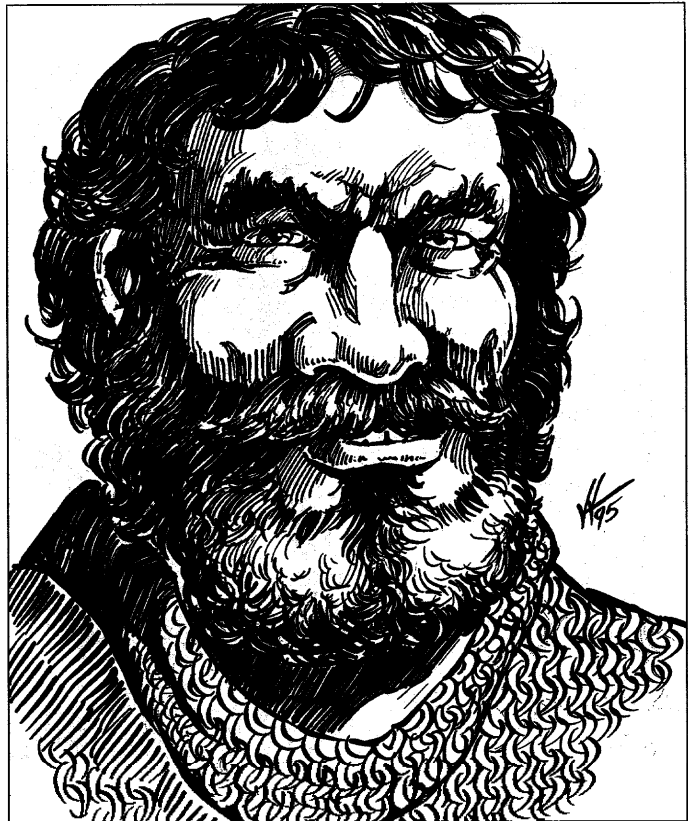
Damage: 1d8+3 (*rod of smiting*)

THAC0: 17 (14 with rod)

Alignment: CG

Magical Items: *Necklace of adaptation*, *robe of stars*, *rod of smiting*

Age: 32, Ht: 5'6", Wt: 130 lbs.



Hair: Silver, Eyes: Gray

Spells: 4/4/4/4/1

Nythra is prominent Rashemaar witch who is best known for her travel on the Astral Plane through the use of her *robe of stars*. She has brought back several important magical items on her journeys and also uses the Astral Plane as a quick means of travel over great distances on Toril. She has gone on several missions to Thay, gathering information on the Red Wizards’ invasion plans and internal affairs. She is rumored to have visited the distant planar city of Sigil, but she rarely discusses her travels with non-witches.

When on the Prime Material Plane, Hathran Nythra is one of the most popular and well-known witches for her friendly manner and open speech with common Rashemaar (unlike many of the secretive witches). She travels extensively within Rashemen, clad in dark green robes and a black-and-silver mask. She has fought in many battles against the Thayans and has survived several attempts on her life by the Red Wizards’ agents.





### Lady Yhelbruna

(Human Female Mage 28)

Str 11; Dex 17; Con 12; Int 18; Wis 16; Cha 16

Armor Class: 7 (-3 Dex)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 42

Number of Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d4 (dagger)

THAC0: 12

Alignment: N

Magical Items: *Broom of flying, ring of regeneration, Shaporyl's mask, staff of the magi, wand of illusion*

Age: 175(?), Ht: 5'3", Wt: 100 lbs.

Hair: Black, Eyes: Black

Spells: 6/6/6/6/6/6/6/6

This eldest Rashemaar Othlor witch retains her considerable beauty through the use of *longevity* potions and other magical means. Though her name and reputation are known throughout Rashemen (and beyond to Thay, where Red Wizards curse her name, and to Aglarond,

where the Simbul counts her as friend and ally), few have actually met her, and fewer still have seen her face. Some outsiders scoff at the notion of a long-lived sorceress in such a backwater nation and believe that there have been several "Lady Yhelbrunas" over the years. Rashemaar have a tendency to react badly to such claims, so foreigners learn to hold their tongues.

In truth, Lady Yhelbruna does exist and, though this is known to few beyond the Unapproachable East, is one of the most powerful wizards on the continent, rivaled only by such luminaries as the Simbul, Khelben Blackstaff, Elminster, and Szass Tam. She is very wise, though after nearly two centuries of existence she retains a singular vanity regarding her appearance and dress. Most feel that Yhelbruna's contribution to Rashemaar society is so great that she can be allowed such little quirks and think nothing of it.

The simple fact of the matter is that Lady Yhelbruna is the true ruler of Rashemen, having gained enormous magical knowledge from the vremyonni, the "Old Ones" who dwell deep in the Running Rocks, and progressed to the point where she surpasses even them. A huhrong is never chosen without her approval, and her advice is invariably followed. She has learned the value of silence and rarely gives orders, save when circumstances are absolutely desperate.

Yhelbruna has moved her permanent residence to the Urlingwood and emerges only to consult with the vremyonni or in times of crisis. The other witches are content to hold their council meetings in her isolated dwelling, well away from the travails and mundane concerns of Rashemen.

### Ygvarri the Dark

(Human Male Fighter 16)

Str 18/76 (24 with *girdle of storm giant strength*); Dex 16;

Con 17; Int 11; Wis 9; Cha 10

Armor Class: 6 (*witch shield*, -2 Dex)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 115

Number of Attacks: 2

Damage: 1d8+12 (*girdle*); 1d12 (*rock hurling*)

THAC0: 5 (1 with *girdle*)

Alignment: CN

Magical Items: *Girdle of storm giant strength, witch shield*

Age: 42, Ht: 6', Wt: 260 lbs.

Hair: Black, Eyes: Green





Ygvarri the Dark is the leader of the White Dragon berserker lodge and probably the best-known berserker in Rashemen. He is, in fact, considered the perfect berserker—strong, skilled in arms, completely heedless of personal risk or danger, and fond of fighting, singing, and drinking great quantities of ale. Unfortunately, Ygvarri is also irresponsible, inconsiderate, rude, self-centered, and immature—traits which have effectively removed him from any possibility of becoming a fyrra or huhrong.

The great alehall of the White Dragons is located in Thasunta (the famous City of Berserkers), and when Ygvarri is not off picking fights, this burly, muscular warrior is probably there wrestling, singing, drinking, or passing judgment on prospective new members. As this last usually involves wrestling, singing, and drinking tests, Ygvarri's business is not terribly different from his social life.

### Other Rashemaar NPCs

- *Dyljhiri* (CG hf M12 (witch)): This Hathran Rashemaar witch often travels incognito outside of Rashemen with her features magically altered. She does this to gather information on foreign lands and their intentions toward Rashemen and to secretly protect Rashemaar youths on dajemma.
- *Fyldrin of Eleven Chairs* (CN hm F6 (berserker)): This hot-blooded son of the Rashemaar huhrong hopes to one day succeed his father in power. The witches do not agree, considering him far too immature and irresponsible. He is a huge young man with a penchant for destroying furniture; his nickname derives from the eleven chairs which he broke while growing up at his father's steading.
- *Volas the Bear* (CG hm F14 (berserker)): Volas is the leader of the Ice Troll berserker lodge. He is an enthusiast of ski- and sled-racing, and he enjoys challenging everyone he meets to these sports. Anyone who bests him, or at least gives him a serious challenge, earns his respect, and Volas can be a useful friend.





# Appendix II: Miscellaneous Locations

## The Red Scourge

This vast and terrifying vessel is the new pride of the Thayan navy. Built of shining, enameled red iron, kept afloat by magic, and powered by captive extraplanar beings, the *Red Scourge* mounts numerous small *Thayan bombards* and a large crew of human warriors but has yet to be tested in battle. Many nations, especially Aglarond and the naval powers of the Sea of Fallen Stars, would pay well for information on this mysterious vessel which, if set in motion, could strangle sea trade to a trickle.

### Map Key

#### 1. Bowsprit

The *Scourge* is virtually indestructible and can travel at considerable speed due to its unique propulsion system (see below). For this reason, it is equipped with several devices intended specifically for ramming and damaging enemy vessels. The bowsprit, for example, is a barbed prong with numerous spring-loaded spikes and saws, that can be released upon contact with another vessel, then lowered so that the bowsprit can be easily extracted as *Scourge* backs water and disengages.

#### 2. Stern

The *Scourge's* stern is equipped with a serrated bowcutter which, in combination with the impaling bowsprit, forces any vessel rammed by the *Scourge* to make an immediate seaworthiness check (see *DMG*, Chapter 14) at a -25% penalty, or sink.

#### 3. Gunports

There are 12 gunports on each side of the vessel, one for each of the 24 light bombards carried by the vessel.

#### 4. Paddlewheels

These paddlewheels provide the *Scourge* with propulsion. Each is driven by a captive tanar'ri (see the orlop deck below). Eight wheels (four on each side) give the vessel a constant base MV of 3 and completely prevent the vessel from becoming becalmed.

#### 5. Deckhouse/Bridge

This armored structure houses an emergency wheel, binnacle, charts, and a small cabin so that officers may rest between watches. Iron shutters may be dropped over the deckhouse's windows and are provided with arrow slits so that it may be turned into a strongpoint should enemies attempt to board the vessel. The *Scourge* can be piloted from here, but visibility is limited, so the pilot is usually out on deck.

#### 6. Rudder

The ship's massive iron rudder is well armored and serrated so that the *Scourge* can back water into enemies as well. An attack by the ship's rudder forces enemy ships to make seaworthiness checks (no modifier) to avoid sinking.

#### 7. Mainmast

The *Red Scourge* is provided with a single mast for emergencies, in case the paddlewheels are disabled or for sailing under normal condition. A ship of the *Scourge's* size normally requires at least three fully rigged masts to move without penalty, so when propelled only by the sails of the single mainmast, the *Red Scourge* has a base MV of only 1.





## Main Deck

### 8. Binnacle

The ship's compass, a piece of enchanted iron that always points north, is sheltered in this sealed post near the wheel to aid in piloting.

### 9. Wheel

The ship's pilot normally steers the ship from this wheel. A second, auxiliary wheel is located in the deckhouse but is not usually used due to the house's limited visibility.

### 10. Ballistae

These large crossbows are set on swivel mounts on the main deck and are used for close-quarters fighting or to discourage boarders. Each ballistae hits for 3d8 points of damage, but takes two rounds to reload and requires a crew of at least two to shoot.

### 11. Hatches

These large cargo hatches lead to the upper deck.

### 12. Companionway

These narrow stairs are used by the crew for normal movement between the upper deck and the main deck.

## Upper Deck

### 13. Crew Quarters

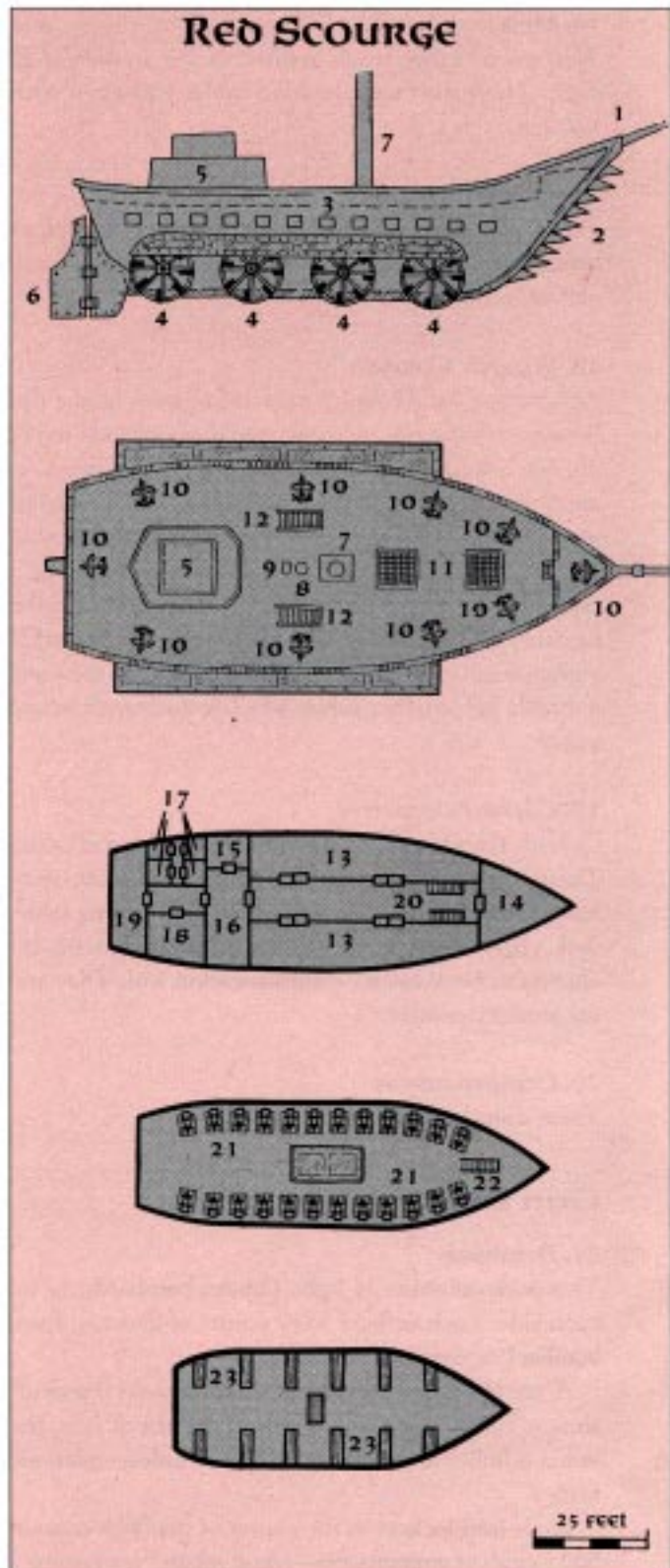
The Red Scourge normally carries a crew of 100 (CE hm F1). Each of these large chambers can sleep up to 50 sailors under normal conditions, 75 if crowded. The Scourge does not carry slaves, as the Thayans have found that they make unenthusiastic and unreliable sailors.

### 14. Locker

Miscellaneous supplies—rigging, provisions, clothing, sails, planking, ballista ammunition, and other items—are stored here.

### 15. Galley

Ship's meals are prepared in this cramped chamber that contains a larder, stove, tables, and miscellaneous cookware.





### 16. Mess

The crew take their meals in this chamber, in shifts of 50 each. The mess contains long tables equipped with benches.

### 17. Officers' Quarters

Two of the ship's 10 officers are quartered in each of these rooms, equipped with a double bunk, table, chairs, and a chest of drawers.

### 18. Wizard's Quarters

At least one Red Wizard is expected to serve on the Red Scourge, to supervise and command the bombards and to provide combat spell support in battle. The wizard normally stays in this well-appointed cabin, which contains a comfortable bed, table, writing desk, bookcase, chest of drawers, and various magical paraphernalia, including a *crystal ball* for communication with Thay and with the captain's cabin. The Red Wizard Phazrada (CE hf Tra12) currently serves on the Scourge. She avoids the crew and normally keeps to her cabin, which is constantly *wizard locked*.

### 19. Captain's Quarters

Captain Emo Medrici (LE hm F11) occupies this cabin. There is a large bed beneath a bank of magically reinforced windows, built-in drawers, a large dining table, desk, chart cabinets, and other miscellaneous items, including a *crystal ball* for communication with Thay and the wizard's quarters.

### 20. Companionway

These stairs lead down to the gun deck.

## Gun Deck

### 21. Bombards

This deck contains 24 light Thayan bombards, 12 on each side. Each inflicts 5d10 points of damage. Each bombard requires a crew of two.

A vessel hit by a light bombard must make a seaworthiness check at a +10% bonus. If the check fails, the vessel is hulled and sinks in 1d10 turns unless repairs are made.

Stout iron lockers in the center of the deck contain 500 rounds of ammunition—metal spheres containing a

flammable alchemical preparation. These lockers are sealed and enchanted with the equivalent of a *ring of fire* resistance so that fires or enemy attacks will not inadvertently set the ammunition off, a disaster that might destroy the Red Scourge entirely.

### 22. Companionway

A *wizard locked* hatch covers these stairs which lead down to the lowest level of the ship.

## Orlop Deck

### 23. Rowers

Benches line either side of the orlop deck. Each is occupied by four dretches, whose job it is to turn the great cranks which drive the paddlewheels and propel the *Red Scourge*. Those cranks not directly attached to the paddlewheels are linked to the others by a series of gears.

The dretches are chained to the benches and are overseen by a babau tanar'ri, who occupies the overseer's bench in the center of the deck. Dretches who do not work hard enough are whipped or beaten by the babau, who has agreed to work for the Red Wizards for a period of 10 years in exchange for gold, magical items, and sacrifices.

**Dretches** (48): AC 4; MV 9; HD 2; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4+1; SA *Scare, stinking cloud, telekinesis, gate*; MR 10%; SZ S; ML 12; Int Low; AL CE; XP 1,400.

**Babau**: AC -3; MV 15; HD 8+14; hp 70; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/2d4; SA *Corrosion, gaze, backstab*; SD +1 or better to hit, thief abilities; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 16; Int Genius; AL CE; XP 17,000 (See the *Spellbound Cardsheets* for details.).





# Thayan Tax Stations

The will of the Red Wizards, as well as their highly efficient tax system, is enforced through dozens of small, self-contained fortresses located along all major trade routes. These fortresses, called tax stations, contain small garrisons and are responsible for inventorying caravans and travelers, assessing and collecting taxes, and enforcing assessments on reluctant merchants. The tax station located at the small Thayan village of Whitebranch is a typical fortress, and with minor adjustments it can be used to represent fortresses throughout Thay.

## Map Key

### 1. Whitebranch

Whether the station created the village or the village created the station is a matter lost in the distant past. Whitebranch is today a village very much like dozens

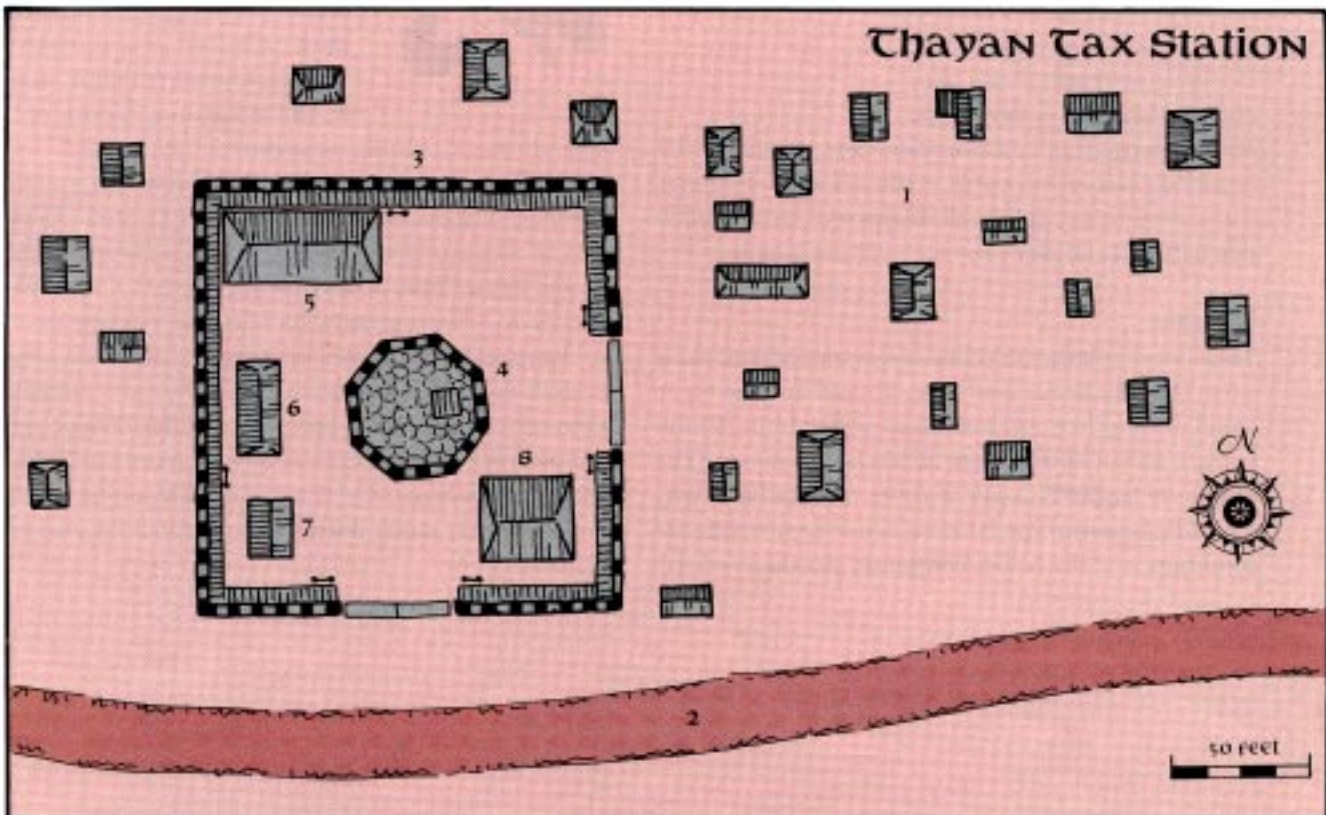
of other small Thayan settlements, with a small population of peasants living under the control of the local tharchion and his minions, with the appointed auctarch as supreme authority in the village. A huddled town of small mud or stone houses, interspersed with a few walled homes of more affluent residents, Whitebranch is home to a population of approximately 300 free Thayans and 500 slaves, most of whom live in the residences of wealthy citizens or toil for the soldiers in the tax station.

### 2. East Road

This paved, well-patrolled road is a major artery of Thayan commerce and hosts a steady stream of caravan traffic.

### 3. Main Walls

The fortress' walls are 10 feet high and 3 feet wide, with a narrow wooden catwalk around the inside accessible by ladders. Bored soldiers walk patrol on the walls—this is usually punishment duty, so enthusiasm is low.





#### 4. Keep

The central portion of the fortress is a squat, stone tower approximately 40 feet in height, divided into three floors. The ground floor contains the fortress' mess hall and kitchen. The second floor contains relatively luxurious quarters for the station commander, Captain Xyphal (CE hm F7), and the top floor acts as the fortress' vault, where documentation on the various caravans is stored along with bags and chests containing the tax station's take from caravans and travelers. A runner from Eltabbar arrives each week to take the fortress' gold—the amount varies from 100-10,000 gp at any one time. The door to the third floor is triple-locked; Captain Xyphal has two of the keys and Ulros (see below) has the third.

#### 5. Barracks

Ordinary soldiers—about 40 1st-level human fighters—are billeted here. Their numbers fluctuate to as high as 60 and are occasionally supplemented with gnolls, who live in tents outside the main barracks since they and the humans generally do not get along. The human warriors here are armed with crossbows and broadswords, equipped with chainmail shirts, steel helmets, and small shields. All are trained to ride horses but normally serve as ordinary infantry.

#### 6. Stable

There are currently five riding horses stabled here along with Xyphal's heavy warhorse. Should anyone try to avoid paying their assessed taxes or flee from Whitebranch, mounted troops are dispatched to pursue. The stables are tended by a pair of slaves, teenaged boys who are badly beaten if the building is not kept in pristine condition, and the horses constantly groomed and fed.

(Some observers might go so far as to note that the horses get better treatment than the slaves.)

#### 7. Slave Quarters

About a dozen slaves serve the Thayan soldiers. Like other slaves in Thay, their lot is a miserable one. Their quarters are filthy and their food only marginally edible. Nonetheless, they are expected to rise at dawn every day to tend to the needs of the Thayan warriors—cooking food, polishing boots, weapons and armor, tending to horses, cleaning the barracks and the commander's quarters, and so on.

#### 8. Counting House

This small building houses the station's chief assessor, a small sour man named Ulros (LE hm 0). He is responsible for inspecting and confirming manifests for every traveler and caravan which comes through the fortress and for assessing the proper taxes. Once the soldiers have collected an appropriate amount, Ulros is to tally it, store it, and maintain accounts for it

until the weekly runner comes from Eltabbar.

Needless to say, Ulros' job is a thankless one, and the enforced desperation of his career has created a great deal of resentment and larceny in his tiny heart. While he and Xyphal have no love for one another, they do cooperate in collecting taxes, for Ulros has recently taken to over-assessing caravan manifests while noting the correct value in his account books. Xyphal's soldiers then collect taxes based upon Ulros' inflated value and the two pocket the difference. So far, no one has gotten wise to this scheme, which could result in the untimely and extremely messy deaths of both should it ever be discovered.







# Appendix III: Timeline of The Region

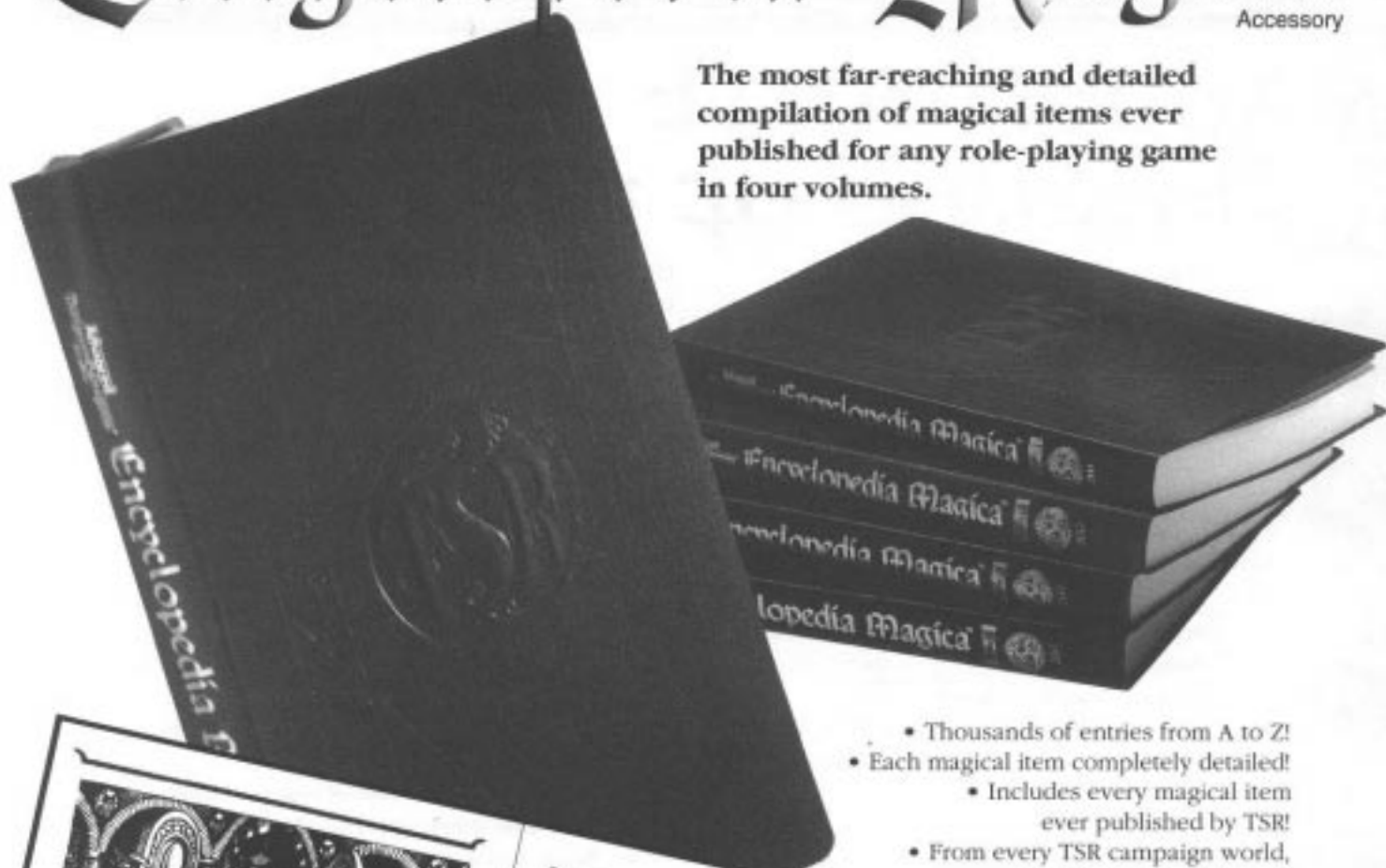
Dates given in Dalereckoning.

-1075	Orcgate Wars in Thay.	1159	Zulkir Szass Tam becomes a lich.
-1069	Orcs in Thay defeated; many flee north and west.	1189	Elthond king of Aglarond.
-150	Mutual fall of Narfell and Raumathar.	1194	Battle of Singing Sands, Elthond killed, Aglarond defeats Thay. Philipspur becomes king of Aglarond.
-135	Founding of Bezantur by Mulhorand.	1197	Battle of Brokenheads, Philipspur killed, Aglarond defeats Thay. Gray Sisters Ulae and Thara becomes queens of Aglarond.
-75	Rashemen founded.	1201	Major invasion of Aglarond by Thayan alliance of wizards narrowly defeated.
-45	Mulhorandi invasion of Rashemen. Dalereckoning begins.	1237	Marriage of queen Thara of Aglarond to Elthar of Milvarune; alliance of Thesk and Aglarond.
1 6 3	Founding of Altumbel by Unther.	1257	Gray Sisters die; Halacar king of Aglarond.
482	Delthuntle and Laothkund break free of Unther.	1260	Battle of Lapendrar, Halacar's ill-fated campaign against Thay. Halacar of Aglarond is poisoned; his sister Illione, tutor to the Simbul, becomes queen of Aglarond.
504	Steady erosion of Unther's control of North Coast cities through 679 DR.	1280	Thay nearly conquers Mulhorand before being repulsed.
756	First fisherfolk settle in Aglarond.	1317	Great Plague of the Inner Sea through 1323 DR. Targuth Athkarr huhrong of Rashemen.
766	Birth of the Simbul.	1320	Queen Illione dies of the Plague; the Simbul becomes queen of Aglarond.
870	Adventurers begin to clear the monsters from the Yuirwood through 880 DR.	1323	Thayan wizards attempt to control others through dreams; they are discovered and destroyed.
922	Battle of Thazalhar. Red Wizards declare Thay independent of Mulhorand.	1334	Hyarmon Hussilthar huhrong of Rashemen.
923	Eltab bound under Eltabbar.	1356	Selfaril of Mulmaster and the Tharchioness (of the tharch of Eltabbar, known as the First Princess of Thay outside of Thay) exchange gifts.
934	First Thayan invasion of Rashemen.	1357	Thayan assault on the coastal cities of Tilbrand, Lasdur, Taskaunt, Escalant, Murbant, and Thasselen with the aid of fire elementals. The plan backfires and the resulting Salamander War lasts over a year. Another Thayan faction invades Rashemen with an army of zombies and is ultimately turned back.
976	Mulhorandi invasion of Thay repelled.	1358	The Time of Troubles; gods walk the Realms.
1020	Thay develops much of its unique fire magic.	1359-60	Tuigan Horde invades Faerûn. Citadel Rashemar destroyed by the Horde.
1021	Thay strikes against the Harpers—liches walk the Heartlands.	1361	Thydrim Yvarrg huhrong of Rashemen.
1030	Establishment of zulkirs as ruling body of Thay.	1366	The Tharchioness marries Selfaril of Mulmaster.
1031	Internal strife in Thay as zulkirs continue to establish rule until 1074 DR.	1367	Major earthquakes destroy much of Eltabbar.
1065	Battle of Ingdal's Arm between the half-elves of the Yuirwood and human settlers. The half-elf Brindor becomes the first king of Aglarond.	1368	The Present.
1074	Zulkirs finally quell rebellions and rule in Thay.		
1 0 8 2	Building of Emmech.		
1085	Building of the Watchwall by the galeb duhr of Tannath and Undergoth.		
1098	Thay attempts invasion of Mulhorand, defeated at Sultim.		
1104	Birth of Szass Tam of Thay.		
1128	Althon king of Aglarond.		
1132	Creation of Long Portage.		
1142	Redsail the pirate retires to Aglarond.		

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# Spellbound



## THRONE OF DECEIT

by Anthony Pryor

ELMORE '89

# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons



## Throne of Deceit Adventure Book

By Anthony Pryor

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# DM's Introduction



**T**hrone of Deceit is an ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure for five or more characters of levels 8-10. The adventurers are set against the schemes of the evil Red Wizards of Thay.

Journeying from Aglarond to Rashemen, they learn about near-legendary cultures and help defeat an invasion from Thay. In the end there is more to the Red Wizards' schemes than meets the eye, setting the stage for the concluding adventure, *The Runes of Chaos*.

*Throne of Deceit* is set in the Unapproachable East, in Aglarond and Rashemen. The adventure is complex and dangerous. Given the magical abilities of many of the party's opponents, at least one wizard and one priest are necessary, and more are recommended.

When the adventure opens, the PCs are in Aglarond, where a wealthy patron asks them to deliver a package. They are intercepted by agents of the Simbul, the ruler of Aglarond, and accused of being Thayan agents. The package contains various documents—orders and correspondence discussing a Thayan invasion of Rashemen, Thay's neighbor to the north.

The punishment for Thayan spies in Aglarond is quick and final, but before the PCs can be dealt with, the Simbul herself intervenes, revealing that she has had the party under observation for some time—they are not Thayan agents. They are, however, pawns of the Thayans. They were selected to deliver the message because their appearance would not attract the attention of the Aglarondan authorities.

The Simbul and her close associates are busy investigating rumors of a massive internal conflict in Thay, and she is unable to spare anyone to assist the adventurers. She offers the party generous compensation for taking a warning to the Iron Lord of Rashemen.

A journey to Rashemen is not without its hazards. The characters travel in the company of a Theskian nobleman who is determined to restore law and order in his own land, and the trip is periodically interrupted by encounters with ghosts, bandits, and marauding humanoids.

The Rashemaar are an isolated, barbaric culture that distrusts outsiders. The PCs must win their respect by engaging in a number of physical contests and games of skill before being allowed to meet with the *huhrong* (Iron Lord).

After warning the Iron Lord, the characters are expected to aid in the defense of Rashemen. The PCs fight and presumably win glory in the rout of Thayan forces, and return triumphantly to Aglarond.

At the conclusion of the adventure the PCs discover that the entire Rashemaar affair was engineered by the evil Szass Tam to discredit his chief opponents, the Zulkirs Lauzoril, Thrul, and Nevron. Szass Tam sends an anonymous warning to the Simbul. After Thay's defeat, Tam's chief opponents are in serious trouble, and several wavering Thayans have come over to Tam's side—most notably the Zulkir Mythrell'aa. Now virtually assured of absolute power in Thay, Tam is free to complete his scheme to enslave the tanar'ri abyssal lord Eltab and crush his opponents. The consequences of a single ruler in Thay are catastrophic for Aglarond, Rashemen, and Faerûn at large.

DMs should read the *Campaign Guide* and the MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® booklet. The *Seven Sisters* supplement, which deals with the mysterious Simbul and her siblings, is useful but not required.

Please note that all boxed text is intended to be read aloud to the players.





# MisLed



hroned of Deceit opens around the beginning of the month of Marpenoth in Aglarond. Suitable ways of getting the party to Aglarond include:

- The party accompanies a merchant to guard against pirate attacks on a sea voyage to Velprintalar.
- The adventurers are sent by their monarch or patron on a diplomatic mission to meet the Simbul.
- The PCs journey to Aglarond to investigate the lost civilization of the Yuir elves.
- The party is sent by the Harpers or another secret organization to investigate Thayan influence in the region.

## A Patron in Velprintalar

Whatever the reason for getting there, the adventure must begin in the Aglarondan city of Velprintalar (see the map in the *Campaign Guide*).

Aglarond is a distant and isolated land, known to most only from stories. The port city of Velprintalar is the land's only major connection to Faerûn and probably the only place in Aglarond where outsiders do not draw curious glances.

Velprintalar is a quaint and crowded coastal city. Its houses are built of weathered wood and thrown together in a picturesque clutter of sharply peaked roofs, jutting gables and dormers, cupolas and balconies. The streets are cobbled and narrow, bustling with traffic where the handsome half-elven folk of Aglarond rub elbows with human fisher-folk, herdsman, and farmers.

You room at The Sailor's Home, an establishment frequented by travelers and foreign tradesmen. When you arrive, innkeeper Mharus approaches and hands you a note sealed with an elaborate crest.

"A young man left this here," he says. "He said that his master sent him, and that I should give this to you personally."

The note reads as follows:

To (party leader's name):

*It has come to my attention that you and your companions are in Velprintalar. My associates in Waterdeep have informed me of your intelligence and reliability. I have a job that I would like you to do for me. It is simple, not dangerous, and you will be suitably compensated. Please contact me at your earliest convenience. I am staying at the Paladin Inn.*

*Sincerely,*

*Lord Thorvald of Tantras.*





The note is also sealed with the sigil of the Six Coffers trading house.

If the characters decide to meet with Lord Thorvald, continue with the next paragraph. If they refuse, Thorvald takes more direct action. He may plant the incriminating documents on the party or see to it that they steal them, or use some other means to get the package into the party's hands.

If the characters go to the meeting with Thorvald, the innkeeper of the Paladin summons him and he meets them in one of the inn's private dining rooms.

Thorvald is a handsome, well-dressed man with dark eyes and long, impeccably groomed hair.

Thorvald buys you a meal and a round of drinks, then speaks.

"I would like you to deliver a package for me," he says. "Rest assured that it is nothing illegal—it is, however, to be delivered to a rather rough section of town, one that I would rather not visit personally. You are an intimidating group, so it is unlikely that you will be bothered. Upon completion of this task, I will pay you each 10 gold pieces."

If the characters agree, Thorvald tells them to deliver the package to a "Sir Maris," who is currently at a warehouse near the waterfront. If they seem unenthusiastic, he offers more, but not more than 20 gp apiece. He does not want to seem too eager to have the party deliver the package. Thorvald simply dismisses the characters if they refuse and later see to it that the information is planted on them.

Should the characters come up with the suggestion that Thorvald himself make the delivery while they act as his bodyguards, he turns to them disdainfully and informs them "I cannot be seen in that—that slum." If the adventurers refuse, Thorvald does not insist, but instead frames them later.

Thorvald's "package" is a thick, waxed paper envelope closed with the sigil of the Six Coffers. He asks for a signed receipt from Sir Maris, proving they've made delivery before he pays them. If pressed, he gives the characters half their gold up front.

There is no "Sir Maris." Thorvald's mission is to get the package into the party's possession. The Aglarondan authorities can then be alerted, and the party taken into custody.

After the characters leave the Paladin Inn, the DM may play out the party's short trip to the waterfront with

normal encounters if desired. The important encounter comes when the party approaches the warehouse described by Thorvald. When they attempt to gain entrance, read the following:

Your knock on the door echoes dully. As you inspect the building more closely, you see that the windows are tightly shuttered and the entire warehouse looks abandoned. Suddenly, a loud voice barks behind you: "Stop! In the name of the Simbul, you are under arrest!"

At your back are at least 20 Aglarondan soldiers in chain mail, crossbows leveled. The leader is an officious individual in a tunic emblazoned with Aglarond's arms. He is mounted on a horse and flanked by two mounted men in hoods and robes.

The characters have three options: They can fight, flee, or surrender. If they flee, use the Velprintalar map from the *Campaign Guide* to run the chase. Even if the characters manage to elude their pursuers, local citizens report them to the Simbul's officials, and the adventurers are eventually hunted down and captured. If they surrender, the characters are taken into custody. In both cases, go to the section *Accused*, below.

If the PCs fight, play out the melee. The Aglarondan soldiers begin with crossbow fire to disrupt PC wizards' spellcasting, then advance, swords drawn, with two wizards to cast spells to incapacitate the party (*web*, *stinking cloud*, *hold person*, and the like). The eventual goal is that the characters are captured and taken to the Simbul's Palace. To this end, if they seem to be winning, bring in Aglarondan reinforcements. As a last resort, have the Simbul (who has been watching in changed form and wishes to maneuver the characters into a position where they will help her) surreptitiously cast spells that incapacitate the party.

Aglarondan Guards (hm & hf F2 (20)): AC 4 (chain mail, shields); MV 12; hp16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword) or 1d4+ 1 (heavy crossbow); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NG; XP 65.

Seneschal (hm F5): AC 10; MV 12 (24 on horseback); hp30; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword); SZ M; ML 13; Int High; AL NG; XP 270.

Wizards (hm M8 (2)): AC 10; MV 12 (24 on horseback); hp24; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M; ML 15; Spells: 6/5/5/4; Int Exceptional; AL CG; XP 2,000.







## Accused

You are stripped of your weapons and equipment and conveyed to the Simbul's Palace. There, you are taken in chains and under heavy guard before a stern Aglarondan official. She is dressed in a dark purple tunic. Her hair is black and long, but she has the slightly pointed ears and coppery skin of a half-elf. She sits at a desk, flanked by two equally stern functionaries. Armed guards surround the room and torches provide dim, smokey light.

"I am Lady Thesea, in service to the Simbul," she says. "You stand accused of espionage against Aglarond."

This session is intended to rattle the party, make them think that they are accused (and, for all intents and purposes, convicted) of a capital crime and that the end of their mortal existences may be near.

Thesea begins the session by listing the contents of the package the characters were expected to deliver.

"The package you had in your possession contains critical information, secrets—troop strengths, movements, names of Aglarondan agents in Thay. Worse than that, the documents describe a Thayan invasion of Rashemen. The mere possession of these documents convicts you of espionage, a crime that carries the ultimate penalty.

"Now, we are in a position to be lenient and reduce the sentence if you cooperate. Give us the names of your Thayan superiors, the agents you have contacted here, and those you were ordered to contact."

Of course, the only names the party has to surrender are Thorvald and the mythical "Sir Maris." If they reveal either name, they are informed that no such persons exist and are required to come up with more names. The innkeepers at the Paladin and the Sailor's Home are both honest and respectable citizens who can easily be proven completely innocent.

Since the characters were misled by Thorvald, they have no information of any use to Aglarond. A few minutes of discussion undoubtedly end with frustrated, desperate PCs. Suggestions from the characters to prove their innocence, such as the use of a detect lie spell, are



taken as insults by Thesea, who suspects the adventurers are Thayan agents who have the means to frustrate such spells. Eventually, Thesea loses her temper.

Lady Thesea's features contort into an angry grimace. She rises, pointing an accusing finger at you.

"I've had enough!" she barks. "I'm finished playing games, now! Either provide me with some useful information, or one of you will die! Sergeant, on my order, execute one of these Thayan spies!"

An Aglarondan soldier clad in sturdy plate armor steps forward, dutifully unsheathing his sword. In desperation, the PCs may attempt to fight, escape, or cast spells. Any actions are interrupted at the last moment by the following event.





## The Simbul

As the sergeant advances, a voice rings out.

“That’s enough, Thesea! They’ve proved they know nothing.”

All eyes turn in the direction of the voice. Suddenly, one of the guards begins to change, his outline wavering and melting into another, and a moment later a robed woman steps forward.

Thesea suddenly exclaims, “Your majesty!” and, along with the rest of the room’s occupants, immediately bows respectfully.

She is not the sort to inspire such obeisance. She is rather tall, with tangled silvery hair, and clad in rather tattered black robes. She carries a long, gnarled staff with an air of quiet authority, however, and there is a tangible aura of power surrounding her.

“Greetings,” she says, turning to you. “I am glad to have you here, though your manners leave something to be desired. I am the Simbul, ruler of Aglarond.”

Those characters who have met or seen the Simbul before recognize her immediately, and any former association works in their favor. She orders the PCs’ chains removed, and tells the guards to escort the party to her private chambers.

Lady Thesea and two guards remain in the Simbul’s chambers, and listen in silence when she speaks.

The Simbul bids you sit, then offers refreshment. She casually waves a hand, and goblets of wine and platters of food glide soundlessly through the air to rest on a table in front of you. The trays are borne by unseen servants, lending an eerie quality to the room.

“I apologize for the pretense,” she says, sitting on a green velvet chair. “I have been following you since your meeting with the Thorvald. I regret to say that he has, so far, eluded capture by my agents. I have assured myself by observing you and, forgive me, surreptitiously investigating your thoughts, that you were duped and have no association with the Red Wizards of Thay.”

“Since you have now been exposed to the intrigues of the Red Wizards, perhaps you would do us a certain service, one that may end in the frustration of their schemes.”

Should any of the PCs ask, the Simbul provides them with a brief overview of the Red Wizards, their history, and ambitions in the region. After some discussion, she makes the following proposal.

“I will be honest with you. My people and I are stretched far too thin by the Thayans. Something is going on within Thay’s borders—some kind of internal conflict, which may have disastrous repercussions for the rest of Faerûn. Their conspiracy against us has redoubled in recent weeks and we run from one crisis to another. Were there three of me I would still be far too burdened with tasks!

“Now comes solid information about a Thayan invasion of Rashemen. Mind you, the Wizards have invaded Rashemen dozens of times and been sent yelping back across the border, their tails between their legs. This time, however, the Thayans have come up with a new scheme, a scheme that may defeat the Iron Lord and his armies.”

At this point, the Simbul hands over the pertinent document from Thorvald’s package. Show the players the front of Card #7, Thrul’s letter. If the players ask about Thay, Tam, or Thrul, show them the back of Card #7, a letter from one of the Simbul’s agents in Thay. If the players ask, tell them the projected invasion date is in approximately six weeks.

“As you can see,” the Simbul continues, “the Thayans have taken precautions to overcome the Rashemaar’s spirit magic and the powers of their witches. Without these, the Rashemaar, though brave, are no more powerful than any other nation. Without these, their disorganized military can be easily defeated.

“If I had time and agents to spare, I would warn the Rashemaar myself. But the schemes and agents of Thay overwhelm us. They scurry about like spiders. I have tried to contact the witches through magical means, but nothing seems to get through—either the





Thayans are interfering magically or something is happening in Rashemen to block my spells.”

The Simbul pauses, then looks at each of you in turn. “I want you to go to Rashemen, carrying this document as well as a letter from me, to warn both the witches and the Iron Lord of the Thayan threat. I will instruct the huhrong to suitably compensate you for your trouble. In addition, I offer each of you 1,000 gold pieces.”

The Simbul is willing to negotiate, but won't go higher than 1,500 gp per person. Once the characters have agreed to the Simbul's proposal, she gives them as much background information on Rashemen as they require. In addition, she tells them the following.

“You must keep one thing in mind when dealing with the Rashemaar—they are even more isolated and provincial than we. Simply informing them that you bear a message from me will not get you an audience with the huhrong. You will have to win the

Rashemaars' respect before they will help you. Remember that they respect strength and physical skill above all other things, and have an innate distrust of foreigners, especially wizards. They often put up a bold front, greeting strangers with gruff behavior and insult while never actually initiating a fight themselves—anyone who is provoked to the point of violence is considered to have lost the exchange. You must respond to such threats in kind, with similar boasts and insults. Never start a fight. If you lose your temper and fight the Rashemaar, you will find yourself beset on all sides by angry berserkers, and you will never earn the Rashemaars' trust.”

The Simbul provides the adventurers with horses, equipment, maps and, within reason, anything else they need to complete their journey. They are allowed to remain at the palace for the night, and are the Simbul's guests at the evening's feast, but they are expected to depart immediately the following morning.





# The Road To Rashemen

**T**he Simbul provides sea transport to the Theskian port of Milvarune (see Map 1). From that point, the PCs' best route is to follow the Golden Way through Thassalra, Phent, Inkar, Phsant, Tammar, and Two-Stars, then take a ferry across the river Mulsantir. Although this adventure is written with this route in mind, and in the expectation of the characters serving as guards on Lord Simgarde's caravan, the players are free to choose a less public route. In that case the DM should modify the encounters listed below to fit the PCs' adjusted route.

## An Overview of Thesk

Once a powerful and prosperous land, Thesk suffered heavily at the hands of the Tuigan Horde during their invasion in 1360, and much of the realm has yet to recover. Where once rich trade caravans traveled from bustling Telflamm and Milvarune, carrying their wares to Rashemen, northern Thay, and points east, bandits and orc tribes now roam freely. Where once great cities rose, impoverished survivors camp in ruins. Where once noblemen worked together in fellowship and national unity, squabbling and bitter feuds have sprung up.

Many Theskians have returned to their nomadic roots, roaming the plains in ragtag bands, fighting with each other and the humanoid raiders who now frequent the region. Though the land is nominally under the oligarchic control of the merchant mayors of the Golden Way, Thesk is disunited and on the verge of anarchy. Even the proud Golden Way itself, the road of ancient kings, is in poor repair and its traffic is repeatedly attacked by raiders and bandits.

Some Theskian merchants have begun to rebuild their broken land and to reestablish their impoverished trade routes. Consequently, there is plenty of work for mercenaries and adventurers in Thesk—caravans need guards and merchant mayors need help in rooting out and destroying raiding bands. The characters can easily take cover identities as freelance adventurers and even earn some gold as caravan guards.

## In Milvarune

The ship journey proceeds without incident through the gray, windy weather of early winter. During the sea voyage, the crew talks about conditions in Thesk, telling how this once-prosperous land was shattered by the Tuigan invasion of 1360. It is a dangerous place and travelers often fall prey to the bandits and orc tribes that, rumor has it, were sent there by the Black Network to disrupt trade. The characters might find employment as caravan guards, for several prominent Theskian merchants are struggling to recapture their realm's former greatness.

Milvarune is a busy port city that seems to have largely escaped the devastation wrought by the Tuigan Horde. Stone buildings line the waterfront, and ships from many





nations dock here, either to replenish supplies or to off-load goods. The captain recommends several good inns—most prominently the Brimming Tankard—wishes the PCs luck, and departs for Aglarond.

The party may take the captain's advice or seek out their own accommodations. Whatever they decide, the adventurers hear many rumors and stories at dinner that night, either overheard at nearby tables or confided by overly-friendly diners. Among the information gained by the PCs that night:

- Several caravans have been raided by a powerful orc tribe calling itself the Wolfheads. Most caravans leaving the city are hiring extra guards to deal with the threat.
- A lone traveler just returned from Inkar relates a story of a terrifying, vengeful spirit haunting the site of the Second Battle of the Golden Way. The ghost was clad in Tuigan armor and produced a fearful howl. The traveler claims his hair turned white simply by viewing the apparition.
- There is civil war in Thay—Red Wizard fights Red Wizard for control of the land.
- Tammar, reduced to ruin by the Tuigan Horde, is now in the hands of a self-styled "Lord Mayor," actually the bandits' chieftain Tolvara, who now levies a heavy toll on passing caravans and remains defiant despite a Theskian army sent to dislodge her.
- A necromancer, possibly Thayan, recently traveled through nearby lands burdened with many strange objects. Those who attempted to investigate his identity, or steal his cargo, met with horrible fates.
- In desperation, the merchant mayor of Two-Stars has hired an entire orc tribe to act as the city's militia and to hold bandits and other orc tribes at bay.
- Several major gem caravans in Thesk, the Dalelands, and Mulhorand have been attacked and plundered.
- The Simbul is missing from Aglarond again, but has been spotted in various places, including the Sea of Fallen Stars, the Great Dale, and even in Thay itself.

- Lord Simgarde leads a strong caravan bound for Rashemen, which is departing at dawn tomorrow. He intends not only to deliver a large quantity of goods to the berserkers, but also to pacify the countryside as he travels. It is a tall order, but Lord Simgarde is a determined man.

If the characters ask further regarding the last rumor, they are directed to the caravanserai near the city's east gate. If they show no interest in working for Simgarde, one of his representatives may approach them directly, since the characters are all obviously experienced adventurers. If the players are dead-set against traveling with Simgarde's caravan, let them go on as they like, and adapt the encounters below as described under each entry.

Should the players agree to work for Simgarde, they are summoned to a meeting with their new employer.

The PCs are conducted through the caravanserai, an open area near the west wall where caravans prepare for departure. Lord Simgarde's caravan is the only major group in the area, but it is a large one, with dozens of horses, mules, oxen and other dray beasts, at least 100 seasoned mercenaries lounging silently in worn but serviceable armor, wagons and carts loaded with bulging sacks, sloshing barrels and locked chests and many minor functionaries rush back and forth—clerks check manifests, drovers argue with wagon masters, sergeants bark orders to their squads, animals roar, whinny, or bleat. Above it all stands a powerful man clad in black mail over which has been belted a white tabard bearing a rearing stallion.

He stares intently at the PCs. He is stern and bearded, and his eyes are black, touched with a gleam of reckless bravery.

"You!" he grunts, stabbing a finger in your direction. "Are you the new guards? You have the look of adventurers about you! I am Lord Simgarde, master of this caravan! Now listen, I will brook no insubordination! I know your kind! There will be no gallivanting off after treasure, exploring dungeons, slaying dragons, or rescuing maidens while you work for MY caravan! You'll be well paid for your services, but remember that I am in charge and you take orders from me and me alone! None of this silly dungeon-explorer foolishness for me! I am a fighter and a merchant, and we serve the dual purpose of delivering our goods and sweeping the infestation of bandit trash from Golden Way! Do I make myself clear?"





Sensible adventurers will probably keep their mouths shut or simply say, “Yes, Lord Simgarde,” but adventurers are not generally known for discretion. Some may wish to argue with Simgarde and dispute his disparaging comments. If this happens, Simgarde merely informs the troublemakers that he is “keeping his eye” on them and that they will regret any “irresponsible” behavior.

Payment for the trip, which is likely to take two to three weeks, is 500 gp per person. This is more than Simgarde is paying his ordinary mercenaries, but he figures the PCs have more experience. He does caution them not to reveal this payscale. He will award bonuses on arrival in Rashemen based upon the PCs’ performance if they demand more.

The adventurers are free to return to their inn or to bunk in the caravanserai barracks with the other mercenaries, but in either case they are expected to be up and ready to leave one hour before dawn the following day.

## Along The Golden Way

The caravan leaves on schedule at the first light of dawn (Lord Simgarde being the sort of master who would see to it that the dawn was delayed if there was any danger of lateness) and takes the road through the Dragonjaw Mountains. This is not yet truly the Golden Way; that celebrated road passes through Telflamm and Phent, several days to the north.

The following encounters are listed in the order they occur and are keyed to Map 1. They may be fought as separate encounters if the party is going it alone.

The caravan is accompanied by 120 mercenary fighters, Lord Simgarde, and his companions—an experienced band of professional fighters. Any of the following NPCs may be used in the coming encounters.

**Lord Simgarde** (hm F15): AC -1 (*plate armor +1, shield*); MV 12; hp86; THAC0 6 (+3 *weapon*); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+3 (*broad sword +3*); SZ M; ML 15; Int High; AL LN; XP 7,000.

Simgarde is an old member of Thesk’s mercantile elite and a skilled fighter. He is grimly handsome, square-jawed, and bearded. Strict, stem, uncompromising, utterly humorless, Simgarde has a reputation for getting things done quickly and efficiently. He wants to use this caravan mission to turn a tidy profit on items long kept

from the Rashemaar, and to help clear the Golden Way of the bandits and raiders who now infest it. He orders the PCs to ride near him at all times, ostensibly so that he can “keep an eye on them.” (In reality, despite his bluff exterior, Simgarde likes the PCs and wants them within easy reach so that he can summon them quickly in the event of trouble.)

**Lady Thyss** (hf F10/P4 (Torm)): AC 3 (*chain mail +1, shield*); MV 12; hp70; THAC0 11; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6 (*mace*); SZ M; ML 14; Int Average; AL LG; XP 270. (Spheres—Major; All Astral, Combat, Divination, Guardian, Healing, Protection, Summoning, Sun. Minor: Charm, Elemental, Necromantic, Weather.)

Lord Simgarde’s wife is a warrior-priestess of Torm. She is determined to help her husband rid the realm of the chaotic violence that has plagued it since the Tuigan invasion. She is every bit as dedicated and cold as her husband. The two of them get on famously.

**Falcon Master Grimm** (hm F8): AC 5 (*chain mail*); MV 12; HD 8; hp48; THAC0 13; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8 (*broad sword*); SZ M; ML 15; Int Average; AL CG; XP 975.

Simgarde and Thyss’ falcon master is a strong and noble fighter with unshakable loyalty to his employers. He will gladly give his life for Simgarde and his family. He carries two personally trained fighting falcons.

**Falcons (2)**: AC 5; MV 1/FI 36; hp5; THAC0 20; #AT 3; Dmg 1/1/1; SZ S; ML 6; Int Animal; AL N; XP 15.

**Mercenaries** (hm & hf F2 (100)): AC 6 (*leather armor and shield*); MV 12; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (*broad sword*); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL N; XP 65.

**Mercenary Sergeants** (hm & hf F5 (25)): AC 5 (*chain mail*); MV 12; hp25; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (*broad sword*); SZ M; ML 13; Int Average; AL N; XP 175.

The DM may roll for normal encounters on the route between Milvarune and Inkar.

The route takes the PCs through the Dragonsjaw Mountains and to the city of Thassalra. From there, the caravan travels northeast, finally joining the great Golden





Way at the walled fortress-city of Phent. From Phent they travel to Inkar, a small city with many inns, most of which are impoverished by the lack of caravan trade.

The next leg of the trip, from Inkar to Phsant, takes at least two days. The PCs' companions inform them that once the Golden Way was lined with inns and way stations for the benefit of caravan traffic. These all lie in ruins now, and caravans are forced to camp beside the road. A day's ride east of Inkar, Lord Simgarde calls a halt and the caravan personnel make camp in short order.

That night, as the chill of coming winter closes in, the party takes its meal in the warm light of the campfire. Nearby, Lord Simgarde sips at a mug of ale, and he is more garrulous and friendly than he has been since the beginning of the trip.

This is a good opportunity for the DM to role-play a friendly conversation with the formerly cold and distant Lord Simgarde. He asks the characters about themselves and their backgrounds, and he shares some of his tales of adventures along the Golden Way. After a while, he speaks of the history of the region and of the epic battles of the Golden Way.

It must have been well on seven or eight years ago," Simgarde says, "that the Tuigan Yamun Khahan swept through this region, burning, pillaging, conquering. He sacked Two Stars and Tezir-on-the-Marsh, then marched down the Golden Way at the head of an endless horde of eastern nomads. Tammar fell, then they marched on Phsant. King Azoun of Cormyr met them there with an army he'd scraped together from all the western lands. There were Cormyrian Purple Dragons, Hillsfar Red Plumes, Dalelands archers, mercenaries from Tantras and Ravens Bluff, dwarves from Earthfast. By the gods, there was even a band of orcs from Zhentil Keep—we thought it was the only good thing those cursed dogs ever did.

"They fought outside Phsant, to neither side's advantage. The allies fell back on Inkar and the Tuigan followed them, sacking Phsant on the way. They met again outside Inkar and this time Azoun lured the Khahan into a trap, isolating him from his troops and killing him.

"The Tuigan were slaughtered, but the cost was terrible. My nation has been a wasteland ever since, raided by bandits and victimized by the Zhentil Keep orcs who never left. We're here to bring back what my land once was—I thank you all for your help."

## A. Ghosts

Without another word, Lord Simgarde rises and vanishes into his tent.

The players may arrange watches and sleep schedules as they wish. The main encounter takes place just past midnight. Any characters on watch witness the following incident. Otherwise, allow the party to be awakened by Lord Simgarde or other caravan personnel.

The night is cold, and each man's breath steams in great, billowing clouds. A faint, silvery mist hangs on the trees and casts a glimmering halo around the moon. From the distance comes a faint sound of singing or humming, carried on the gentle breeze. It builds in intensity until it is a low, rhythmic chant, like the marching cadence of a hundred armed men.

In the distance, the mist parts to reveal rank upon rank of silver-white glowing horsemen, each armored in scale or chain, with elaborate helms and long lances. In the center of the horseman rides a tall, imposing figure, also clad in scale armor, wearing a high helm sporting a black plume. He too shines with an eerie glow, and urges his horse forward.

"Bow before the might of the Tuigan!" he bellows, in an icy voice long dead "Submit to the great Yamun Khahan or be destroyed!"

The glowing figures are the spirits of slain Tuigan warriors, and the leader is none other than the ghost of Yamun Khahan, self-styled Emperor of All The World. The PCs may speak to the Tuigan spirits, with guidance and advice (some of it actually helpful) from Lord Simgarde. Regardless of their questions or response, Yamun Khahan responds only with demands for surrender and submission to the glorious Grand Army of the Tuigan. Eventually, he loses patience and orders his spectral warriors to attack.

Other caravan members fight the various attacking Tuigan spirits. Only the party is privileged enough to battle the ghost of Yamun Khahan and his bodyguard.

**Yamun Khahan** (ghost): AC 0; MV 12; HD 10; hp50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg Age 10-40 years by touch; SD immune to normal weapons; SZ M; ML Special; Int Genius; AL LE; XP 7,000.

**Spectral Horsemen** (10): AC 2; MV 12; HD 5; hp20; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; SD immune to normal weapons; SZ M; ML Special; Int Low; AL LE; XP 270.





If the spectral horsemen are “killed” or turned by a cleric, they dissipate and vanish for 1d4 months, always returning to haunt the Golden Way.

Yamun Khahan is the PCs’ most dangerous opponent. He, too, merely dissipates if “slain” and eventually returns. He differs from a normal statistics ghost in that he cannot use the *magic jar* ability.

These evil spirits can be eliminated only if the remains of Yamun Khahan are found and interred with the proper Tuigan ceremonies. Yamun’s body was buried in a mass grave along with his followers, and must be distinguished from thousands of other bones—possible only through magic such as *speak with dead* or a *wish*.

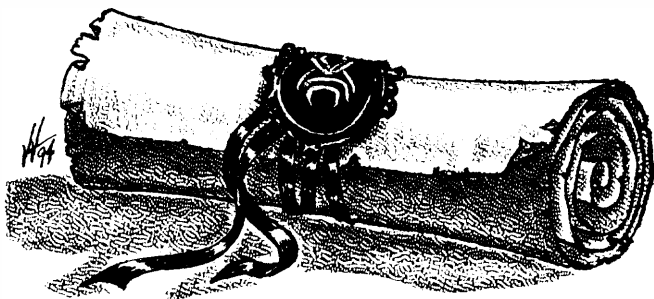
Unnaturally aged characters are stuck for the moment, and can only be aided by high-level magic.

## B. The Wolfheads

Lord Simgarde efficiently oversees repairs and tending to the wounded, and the caravan departs soon after dawn. During the day, the caravan passes through the actual site of the Second Battle of the Golden Way. Here may be found many souvenirs: rusted helmets and armor, broken swords, arrowheads, bits of tack, and the like.

This day sees an attack by the vicious orc raiders known as the Wolfheads.

The caravan passes through an open plain, dotted here and there with low hills and stands of trees. From all around comes the harsh howling of countless wolves. Ahead, along the Golden Way, a trio of black shapes approaches. In a moment, they resolve into three grim, black-skinned orcs mounted on massive, snarling wolves. They are armed to the teeth, with great curved falchions, crossbows, and lances. Black banners emblazoned with savage designs fly above them. Each wears a wolfskin cloak with a wolf skull affixed to the top of each helm.



“Caravan master!” snarls the lead orc, a powerfully-muscled creature in a dark iron helm, a fur vest, and chain mail. “You pass through the lands of the Wolf-head orcs! Give over half your cargo and live! Resist us and die! This is your only warning!”

Lord Simgarde trots forward, head held proudly. “You trespass upon Theskian soil, orc!” he bellows. “Leave this moment and we will let you live!”

The orc seems stunned at Simgarde’s boldness, but then screams an order. All around you howls break out, and a black horde of orcs appears, rising from concealed shallow pits and from behind hills and copses. Battle has begun.

Wolfhead Orcs (\*): AC 7; MV 9; HD 1; hp6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword), 2d6 (falchion), or 1d4+ 1 (crossbow); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL LE; XP 15.

Wolfhead Orc Chieftain (\*): AC 4; MV 9; HD 3; hp18; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broadsword); SA +2 to damage; SZ M; ML 13; Int Average; AL LE; XP 65.

Worgs (\*): AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp20; THAC0 17; Dmg 2d4; SZ M; ML 11; Int Low; AL NE; XP 120.

One nomadic tribe among many sent here by Zhentil Keep to help fight the Tuigan, the Wolfheads decided that they liked Thesk and stayed with the tacit approval of the Black Network. All ride worgs and fight with a variety of weapons.

A number of ogres fight with the Wolfheads.

Ogres (\*): AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp25; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; SA +2 to damage; SZ L; ML 12; Int Low; AL CE; XP 270.

\* Throw as many orcs, worgs, and ogres at the characters as they can handle (2-5 mounted orcs, 1-5 worgs or 1-3 ogres per character is a good guideline).

Have Lord Simgarde or other caravan members fight alongside the adventurers as desired. Eventually, the tide turns in the caravan’s favor, and the Wolfheads retreat in disorder, never to trouble the Golden Way again. Simgarde’s caravan has lost perhaps 20% of its guards, but is still strong enough to continue.







### C. The Tyrant of Tammar

Lord Simgarde tells the PCs that Tammar suffered especially heavy losses at the hands of the Horde, and there is a rumor that bandits now rule there.

The city's stench announces its presence long before it comes into view. In the distance, there is a cluster of shacks and lean-tos huddled around a wall that was battered heavily by siege engines long ago, its face marred with gaping breaches. Some have been crudely repaired and workers are busily patching others. Dirty black smoke rises from hundreds of campfires, hearths, and chimneys. Each waft of cold wind makes the stench of tightly packed humanity worse.

As the caravan draws nearer, what passes for city gates rumble open, and a unit of at least 20 horsemen trots out. They are all rough, grizzled warriors with an assortment of weapons and armor.

"Keep quiet, now," hisses Lord Simgarde. "Follow my lead."

"We speak with the full authority of Tolvara, Lady Mayor of Tammar, who rules here!" shouts the lead rider. "You are to submit immediately to inspection for assessment of road tolls and taxes!"

To your surprise, Lord Simgarde does not respond angrily, but speaks with quiet authority. "I am Lord Simgarde of Milvarune. My caravan requires shelter. We will do as you request."

The riders escort you past the teeming slum that surrounds the city walls, and through the gates. Nearby is the Wheelwright, an inn with grand stables.

"Your people may stay here," says the lead rider. "We will inventory your cargo and submit a manifest tonight."

Simgarde complies without protest.

The bandits swarm over the caravan's wagons, but, surprisingly, do not take anything, contenting themselves with reciting contents to scribes, who transcribe furiously.

After leaving several of his guards to watch over the wagons, Simgarde calls the characters aside and asks that they meet him in his room.

"I went along with the bandits' demands so that I could confirm the truth of the rumors I've been hearing," Simgarde says. "The fact is that Tolvara and her

cut throats have taken over the city and are running it as their private domain. Rest assured that they will seize half our cargo before letting us go. If our nation is ever going to survive, Tolvara and all like her must be stopped. My guards tell me that she and her cronies occupy a mansion near the center of the city. I propose we attack tonight and drive the bandits out."

If the adventurers agree to Simgarde's plan, go on with the attack. If not, he curses them as cowards, docks their pay, and launches the attack himself, winning all the glory for driving out Tolvara's gang.

In the more likely event the characters agree to help Simgarde attack the mansion, he directs them to assault the west wing where, as luck would have it, Tolvara and her personal bodyguards are staying.

Use Map 2 to run the battle. Inform the players that the remainder of Simgarde's forces is attacking the manse elsewhere.

**Door:** The main door is locked and barred. It may be battered down, but if the PCs attempt to do so without first picking the lock, they will do so at half the normal open doors roll. If a character picks the lock first, use the normal open doors roll. The door is barred from the inside, but the bar is not heavy, so the parenthesis roll for opening barred doors need not be used. The door may also be opened using magical spells such as *disintegrate* or *lightning bolt*. The door is allowed a normal saving throw for equipment (*DMG* Table 29) as thick wood.

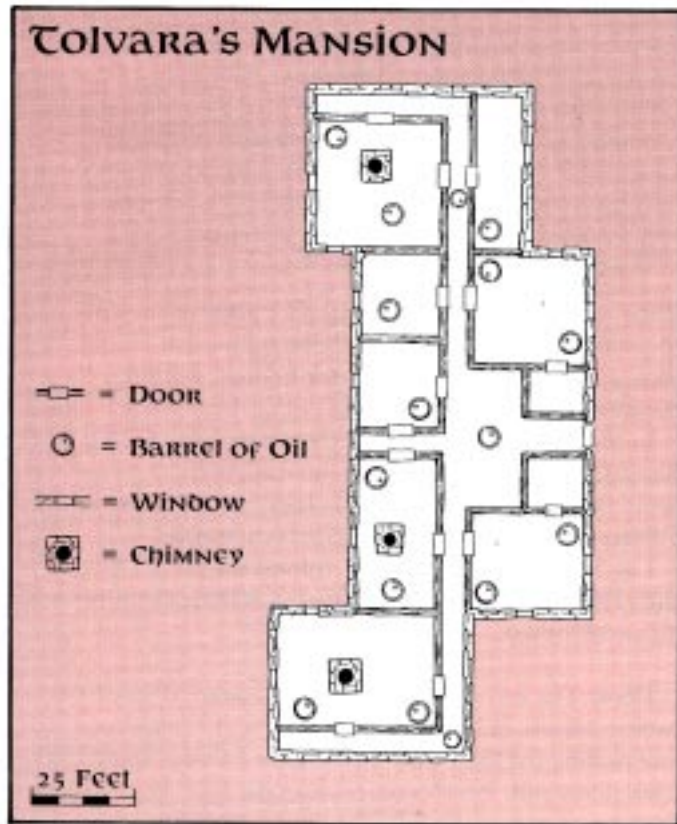
If the door is opened on the first try, the PCs may enter with surprise. If not, the occupants are alerted and prepared when the party enters.

**Windows:** All of the manse's windows are barred, requiring a bend bars/lift gates roll to open. Up to three characters may combine their bend bars/lift gates percentages to pull off the bars and enter the building with surprise if successful.

**Other means of entry:** The party may try some creative methods of entering the building such as *teleportation*, *disintegrating* a section of wall, *knock*, *dimension door*, or other magical means. Climbing on the roof and entering through chimneys may also succeed, but the chimneys are just 2 feet square and can only be entered by very small or very limber characters.

**Occupants:** When selecting opponents in the wing's various rooms, use the following statistics.





Bandits (hm & hf F1 (50)): AC 5; MV 12; hp6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword) or 1d4+1 (heavy crossbow); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NE; XP 15.

Bandits (hm & hf F3 (25)): AC 5; MV 12; hp18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword) or 1d4+1 (heavy crossbows); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NE; XP 65.

Bandits (hm & hf FS (10)): AC 5; MV 12; hp30; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword) or 1d4+1 (heavy crossbows); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NE; XP 175.

Tolvara's followers are a tough band of misfits and criminals. They fight well and are quite loyal but will not support a cause that is clearly lost. They are experts at ambush and snap-shooting with heavy crossbows. They are also equipped with flaming crossbow bolts, which inflict 1d6+1 points of damage. Some have poisoned bolts as well, which can cause paralysis or even death (at the DM's discretion) if a saving throw vs. poison fails.

Wizards (hm & hf M1 (3)): AC 10; MV 12; hp3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M; ML 11; Spells: 1; Int Genius; AL NE; XP 120.

Garmanx (M6): AC 5 (*bacers of AC 5*); MV 12; hp16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M; ML 11; Spells: 4/2/2; Int Genius; AL NE; XP975.

The bandit wizards are well prepared with *magic missile*, *shield*, *darkness*, *invisibility*, *web*, and similar combat spells.

Elite Guards (hm & hf F6\*): AC 2; MV 12; hp40; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1 (broad sword, +1 Str); SZ M; ML 15; Int Average; AL LE; XP270.

\*Use a number of guards sufficient to challenge the party.

Tolvara has hired veteran fighters from an evil mercenary unit, the Fangs of Talona. (Although she is a chaotic evil goddess, she has lawful followers.) They are famous for their skill and loyalty and, unlike their lower-ranking fellow bandits, fight on even if all seems lost. Her fighters are likely to use poisoned weapons. They wear black plate armor and helmets in the shapes of monsters and wild animals, emblazoned with the three teardrops of Talona.

Bruno (hm F10): AC 0 (full plate and shield); MV 12; hp75; THAC0 11 (+3 weapon, +2 Str); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+6 (*battleaxe* +3, +3 Str); SZ M; ML 15; Int Low; AL CE; XP 4,000.

Bruno is Tolvara's personal bodyguard. He is dim, thug-gish, ugly, and rumored to have a small amount of ogre ancestry. He is loyal as a puppy to his "best friend" Tolvara—he will die for her. If she is directly threatened, he goes berserk, doubling his ordinary attacks and inflicting an additional +3 damage with a successful hit.

Lady Tolvara (hf F12): AC 0 (*plate armor* +2); MV 12; hp80; THAC0 9 (+3 weapon); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+4 (*sword* +3, *frost brand*, +1 Str); SZ M; ML 17; Int High; AL CE; XP 5,000.

Tolvara is a highly skilled, experienced, and cunning bandit chieftain. She has lived by her wits for many years, but made her fatal mistake when she decided to settle down and become a self-styled tyrant of Tammar. She possesses a variety of magical items, including a *ring of fire resistance*, *boots of speed*, and her sword *Snow-*





*dragon*, a *frost brand* +3. She uses all of these items to effect an escape if the fight turns against her.

**The Inferno:** Scattered throughout the mansion are large barrels of flammable oil. As a last resort, if it becomes obvious that all is lost, Tolvara shouts the code word "Inferno," ordering her troops to break open the barrels, set the spilled oil alight with flame arrows, then escape in the confusion or die fighting. Should the characters be unable to prevent this from happening (Tolvara has enough troops to break open at least some of the barrels), they will be engulfed in a raging inferno. Characters must make a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon each round they remain in the manse or suffer 2d6 points of damage. For the first three rounds, a successful saving throw eliminates all damage. After three rounds, a successful saving throw merely reduces damage by half. After 10 rounds the structure is fully blazing, and failed saving throws result in 4d6 points of damage (halved by successful saving throws).

Whether Tolvara escapes or not is up to the DM, providing she survives. If she escapes, she may return later to take vengeance on those who defeated her.

**Treasure:** With the estate in flames and Tolvara slain, captured, or on the run, Lord Simgarde salvages what he can, sending teams into the smoldering wreckage to glean them for the bandits' stolen gold.

Most of this he distributes to the townspeople, but he keeps some to reimburse himself for expenses and to distribute as bonuses to his various assistants, especially the PCs.

The adventurers are free to distribute the following among themselves: 5,000 gp, 10,000 sp, three random potions, a *ring of feather falling*, a *wand of illumination*, a *robe of useful items*, *wings of flying*, and a *warhammer* +2.

If the characters object to Simgarde giving the treasure away or for keeping any of it himself, he does not hesitate to terminate their employment and turn both his guards and the townspeople loose on the party. If the characters don't flee, they will be beaten, stripped of possessions, and driven out of town to finish the journey on their own.

## D. To The Lake of Tears

The caravan reaches the Mulsantir ferry five to six days after leaving Tammar. The River Mulsantir is serviced by a ferry which was once busy with many caravans bound for Mulsantir town in Rashemen. Today it primarily services individual travelers; Lord Simgarde's is

the first caravan to get this far in many months. The ferryman is delighted to help convey the party and caravan across the river, but the process takes an entire day, given the ferry's limited cargo capacity.

The party crosses over into Rashemen itself, making port at Mulsantir and moving on to the next chapter of the adventure.





# The Iron Lord's Realm



**A**pon arrival in Rashemen, Lord Simgarde thanks the PCs profusely and gives them their promised pay, with a bonus varying from 500 to 2,000 gp per person, depending on performance. He then makes deals with Rashemaar merchants, bids the party farewell, and takes the ferry back to Thesk. The party is now on their own in Mulsantir.

Mulsantir is a town of cold stone and wood buildings, touched now by the first snows of the season. A small fleet of fishing boats called feluccas sets out each morning to drop lines and nets into the cold depths of the Lake of Tears.

The Rashemaar are a tough, black-haired race who keep to themselves and seem to value the qualities of hard work, martial and athletic skill, and large capacities for ale and beer. Most watch the PCs with curiosity and a certain lack of respect but little open hostility.

The PCs must now decide to whom they will deliver their message. If they make inquiries of the locals, they are directed to the local *fyrra*, or lord, one Thorbinn the Black, whose steading lies a mile or so north of town. Most Rashemaar, if told of the party's information, will express mild interest, but all will defer to the *fyrra*, or tell the adventurers to visit the *huhrong*. Unfortunately, no one in town knows where the *huhrong* is presently, and the adventurers are once more directed to see Lord Thorbinn.

All encounters in Rashemen are keyed to Map #3.

## Meeting Thorbinn

**T**he adventurers will eventually get the idea that they have to meet with Lord Thorbinn, the local *fyrra*, at his estate on Green Hag Hill, north of Mulsantir. When the party ventures north, read the following:

A light snow is falling, but visibility is good, and the roads are clear of ice. You ride north through trees heavy with snow, and split rail fences enclosing farms and ranches. Outside of town, Rashemaar dwellings seem to be built in harmony with their surroundings—in the form of sod-roofed mounds hollowed out of rocky outcroppings, or nestled in small groves of trees so cunningly as to be virtually invisible.

In the distance you see a hill and, upon its crest, a squat longhouse with elaborately carved end-caps. There are several wood and stone outbuildings nearby. A trail of smoke rises from the longhouse's chimney. From the foot of the hill, you hear the sound of laughter and loud singing.

As you approach, you see that a low stone wall runs around the base of Green Hag Hill, and the gate is guarded by a pair of indolent Rashemaar who lean on their spears with bored expressions; clearly, they would much rather join in the revel on the hill than stand watch at the gate.





When he catches sight of you, the first guard pokes his companion, who instantly snaps to alertness.

“Who approaches the stead of Fyrra Thorbinn the Black?” demands the first guard.

Once the PCs explain their business with Thorbinn, the two guards allow them to proceed but first insist that the party leave all its weapons and enchanted items at the gate. If the characters refuse, the guards wave them through, saying “You’ll answer to Lord Thorbinn if you come to his house bearing weapons, but that’s not our affair.”

Actually, the characters are expected to refuse; in this manner, they gain respect from the warlike Rashemaar. If they agree and allow the guards take their weapons, the other Rashemaar treat them with contempt and little respect (“Where are your weapons, foreigners? Did some mean kobolds come along and take them?” and so on). Keep this in mind during the encounter with Lord Thorbinn and his companions.

The longhouse is at the end of a rather brisk walk up Green Hag Hill. The clamor from the longhouse is almost deafening now. The house is at least 100 yards in length, fancifully carved with elaborate knotted designs, some in the form of long serpents or dragons, others entirely abstract. The front gates lie open, and inside torches flicker. Dozens of Rashemaar are seated around long tables.

As the PCs approach, a pair of Rashemaar men in fur vests staggers out, each bearing a tankard.

“Ho!” bellows the first. “Visitors we have! And outlanders by their appearance!”

“Ha!” shouts the second. “Dressed like clowns and staring like sick calves! I’d say they were outlanders, for sure!”

Light heartedly insulting visitors is a Rashemaar tradition and the PCs will be all right so long as they ignore the taunts or (better still) come up with some of their own. If they respond with creative insults, the two Rashemaar look at them seriously, as if contemplating going for their swords, then burst out laughing and escort the characters into the longhouse.

Should a character take offense and draw a weapon, the party will have a fight on its hands, with the Rashemaar boiling out of the longhouse to battle the “out-

land scum.” Since this is likely to result in the characters’ capture, expulsion, or death, it is probably best to discourage getting the party into more than a good-natured scuffle. If they drop weapons or stop fighting and claim that it was all in fun, the Rashemaar will probably appreciate the joke and let them into the longhouse.

The interior of the long house is close and smokey, reeking of unwashed Rashemaar, roasting meat, spilled beer, and other, less savory, odors. Tightly packed together, male and female Rashemaar warriors are engrossed in raucous conversations, singing, arm wrestling, drinking, and engaging in various contests of strength.

The crowd of Rashemaar in front of the PCs parts at last to reveal a burly, thickly bearded individual, clad in baggy breeches, high boots, and a fur vest. He is seated on a large, wooden throne. Seated on a similar throne beside him is a comely, black-haired woman who gazes at the party demurely.

“I am Fyrra Thorbinn the Black!” he shouts over the tumult. “You would have words with me?,”

What follows is an opportunity for interaction with the Rashemaar. Lord Thorbinn is having too good a time to listen much to what the characters say, and every time they attempt to convey their information to him, he insists that they join him in a joint of meat, a jack of ale, or—worst of all—a mug of *jhuild*, the potent firewine of the Rashemaar. All of these things are likely to distract the characters and possibly even reduce them to insensibility (see the Campaign Guide for details on the effects of firewine).

The characters’ reactions to Thorbinn will determine his attitude. If they arrived without weapons, they definitely start off on the wrong foot. Thorbinn considers them to be weaklings and possibly even outlander cowards.

If the adventurers match Thorbinn drink for drink, join him or his retainers in singing or dancing, or engage them in tests of strength or skill (arm wrestling, axe throwing, archery contests), all eventually decide that these outlanders aren’t such bad people after all. In this case, after the feast, Thorbinn meets the characters in his private audience chamber, and treats them with considerable respect.

Should the adventurers refuse to join in the fun, Thorbinn listen to them and cooperate, but only





grudgingly, and will make it clear what he thinks of them.

If some PCs join in and others don't, Thorbinn is still be polite and supportive, but only speaks to those characters who participated. Keep all these reactions in mind during the meeting later.

Also at the longhouse is none other than Fyldrin of the Eleven Chairs, son of the huhrong. He is here enjoying the company of his friends and will encounter the adventurers from time to time. He will be friendly one moment, bellicose the next. Allow the party to develop an opinion of him before proceeding to the meeting with Thorbinn. If asked, Thorbinn only relates the young man's name, at the exact moment that Fyldrin drops into a massive wooden chair and smashes it to pieces. ("That brash warrior is called Fyldrin of the Eleven—no, make that Twelve—Chairs. We call him that because he broke eleven of his father's best chairs before they finally threw him out.")

Eventually, as the sun sets over the snowy fields, the feast winds down, and Thorbinn asks the characters to meet with him in an hour. He has servants see them to quarters in one of the outbuildings, where they are allowed to wash, change clothes, and rest until the meeting.

## Meeting with Thorbinn

A servant summons the party to the meeting with Thorbinn and they return to the longhouse.

The servant leads the PCs through an obstacle course of overturned tables, empty platters and tankards, spilled food, ale, and other rubble. Beyond the feast hall are Thorbinn's private chambers. Thorbinn is here seated at a long table along with the young man who was breaking chairs earlier and who looks rather bored with the entire proceeding. Also present are an older man with a long gray beard, and a robed figure of uncertain gender, face obscured by an embroidered mask.

"Come, sit," Thorbinn declares. He is a far more serious and introspective man than he was just a few hours ago.

Thorbinn asks to see both the Simbul's letter and the intercepted Thayan document. He hands them over to

the gray-haired man, who reads them out loud, as Thorbinn himself cannot read.

The full import of the message is like an oppressive weight on all in the room. Thorbinn exchanges glances with the robed figure beside him, then speaks.

"This is grim news indeed," he says. "The Thayans have tried to conquer this land many times, and each time we have sent them fleeing with huge losses. This message implies that they have finally created a means of overcoming both our armies and the magic of our witches."

The robed figure speaks with a feminine voice. "I am Hathran Shialis. I am *wychlaran*, what others call a witch. I am advisor to Lord Thorbinn. If the news you bring is true, Rashemen is in peril. It is vital that you inform the Iron Lord who rules this land."

The young man suddenly perks up. "I am Fyldrin, son of the huhrong," he says. "My father is at his hunting lodge near the Ashenwood. I can guide you there."

Lord Thorbinn nods. "It is important that the Iron Lord and the witches receive this information. I will have Fyldrin guide you north with an escort of warriors. Time is short. You must leave at first light, but in the mean time you are my guests."

The Rashemaar answer any questions the PCs might have about their land and culture. They make it clear that foreigners are generally not welcome here, but the importance of the PCs' message supersedes their societal strictures.

Party members may eat (assuming they have any appetite left after the feast), wash, or sleep. Thorbinn provides them with warm clothing, weapons, and any other mundane items they might need. He also suggests that Rashemaar ponies might be preferable to their own mounts, since the weather is growing harsh.

Rashemaar Ponies: AC 7; MV 12; hp7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2; SZ M; ML 7; Int Animal; AL N; XP 15

Thorbinn will exchange the characters' horses for ponies and even offer them Rashemaar sleighs, but the PCs do not have to accept them. In this case, however, the party risks penalties to the health and movement of their own horses as the snow closes in.





# To Tharfenthal



he party departs from Green Hag Hill the next morning.

A moderate snow has fallen during the night, and the horses slog through several inches of the stuff. The world has turned entirely white—fields, forests, homes, even Green Hag Hill itself all are the same stark color. A light snow still falls, accentuated by a slow, cold breeze.

See Map #3 for the route to Tharfenthal, Iron Lord Thydrim Yvarrg's hunting lodge. The DM may play out encounters on the back of Card #3.

If the party did not exchange their horses for Rashemaar ponies and are riding mounts unused to extreme cold weather, assess a penalty of 1d6x10% movement each day and make a saving throw vs. spell for each non-Rashemaar horse at the end of each day's travel (they save as 1st-level fighters). Any horse that fails contracts pneumonia and can no longer carry a rider. Horses with pneumonia die in 2d6 days unless treated with *cure disease* or medical remedies (a successful herbalism or healing proficiency check cures a sick horse).

The PCs are accompanied by Fyldrin of the (now) Twelve Chairs and as many Rashemaar warriors as the DM sees fit. Use the following statistics:

**Fyldrin (hm F6 (Berseker)):** AC 6 {studded leather armor and shield}; MV 12; hp38; THAC0 15 (+1 *weapon*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+2 (*battle axe +1, +1 Str*); SZ M; ML 15; Int Average; AL CN; XP 420.

Fyldrin is not an especially bad person but is something of a know-it-all who tends to look down his nose at the adventurers. A berserker of the Ettercap lodge, he enjoys fighting and is mindlessly aggressive in combat. He hopes to follow in his father's footsteps and become huhrong someday, but the witches consider him far too undisciplined and immature for such a post. He guides the party to his father's hunting lodge but might make their lives difficult by wading into battle at the wrong time or leading the PCs into an ambush.

**Rashemaar warriors (hm & hf F1\*):** AC 7 (leather armor and shield); MV 12; hp6 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword or battleaxe) or 1d6 (long-bow); SZ M; ML 15, Int Average; AL varies, but usually N; XP 15.

\*As many as are necessary.

The warriors are competent and much less rash than young Fyldrin. They follow orders efficiently but sometimes suggest other options if they feel their leader's commands are particularly ill-advised.

## The Road to Tharfenthal

The adventurers travel north on Rashemaar ponies or in sleighs. Fyldrin and the warriors ride their own ponies. The journey from Mulsantir Town to the huhrong's lodge takes five to ten days, depending upon the weather.

In addition to the normal encounters on Card #3, the DM may also use the following encounters to provide a glimpse into the land, culture, and people of Rashemen. Most are nonviolent role-playing encounters, though some can degenerate into combat if the





characters make the wrong decisions or Fyldrin's hot-blooded nature is not somehow restrained. All are keyed to Map #3.

### A. Sleigh Race

A heavy snow falls during the morning, slowing progress, but clears by midday. The snow has left the hills clad in another half-foot of cold white. As the PCs ride along the narrow trail, the trees and cliffs suddenly give way and they find a shallow valley, surrounded by high hills, with a perfectly flat floor.

As you ride along the foot of the hills, Fyldrin says, "This is Lake Yval. It freezes over in the winter and we use it for skiing and sleigh racing. Look! They're racing now!"

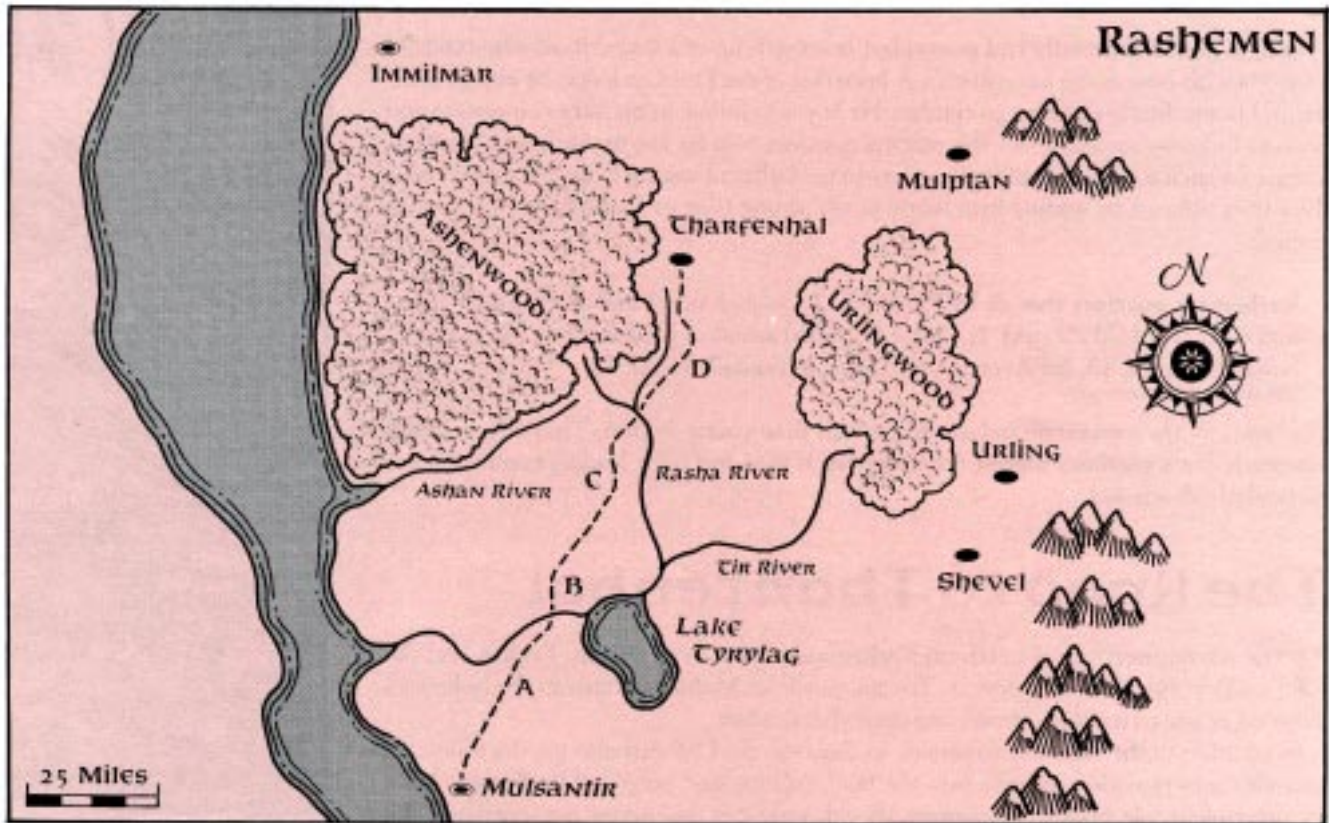
Out on the flat surface of the lake, you see a pair of sleighs drawn by frost-bearded ponies, flying across the snow with a handful of following riders. You hear shouts and bellows of encouragement, and as one of the sleighs pulls ahead, Fyldrin reins to a halt.

"It's Varri!" he shouts. "Fyrta Divar's son! He's a friend of mine. Varri! Show him your backside!"

Fyldrin insists on staying and watching the race "only for a moment." Of course, it takes much longer than that. At the end of the race, which Varri's sleigh wins handily, Fyldrin spurs his pony across the frozen lake, riding out to meet his friend. If the characters wait for him, Fyldrin shows no sign of leaving any time soon and in a few moments is sharing a bag of firewine with Varri and company. Should the party choose to ride after the wayward princeling, they witness the following scene.

Fyldrin leaps from his horse and races toward Varri, a burly, bearded young man dressed in a fur vest and leather-wrapped leggings, and grabs him in a bearhug. In a moment the two are wrestling in the snow, bellowing insults.

At length, Fyldrin and Varri get back on their feet, brushing off snow, and Fyldrin makes introductions. "This," he declares, "is Varri the Brave, one of the







most fearsome swordsmen in all of Rashemen. It's also well known that I'm the only berserker in the land he can't drink under the table!"

"And you have the brains of a two-headed stoat!" Varri shoots back, pulling out a wineskin. "I've got some jhuuld, a rare vintage, and we can test the truth of your boastful squawking right here and now!"

Unless the PCs intervene, Fyldrin, Varri, and their dozen or so companions engage in a major drinking and bellowing contest right there on the ice, eventually ending completely besotted and incapable of doing anything more than staggering and moaning incoherently.

Of course, it is not in the party's interest to allow this sort of behavior to continue, so their job is to persuade Fyldrin to leave his companions and do his duty.

Should the characters prepare to leave without Fyldrin, one of the Rashemaar guards (who are loyal veteran members of the Fangs of Rashemen, and look upon Fyldrin's antics with distaste), suggests that it would be best to bring him along, especially since he knows the best route to his father's hunting lodge and will help get them past any guards or overzealous retainers. Should the characters insist on leaving Fyldrin behind, the guards will not stop them, but the DM should make the Rashemaar at Thydrim's lodge much more suspicious and harder to deal with as a consequence. (The Iron Lord would be quite upset that the PCs left his son behind in the wilderness, regardless of their explanations.) As the characters will probably want to bring Fyldrin along, the Rashemaar will help them rig a sled to drag his recumbent body.

It's up to the players to figure out how to persuade Fyldrin. He is a reckless, irresponsible youth who is more interested in drinking and socializing with his friends than in saving his land from Thayan invasion and loudly condemns the characters as killjoys and foreign devils if they try to bring him along.

Forcibly restraining Fyldrin brings reprisals from Varri and his friends, but they may be too intoxicated to do much damage. The characters may also attempt to reason with Fyldrin, explaining his responsibility as the huthrong's son and as a warrior of Rashemen. If asked, the Rashemaar warriors add their voices to this particular chorus, which Fyldrin eventually heeds, albeit grudgingly.

If the characters delay too long or fail to come up with a decent scheme to bring Fyldrin with them, he may consume enough firewine to place him in a berserker

rage (see the *Campaign Guide* for details about berserker rage and its effects). Fortunately for the PCs, he is not terribly competent with his weapon, due to the effects of excessive firewine and the unsure footing of the snow and ice. He is more likely to fall flat on his face, but will still try to attack those around him, convinced they are enemies.

Should all else fail, the DM may inform the adventurers that Fyldrin has knocked himself out in a fall, allowing them to gather him up and ride away with him (Varri and company may object somewhat, but won't insist). He awakens several hours later, in a very bad mood. Nursing a major headache, he continues to guide the party nonetheless.

Characters who join the party should be punished with a savage random encounter; assess penalties due to intoxication.

One to three days later, the following events occur.

## B. Berserkers

Over a snow-covered rise ahead is a small party of Rashemaar who lead their horses along the trail, singing and bellowing to each other. As they draw nearer, the adventurers see that they are armed with a motley assortment of swords, axes, bows, and knives.

The lead warrior, a tall, muscular man with a massive black beard shot with gray, sees them and stabs a finger in their direction.

"Ha! A gang of foreigners! I'm surprised we didn't smell them a league off! What are they up to, I wonder? Fresh from stealing someone's sheep? Or are they planning to stare about in wide-eyed amazement, like a herd of cows, waiting for someone to take their hand and lead them back to their playpens?"

Another warrior joins in. "No, Ygnor!" he shouts. "You misjudge our new friends! They're obviously drunk on watered-down red wine and have lost their way! Perhaps if they turn their weapons and gold over to us, we can direct them to the Lake of Tears, and then back to their cozy homes, where they can eat their leathery gruel and drink their watered wine in peace!"

The men are berserkers from the White Dragon lodge and mean no real harm. If the characters remember their





earlier encounters, they will realize that the idea is to insult the warriors back and perhaps challenge them to a contest to win their respect. Losing one's temper and going for a weapon in such a situation is considered extremely bad form and word of the characters' behavior will be all over the country in no time. The berserkers fight only if strongly provoked, since they are reluctant to stain their blades with the blood of "cowardly foreigners." If any of the White Dragon berserkers are killed, the White Dragon lodge declares a blood feud on the adventurers, and won't rest until they are all dead—or until sufficient compensation is paid to the victims' families.

**Rashemaar Berserkers** (hm & hf F1-5): AC 8; MV 12; HD 1d4+ 1; hp Varies; THAC0 Varies (+1 *weapons*); #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (dragons' fang); SA Berserk; SZ M; ML 15; Int Average; AL CN; XP 35 (1), 60 (2), 75 (3), etc.

If the adventurers respond properly, flinging back the berserkers' insults with equal vigor, challenging them to an axe or knife throwing contest, wrestling, or similar sport, so much the better—the berserkers soon decide that the adventurers are fine, stout-hearted fellows. In this case, the PCs are welcome at all White Dragon lodges throughout Rashemen and particularly accomplished fighters might even be invited to join (though they cannot gain the berserker kit in this manner). The party is also invited to spend the night at a nearby White Dragon longhouse, which Fyldrin thinks is a terrific idea (he is a member of the Ettercap berserker lodge, close friends of the White Dragons).

If the characters are slow to catch on, and take the berserkers' insults seriously, Fyldrin or the Rashemaar warriors might be able to advise the party how to deal with the White Dragons. If the DM wants to put the PCs to the test, the Rashemaar won't intervene and the PCs must get themselves out of trouble.

If the adventurers refuse the berserkers' offer of hospitality, there is little opportunity for sleep. The White Dragons keep them up all night, singing, drinking, dancing, engaging in the usual contests. Any characters kept up all night suffer attack roll, saving throw, and proficiency check penalties of -3 the next day due to fatigue and sleep loss.

## C. The Wood Man

This encounter occurs a day away from the lodge, when the characters pass by the fringes of the Ashenwood. It is intended primarily to introduce the characters to the powerful nature spirits which inhabit Rashemen.

The looming bulk of the Ashenwood rises to your left looking dark and forbidding even beneath a protective mantle of snow. As you ride along the trail, only 20 yards from the edge of the woods, you hear a tortured screeching and cracking emanating from their depths.

Fyldrin suddenly looks to the left, with a shout of alarm, and horror shrouds the faces of your Rashemaar escort.

"Gods save us!" Fyldrin shouts as the snowy forest suddenly heaves and rises up like a newly wakened sleeper. Snow cascades from the great, humanoid form which rears up from the forest. It is like a great man but crafted from knotty wood, twisted branches, clods of dirt, rocks, and boughs. Its great feet resemble roots, and its hands are like enormous battering rams covered in moss and seedlings.

Around you, the Rashemaar are averting their eyes, hiding their faces, or looking down, muttering prayers. These warriors, whose bravery was once beyond question, are now paralyzed with terror.

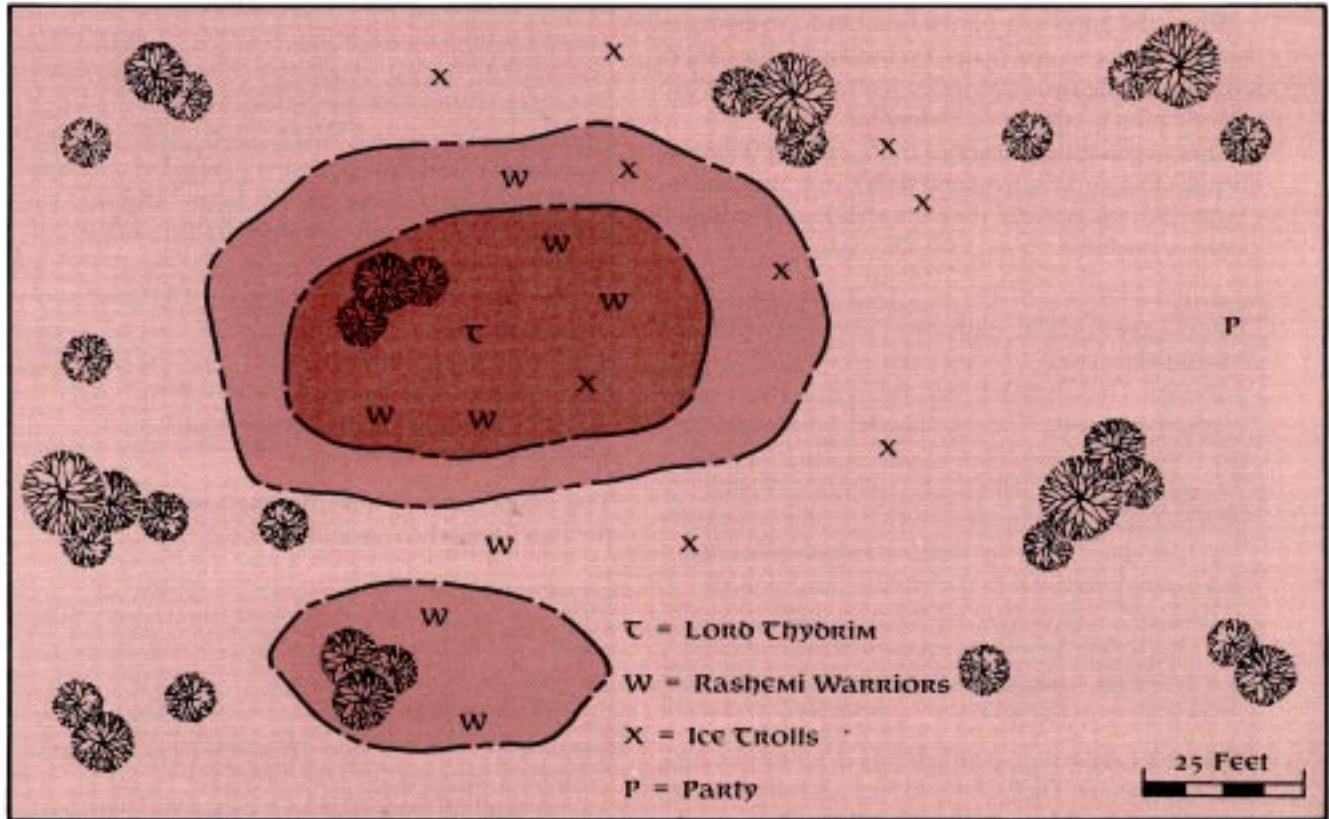
"It's the wood man," Fyldrin gasps. "Pray that it doesn't want us."

The wood man (see the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*® booklet) shambles off, heading south toward Thay, and does nothing to the party, after which the Rashemaar heave sighs of relief and continue without further discussion. The characters cannot really affect it, and if they attack the creature it completely ignores them. Read the following out loud once the wood man has gone.

"Gods and spirits," mutters Fyldrin, shaking, visibly frightened. "It was a wood man."

"Terrible danger must face all of Rashemen," one of the guards tells you. "The wood man only appears if the entire land is threatened."





## D. TROLL HUNT

The party arrives at Thydrim Yvarrg's hunting lodge at midmorning, five to ten days after departing Green Hag Hill.

The road rises into wooded highlands adjoining the snowy bulk of the Ashenwood. Ahead is a large hummock surrounded by a low wall. Chimneys bristle from the hummock and a number of doors and windows spread along its length. The entire hummock is actually a building, constructed to blend in with surrounding terrain.

"It's Tharfenhal!" declares Fyldrin. "My father's lodge! Hey in there! Is anyone home?"

A pair of Rashemaar guards comes around one corner of the lodge, sees your party, and waves. Fyldrin trots his horse forward.

The guards greet Fyldrin warmly and are friendly to the PCs since they are obviously his friends. (The PCs will have a harder time with the guards if they left Fyldrin at Lake Yval.)

The guards invite the party into the lodge. If the characters ask to meet with Lord Thydrim, the guards inform them that he is off hunting ice trolls. Should they do so, Fyldrin immediately insists that the party forget about going to the lodge and instead find his father and help with the hunt.

If the PCs enter the lodge, read or paraphrase the following description.

The lodge's interior stands in contrast to its naturalistic exterior. Supported by fancifully carved pilasters, the main dining hall's ceiling is lined with heavy beams of dark wood, and is only barely visible in the torchlight. The hall is lined with dozens of long, hardwood tables and benches, and at one end is a platform supporting the high table.

The PCs are ushered to a suite of small rooms adjoining the dining hall, where the Rashemaar guards urge them to rest and change clothes. Later, they bring ale and fruit for refreshment.

Eventually, if the characters do not choose to seek out Lord Thydrim, Fyldrin insists. If they still refuse, a guard shows up, informing the party that Lord Thydrim is late in returning, recruiting them to help search.





When the party sets out to find Lord Thydrim, let them search for several hours. Fyldrin knows his father's favorite hunting sites, in a rocky, semi-wooded area two or three miles northwest of Tharfenhal.

After negotiating precarious trails, picking their way through close-growing trees and sliding over treacherous, ice-covered outcroppings, the party finds Lord Thydrim—in serious trouble.

On a rocky rise 100 yards or so ahead of you is a frightening scene.

A great, black-bearded man clad in scale armor and swinging a gigantic black two-handed sword stands at the summit of an outcropping, surrounded by a handful of Rashemaar warriors. The beleaguered band is under attack by innumerable thin, ice-blue creatures who rush them in waves, slashing with terrible claws and tearing warriors with their jutting, jagged teeth.

"Father!" bellows Fyldrin. "Hang on! We're coming!" With that, he spurs his horse forward and thunders across the frozen ground into battle.

Fyldrin's rash actions preclude any detailed planning by the characters. They may hold back and allow him to attack and possibly be killed (his father will not be pleased), or they may wade into battle after him.

Use Map #4 on page 23 to run the melee. Those characters who have dealt with ice trolls before and expect them to be relative pushovers are in for a shock. What the Rashemaar refer to as "ice trolls" are actually more like normal trolls, save for the fact that they prefer cold weather. Use the following statistics for the battle.

**Rashemaar Ice Trolls** (10): AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; hp42; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+4/1d4+4/3d4; SD Regeneration; SZ L; ML 14; Int Low; AL CE; XP 1,400.

The DM may choose to actually run Lord Thydrim, Fyldrin, and the warriors' portion of the combat but may also simply provide the players with an overview while the characters fight their own trolls.

Once the DM feels that a sufficient number of trolls have been slain, the survivors run off in disorder, pursued only by the bellows and war cries of the Rashemaar. Thydrim bounds down from the rocks, assisting his warriors, who have lit torches and are busily burning those miscellaneous troll parts which still move. Read the following out loud.

Lord Thydrim stabs a troll hand which is attempting to crawl up his pant leg, then grins heartily. "Fine scrap, eh? I see you're my son's friends, and that's fine with me, even though you do look a touch foreign . . . I don't hold that against you, mind you. In any event, you arrived at a good moment. Not that we couldn't have handled those wart-skinned fiends ourselves, of course . . ."

Fyldrin interrupts. "We have an important message, father."

Thydrim stops stabbing troll parts and looks directly at you. "A message?" he thunders.

"Why didn't you say so? Out with it!"

The characters may now pass their information on to the Iron Lord, who responds alarmingly.

The Iron Lord is silent for a moment as his eyes bulge and a red flush grows in his face. Finally, rage explodes.

"The god-cursed Thayans think they can invade us AGAIN?" he bellows. "They think they can interrupt MY hunting holiday, do they? WHY, in the name of all the gods must they pick THIS particular moment, when I have FINALLY managed to get away from all my responsibilities and all my problems, and am TRYING to relax by killing a few trolls? Those motherless Thayan CURS! I will make them REGRET interrupting MY holiday—mark my words, you foreign hellions!"

With that, the huhrong strides from the battlefield, leaving his warriors to finish torching the troll corpses.

He casts a black glance back at you.

"Well?" he demands. "WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?"

Thydrim walks back to the lodge (his horses were all killed by the trolls) unless the adventurers offer him a ride, then barrels through the main door and into his main hall, telling his servants to see to the party's needs.

The lodge's interior stands in contrast to its naturalistic exterior. Supported by fancifully carved pilasters, the main dining hall's ceiling is lined with heavy beams of dark wood, barely visible in the torchlight. The hall is lined with dozens of long, hardwood tables and benches. at one end, a platform supports a high table.





The PCs are ushered to a suite of small rooms adjoining the dining hall where the Rashemaar guards urge them to rest and change clothes. Later, they bring ale and fruit for refreshment.

As they change, rest, and freshen up, the characters periodically hear Lord Thydrim bellowing like a bull, telling his servants to summon his fyrra, contact the witches, and that he will be having a strategy session at Tharfenhal—**IMMEDIATELY!**

The “immediate” meeting takes place two or three days later. During that period, many Rashemaar lords and witches arrive and are housed at Tharfenhal. The PCs can discuss matters with Thydrim and his leaders, and may be assigned various missions by the Rashemaar: to contact or escort a certain fyrra; to magically summon important individuals; to provide reports of Thayan activities or political conditions in Aglarond. A mysterious magical interference still prevents magical contact with the Simbul or anyone else outside of Rashemen, however.

Finally, Lord Thydrim presides over a conclave and strategy session with as many fyrra as he can summon as well as several prominent witches. The DM may have the characters role-play the meeting, or he may simply summarize the discussion by reading the following out loud.

The raucous gathering of Rashemaar fyrra, or lords, as

well as a collection of mysterious, robed, hooded, and masked witches, grows silent as Lord Thydrim raises his hands.

“Yet another crisis faces our nation!” he declares. “These foreign adventurers were sent here by the Simbul with an important message for us!”

At Thydrim’s urging, you read both the Simbul’s letter and the intercepted Thayan communication, drawing grim stares and black mutterings from the gathered Rashemaar.

“It seems that the Thayans have created a new kind of monster to threaten us, in an attempt to overcome the magic of our witches and of the spirits of Rashemen!” Thydrim continues. “The invasion is imminent—possibly only days away. First, I summon the Fangs of Rashemen as well as the warriors of the berserker lodges and all youths currently on dajemma who can be summoned, to muster and gater at the Gorge of Gauros, where the Thayan attack will come. Further, I ask our respected witches, the wychlaran—sacred Othlor, and respected Ethran, Blethran, and Hathran, to turn their magic and learned wisdom to the defense of our realm, and to gain aid from the ancient spirits of forest, stone, hill and tree. The Thayans claim that their new creatures are immune to the magic of Rashemaar spirits, so they may present an even greater challenge than ever before.”

Lord Thydrim scans the room, meeting the gaze of every individual there—now you see why he is called huhrong, or Iron Lord. “Twenty times and more have the Thayans tried to conquer our land. Twenty times and more have they failed, sent shrieking back across their borders, their wives widowed, their children orphans. The great Khan of the Tuigan came here as well, to steal our gold and make us all slaves. He too was sent fleeing in disorder, saved only by the treachery of the Red Wizards.

“Now, our ancient enemies threaten us again and perhaps now they are stronger than ever, and the danger is greater. All Rashemaar will do their duty. Our land will remain free or we will die, swords in hand, in a sea of Thayan blood. If it is war the Red Wizards want, then it is war we will give them! Long live Rashemen!”

The crowd bellows “Long live Rashemen!” Their response echoes from the high, dark-beamed ceiling. “Go now.” Thydrim shouts, “Prepare for battle!”





# The Battle at Gauros

**A**s the Rashemaar at Tharfenthal prepare to depart for the Gorge of Gauros, the characters notice that all expect the party to accompany them and fight the Thayans. If the adventurers have no objection to this, so much the better. If they express any reservations the Rashemaar look at them oddly, and if the party refuses they are (no surprise here) condemned as “weak-kneed foreign cowards” and treated to the sort of epithets with which the adventurers are already familiar. The Rashemaar do not stop them from leaving, however, and the Simbul’s message arrives as the PCs are leaving Rashemen. Of course, if they do not fight in the battle, the adventurers lose the opportunity for considerable glory, experience, and treasure.

## To The Gorge of Gauros

**I**f the characters choose to march south with the Rashemaar, read or paraphrase the following.

The Rashemaar seem unduly jolly for a band of warriors off to battle a seemingly invincible foe. As the hearty band marches south it is joined by more warriors: young firebrands wielding swords that have never been used in battle, berserkers of various lodges; experienced warriors who have fought inhuman raiders and Thayans before grizzled fyrra and their retainers; powerful men with gruff voices and a dark determination to meet and destroy their land’s enemies. Nearly all are afoot; a few warlords ride sturdy ponies or are towed in sleighs, but the mass of Rashemen’s armed forces appears to be a skilled but undisciplined infantry. Those with military experience might wonder how such a force could have defeated the invincible Tuigan Horde or the limitless dark legions of Thay.

The march south is through driving snow, but the cold weather seems only to stoke the fires burning within the hearts of all the Rashemaar. Each night finds an ever-larger camp, surrounded by tents and campfires, listening to the bluff boasting and hearty singing of hundreds—soon thousands—of Rashemaar warriors.

After several days’ march, the Rashemaar make camp beside the river Tir. The Tir is choked with ice but still flows. Tomorrow the army will cross over on a great wooden bridge, and continue south toward the Gorge.

As you settle in for the night, a dark figure appears in your circle of firelight. She is robed and deeply hooded, her features concealed by a dark red mask. You know by this time that she is a witch.

“Greetings,” she says without formality. “I am Nythra of the Seven Rivers, a witch of Rashemen. I spoke with the great Othlor, Lady Yhelbruna, and we agreed that you are the ones to help us in the coming battle.”

Without asking, Nythra crouches by your fire and continues.

“We have discovered that Zulkir Thrul’s gemstone golems do indeed exist, and they are highly resistant to the magic of Rashemen. Even if we manage to defeat





the Thayans, it may be at such a terrible cost that we will be helpless against their next attack. The sad fact of life is that there seems to be an endless supply of Thayans and a limited number of Rashemaar. Even now they seek to delay and frustrate us. Thayan agents were caught trying to destroy the Tir bridge just last night.

\*“The gem golems do have vulnerabilities, however. As the letter you intercepted implies, the Red Wizards still have trouble controlling the golems, and an entire circle is required to keep them moving forward and fighting. My sisters and I can identify which circle is controlling the golems, then you must fight your way to the circle, disrupt it, and destroy the Thayans’ control of their creations. The circle is likely to be led by a very powerful Red Wizard, possibly a zulkir. The rewards, in both glory and will be considerable. Will you help us?”

What Nythra doesn’t tell the party is that she and Yhelbruna settled on the characters as agents for this dangerous mission because they are foreigners, so if they die in the attempt no Rashemaar lives will be lost. Such is the witches’ dedication to Rashemen.

If the characters agree (and Nythra is willing to make generous offers, including the pick of scavenged weapons, armor, and treasure, as well as up to 5,000 gp per party member), then proceed to the next chapter. If they refuse despite all of Nythra’s offers, she gives up, and assigns the attack to Rashemaar berserkers, who should succeed despite being almost completely wiped out. Of course, if this happens, the Rashemaar witches are quite disappointed with the characters and provide no further help, advice, or support. If word of the characters’ refusal gets out to the Rashemaar at large, the party is forcefully asked to leave the country and never return.

## The Battle at The Gorge

Several more days’ march brings the Rashemaar army, now numbering over 20,000, to the Gorge of Gauros. At the gorge they meet a second force, this one nearly 10,000 strong.

The army moves south, along the shores of Lake Mulsantir and finally into the Gorge of Gauros. Here, near warmer southern climes, the snow is less oppressive but

still covers everything in a deceptively peaceful, white blanket. Lord Thydrim, the witch Nythra, and Fyldrin meet with the PCs briefly after they arrive.

“Your warning came not a moment too soon,” Thydrim tells you. “We have word that the Thayans are on the march with rank after rank of strange, gleaming giants in the van. These will be the gem golems. Nythra of Seven Rivers has told me of your mission. I wish you luck and pray that you die well.”

Fyldrin of the Eleven (or rather Twelve) Chairs grabs his father’s arm.

“Let me go with them, father!” he demands. “The land is in danger and the people need help!”

Thydrim initially refuses Fyldrin’s request but relents if he insists and the party agrees. The party may refuse Fyldrin’s demands, feeling that he might cause more trouble than he is worth. If this happens, he is disappointed, but does not cause trouble, agreeing to fight beside his father in the coming battle.

“Nythra will accompany you as you go up the gorge by witchboat. There is a place not far from here where you may hide as the Thayans pass by. You will wait until the golems have passed your position and engaged my warriors, then you will make your way down into the midst of the Thayan army. Nythra will tell you which wizard’s circle controls the golems—that is the one you must attack. Our archers will cover your advance and Nythra and the other witches will cast spells as needed to support you, but the brunt of the fighting will fall upon you. If you succeed in disrupting the circle, the Thayans will lose control of their golems and we can destroy them here and now.”

Thydrim salutes you in the Rashemaar style, his arms crossed across his chest.

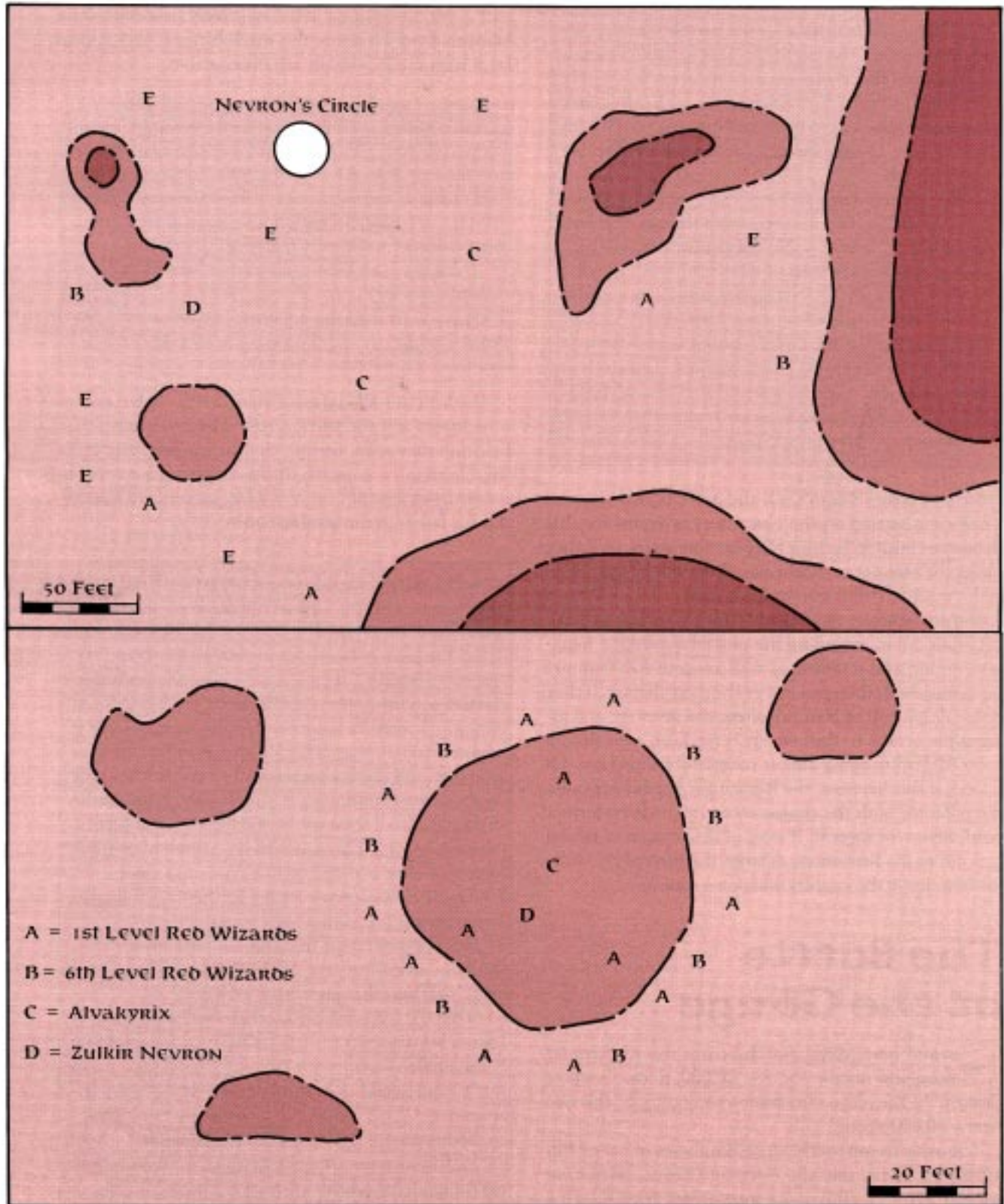
“My sentries report that the Thayans are less than an hour away,” he says, “so you must go now. Good luck, and may the spirits fight with you.”

Then Thydrim, Iron Lord of the Rashemaar, is gone, leaving you with the witch Nythra and two Rashemaar scouts.

“Come quickly,” Nythra urges. “The enemy approaches.”

She leads you to the nearby river Mulsantir, where a small boat waits. You get into the boat, and it begins to move downstream of its own accord.









“Our witchboats,” says Nythra, “are one of our best resources against the Thayans.”

The boat carries the party a mile or so down the gorge. Once there, Nythra sends the witchboat back upstream and leads the party up a narrow, winding trail, slippery and treacherous in the snow, to a rocky saddle hidden from the gorge below.

Below lies the wide Gorge of Gauros, with the Mulsantir winding like a green ribbon in the south. Along its bank marches a seemingly inexorable tide of warriors. First come dozens of gleaming figures twice the height of a tall man, apparently crafted of ruby, emerald, and diamond in the shape of armored warriors. Behind them is an enormous rabble of Thayan soldiery – gnolls armed with long bows and flails, humans in a variety of armor, wild-eyed orcs, chattering goblins and cavalry mounted upon horses, black unicorns, leucrotta, centaurs – even wilder, unidentifiable creatures. Overhead, a flight of red-robed wizards, mounted on griffons, swoops and wheels.

“This is what we of Rashemen must face constantly,” says Nythra, softly. “No matter how many times we defeat them, they always return.”

In the distance you see that the Rashemaar are deployed in a wide section of the gorge, their flanks secure against the River Mulsantir and the sheer gorge walls. As you watch, the gem golems lumber toward the Rashemaar. Arrows fill the air, but glance off or break against the glittering gem-hard skin of the monsters. In a few moments, the golems have reached the first Rashemaar battle line, and wade in, swinging their great arms, throwing Rashemaar warriors aside like toys; behind come the gnolls, orcs, goblins, and humans.

“Look!” urges Nythra. “The circles!”

Almost directly below you, guarded by units of gnolls and other creatures, Red Wizards, resplendent in red satin robes, form circles and chant ominously, obviously summoning powerful magic.

“They use the circles to enhance their power,” Nythra hisses. “Wait!”

Nythra closes her eyes in concentration, as further down the gorge, the golems send the first Rashemaar line fleeing. Beyond the main bulk of the Rashemaar army, the witches are busy too, dancing and capering about small fires, sending lightning bolts, fireballs, and other castings at the golems. A few stumble and

hesitate, but most advance, slowly but steadily, apparently unstoppable.

“There!” declares Nythra, pointing to a wizard’s circle a hundred yards or so distant. “That one! He’s controlling the golems! Go now! Before it’s too late!”

The Rashemaar line wavers, stumbling back in the face of the golems’ onslaught. Then with a great groaning, a dread wood man appears, grabbing at golems and smashing them into glittering shards, or flinging them to shatter on distant rocks. It is an awesome sight, but it may not be enough, for the golems concentrate on the wood man, ripping at his tough, barklike flesh and tearing huge chunks in it.

Use Maps 5 and 6 to run the battle. The first portrays the gorge itself and the route from the party’s hiding place to the circle while the second portrays the circle itself.

Several companies of Thayan troops guard the circle. By taking the right route the adventurers might be able to avoid some or most of them, but this is up to the DM. The units are as follows. During the party’s attack, Nythra may help the party with supportive spells from her hiding place.

**A. Gnolls (20):** AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SZ L; ML 11; Int Low; AL CE; XP 35.

**Flind Commander:** AC 5; MV 12; HD 2+3; hp18; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4 (flindbars); SA disarm; SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL LE; XP 120.

**B. Goblins (30):** AC 6; MV 6; HD 1-1; hp5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SZ S; ML 10; Int Low; AL LE; XP 15.

**C. Infantry (hm & hf F3 (20)):** AC 6; MV 12; hp18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad swords or longbows); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL CE; XP 65.

**Infantry Sergeant (hf F6):** AC 2; MV 12; hp48; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NE; XP 270.

**D. Black Unicorns (10):** AC 3; MV 24; HD 4+4; hp28; THAC0 15; #AT 4; Dmg 1d4/1d6(x2)/1d10; SA Charge, *cause light wounds*; SD *teleport*; SZ L; ML 14; Int High; AL CE; XP 975.

**Unicorn Riders (hf F3/P4 (Crylic)):** AC 5; MV





12; hp24; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (light lance) or 1d8 (broad sword); SZ M; ML 13; Int Average; AL CE; XP 65. (Spheres-Major; All, Astral, Charm, Combat, Guardian, Healing, Necromantic Summoning, Sun, Weather. Minor: Divination, Elemental, Protection.)

**E. Gem Golems** (1 each location, type decided by DM):

**Ruby Golem:** AC 0; MV 6; HD 10; hp50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3d10; SD +1 or greater to hit, immune to electricity and heat attacks; MR 25% (nature-based magic only); SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 5,000.

**Emerald Golem:** AC 0; MV 6; HD 12; hp55; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 4d10; SA Lightning bolt, *cloudkill*; SD +2 or greater to hit, immune to acid and heat attacks; MR 50% (nature-based magic only) SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 8,000.

**Diamond Golem:** AC 0; MV 6; HD 14; hp60; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 5d10; SA *Sunray*, diamond chips; SD +3 or greater to hit, immune to heat, electrical, and acid attacks; MR 75% (nature-based magic only); SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 10,000.

Once the party has fought its way to the casting circle, the battle is not over. The circle is led by none other than Nevron, Zulkir of Conjunction and Summoning. His assistants are all lower-level wizards, and most of their spellcasting capacity has been drained by the casting circle, but they can still fight with daggers. Several higher-level wizards occupy the circle. Once the characters attack, the circle breaks and the wizards fling themselves at the party, hoping to defeat or drive them off before control of the golems is irrevocably lost.

**A. Red Wizards** (hm & hf M1 (12)): Int High; AL CE; AC 10; MV 12; hp3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SZ M; ML 12; XP 15.

\*These wizards have no spellcasting ability left, and attack with their daggers.

**B. Red Wizards** (hf & hm M6 (7)): Int Genius; AL CE; AC 10; MV 12; hp18; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SZ M; ML 13; XP 650.

Each 6th-level wizard is usually armed with the following spells, which remain is up to the DM.

**Spells:**

**Level 1:** *Grease, mount, protection from good, shocking grasp, spider climb, unseen servant.*

**Level 2:** *Darkness, 15' radius, glitterdust, Melf's acid arrow, summon swarm.*

**Level 3:** *Dispel magic, flame arrow, monster summoning I, phantom steed.*

**C. Alvakyrix**, hf Con10 (Red Wizard): AC 2 (*bracers of AC 2*); MV 12; hp30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (*staff of striking*); SZ M; ML 15; Int Genius; AL CE; XP 2,000.

**Spells:**

**Level 1:** *Armor, mount, protection from goodx2, spider climb, unseen servant.*

**Level 2:** *Alter self, glitterdust, Melf's acid arrow x2, spectral hand, summon swarm.*

**Level 3:** *Feign death, flame arrow, monster summoning I x2, phantom steed.*

**Level 4:** *Dimension door, Evard's black tentacles, monster summoning II x2.*

**Level 5:** *Chaos, conjure elemental, monster summoning IIIx2.*

Alvakyrix is Zulkir Nevron's chief apprentice, and a powerful wizard in her own right. She fights loyally, even if the Thayan cause is clearly lost. She has exhausted most of her spells, DM can reduce spells as he sees fit.

**D. Zulkir Nevron**, hm Tra24 (Red Wizard): AC 5 (*robe of the archmugi*); MV 12; hp40; THAC0 13 (10 with staff); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (*staff of striking*); SZ M; ML 15; Int Genius; AL NE; XP 18,000.

**Spells:**

**Level 1:** *Alarm, armor, grease x2, mount, burning hands, color sprayx2.*

**Level 2:** *Alter self, continual darkness, glitterdust, levitation, Melf's acid arrow, summon swarm x2.*

**Level 3:** *Flame arrow x2, fly, infravision, monster summoning I x2, phantom steed, protection from good, 10' radius.*

**Level 4:** *Confusion x2, dimension door, Evard's black tentacles x2, monster summoning II x2, extention I*

**Level 5:** *Animate dead, conjure earth elemental x2, magic jar, monster summoning III x2, summon shadow, Mordenkainen's faithful hound.*

**Level 6:** *Anti-magic shell, conjure animals, disintegrate x2, ensnarement, globe of invulnerability, invis-*





able stalker, monster summoning IV.

**Level 7:** *Drawmij's instant summons, limited wish x2, mass invisibility x2, monster summoning V, power word, stun, teleport without error.*

**Level 8:** *Mass charm, maze, monster summoning VI x2, power word, blind, prismatic wall, Otto's irresistible dance, trap the soul.*

**Level 9:** *Gate, imprisonment, monster summoning VII, power word, kill x2, prismatic sphere, time stop.*

Although much of his casting capacity is exhausted (the DM can choose just what Nevron has left), He is still a deadly opponent. It is possible that the party kills him, but if reduced to half hit points, he escapes if possible, using a phantom steed spell. If he is badly wounded, he stays out of Thayan politics for a while. He and his cronies are embarrassed, and their political clout is seriously diminished. If slain, Nevron is replaced by one of Szass Tam's allies, and the necromancer's hold on Thay is nearly complete.

## Victory

If the PCs manage to attack the circle itself, they distract the wizards long enough for them to lose control of the gem golems. Should the party be defeated, wiped out, or forced to retreat before attacking Nevron's circle, Tam has prepared a fallback plan: Two of Nevron's 1st-level wizards are actually Tam's agents, carefully prepared with magical suggestions and protected against spells and other procedures intended to reveal their secrets. These two break the circle and cause Nevron to lose control of the golems. This is a last resort, to be used only if the party is unable to attack Nevron.

After Nevron's circle has been broken or defeated, or if it looks as if the party is going to be wiped out, read or paraphrase the following:

Now panicking Thayan warriors begin to bolt past, flinging aside their weapons, running in terror.

Looking back down the gorge where the Thayan golems were engaged with the Rashemaar warriors, the Rashemaar have fallen back, but the golems have not advanced. Instead, the golems are staggering in wild circles, striking out at each other, turning back and attacking the Thayan warriors behind them.

Suddenly, the Rashemaar realize that the golems are out of control and leap forward with a mighty shout, toppling golems, cutting down fleeing humans, gnolls, and goblins despite Thayan officers' desperate orders and bel-

lowed calls to stand fast. The great wood man strides through the Thayan army, picking up soldiers and flinging them down or crushing them beneath its gnarled feet, completing the rout of the Red Wizards' once-fearsome host.

It is probably best for the adventurers to get out of the way lest they be mistaken for Thayan warriors and overwhelmed by jubilant Rashemaar fighters and berserkers. (If the party doesn't think of this, the DM might consider making a tacit suggestion. . . .)

The battle ends in a humiliating Thayan defeat, whereupon Nythra and the scouts escort the PCs back to Thydrim's camp and the Iron Lord heartily hails their success, profuse in his thanks.

"From this day forward," says Thydrim, "you are as citizens of Rashemen. You may travel anywhere in this land and never want for food, shelter, or comfort. Your assistance has helped to save our land, and we will never forget you."

Some PCs may insist, quite rightly, that the average citizens of Rashemen will be unaware that they are citizens and will simply treat them as more "cowardly foreigners." Thydrim gives them amulets, brooches or other tokens of their new status as defenders of the land and in essence, honorary Rashemaar. The PCs are given the run of the battlefield to scavenge for treasure and are also rewarded by Thydrim and the witches.

If Fyldrin fought beside the PCs and was killed, Thydrim's reaction is understandably sadder, though he claims to be glad that his son fought well.

The shattered "corpses" of gem golems yield precious stones as described in the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM* booklet. The party is able to scavenge all the golems they slew during the battle.

In addition, if the PCs succeeded in slaying Nevron, they may take his magical items and Thydrim, and the witches reward them with the following largess: 11,000 gp, 100 random gems, 5 art objects, 4 random magical items, and the sword *Hadryllis*. This sword was once wielded by an ancient Rashemaar warrior. He used the sword to vanquish an invasion of Rashemen from the Outer Planes led (unknown to the Rashemaar) by the archfiend Eltab. It was that same Eltab who later helped the Thayans defeat the god-kings of Mulhorand. (This fact will be important to the next adventure, *The Runes of Chaos*.) It is a valuable Rashemaar treasure and symbolic of the esteem in which the huhrong now holds the PCs.





*Hadryllis* (Sword): +3/+5 vs. tanar'ri, baatezu, and yugoloth; Intelligence 16 (speech); Alignment chaotic good; *detect magic*, 10' radius; *detect invisible objects*, 10' radius; *strength* (once a day); special purpose: slay tanar'ri, baatezu, and yugoloth; special purpose power: *blind*; Languages: owner's tongue, Common, Elf, Dwarf, Orc; Ego: 21.

*Hadryllis's* purpose, as noted, is the destruction of fiends of all kinds. It has a greater purpose, however: the defeat of the tanar'ri abyssal lord Eltab, who caused such devastation in the Red Wizards' campaign against Mulhorand. As the PCs will learn, when fighting Eltab *Hadryllis's* special purpose power is rolled randomly, using Table 117b in the DMG, each time it hits Eltab.

The characters are invited back to the Iron Lord's victory revel at Tharfenhal. After that, the Simbul's message arrives.

## Epilogue

These events take place after the characters have enjoyed Lord Thydrim's hospitality for a few more days, or after they are on their way out of the country.

In the sky overhead, you see a small winged form. As it draws nearer, you see that it is a tiny humanoid, flapping earnestly toward you. "Don't shoot!" it squeaks. "I bear a message of great importance!"

Forced to resort to a messenger by the magical interference emanating from Thay, the Simbul sent the sprite Amber with a small package. If the characters shoot or cast magic at Amber, it continues to protest its innocence and the importance of its mission. If the adventurers are so cruel as to kill the sprite, they can retrieve the message from its body, but the Simbul will be very angry with them if she ever learns the truth.

If the sprite is allowed to land it hands over a tiny package sealed with the Simbul's insignia.

"Far have I traveled," says the sprite, "over endless moors and dismal swamps, past crashing surf and treacherous mountain peaks. I was nearly eaten on several occasions, first by a great trout, then by a badger which came upon me as I slept. Always, always was I loyal, despite hardships, and it is suitable that a faithful messenger such as myself be suitably rewarded."

Amber does not require gold or silver (these being too large or heavy for her) but would be delighted with a small cake or pastry. She is reluctant to name a specific reward, and will gain considerable amusement watching the characters try to come up with something suitable. If the party refuses or sends her back to the Simbul for a reward, Amber does her utmost to annoy and taunt the party until she is finally driven off with threats or actions of real violence. Even then she may continue taunting the party from a safe distance, but she will eventually grow bored and fly away.

Show the players the front of Card #8, which bears the message from the Simbul. If the player characters know what is good for them, they will immediately make for Aglarond and the beginning of the next adventure, *The Runes of Chaos*, in which the future of all Faerûn may, as the Simbul suggested, may truly be in their hands.





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Advanced  
Dungeons & Dragons®



# Spellbound



The RUNES  
of chaos

by Anthony Pryor

# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons



## The Runes of Chaos Adventure Book

By Anthony Pryor

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# DM's Introduction

**T**he *Runes of Chaos* follows the adventure *Throne of Deceit*. It involves a hazardous mission into the very heart of the Red Wizards' realm in order to stop or delay the diabolical plans of the lich-Zulkir Szass Tam, who wishes to become Emperor of Thay.

## Prologue

Szass Tam's plans for supreme rulership of Thay have grown and evolved over centuries. Tam has manipulated his political allies and friends for years, maneuvering them into positions of power as commanders and officers of major legions and creating tharchions—he has even placed a few into the role of zulkir. Today, only two of the eight zulkirs actively oppose him: the Zulkirs Lauzoril and Aznar Thrul.

Recently (with the unwitting help of the PCs in *Throne of Deceit*), Tam allowed his rivals to invade Rashemen, but saw to it that plans for the invasion fell into Rashemaar hands. The Rashemaar dealt the Thayans a crushing defeat, Zulkir Nevron was badly wounded (and may have been killed, depending on the outcome of the first adventure), and both Lauzoril and Thrul were thoroughly discredited. The Zulkir Mythrell'aa who had up until that time maintained neutrality, declared support for Szass Tam and began to muster their armies to crush the necromancer's few remaining foes.

With undisputed control of Thay within his grasp, Szass Tam is now continuing with his other major scheme, the complete enslavement of the tanar'ri abyssal lord Eltab, a creature of vast power who once helped the Thayans overthrow their ancient rulers, the god-kings of Mulhorand.

To this end, Szass Tam journeyed to Warlock's Keep, a distant and near-legendary site on the Sword Coast, where he won the cooperation of the powerful lich Larloch. After making unspecified deals with the lich, Tam received several major enchanted items including the Death Moon Orb and the great magical throne known as Thakorsil's Seat, both of which were necessary to control Eltab. By using an evil spell called the Ritual of Twin Burnings to inscribe the nine *Runes of Chaos* upon the seat where Eltab is currently imprisoned, the seat becomes active. A magical dampening field falls over central Thay and reduces the effectiveness of Greater Divination spells and eliminates them entirely in the immediate vicinity of Thaymount. This effectively prevents the Simbul from observing Thay.

Currently, eight of the runes have been inscribed. When the ninth is etched into the seat, the occupant, Eltab, will be permanently and irrevocably enslaved to Szass Tam's will. The only things that impede Tam's plan are the facts that each rune requires the sacrifice of a more powerful victim of good alignment, and the engraving of the ninth rune requires the life energies of a powerful wizard. After being foiled by the magical defenses of more powerful wizards (he would have loved to obtain the Simbul or a wizard of Khelben Arunsun's status so that he could complete the spell and rid himself of a troublesome enemy at one stroke), Tam finally managed to catch the famous Harper ally Azargatha Nimune of Deepingdale with the *rnuge-tunnel* spell. She had been a thorn in his side for years, and he finally seized her at an unguarded moment and transported her to his prison beneath Thaymount.







Now, Tam must simply wait until the time is right (the enchantment may only be cast on the night of the dark of the moon) before sacrificing Nimune. This action will establish the ninth rune and complete his control of the dread tanar'ri lord. With such a powerful creature in his thrall and Thay completely under his thumb, Tam will be unstoppable. The legions of Thay will march against their neighbors, unhindered by the bickering and political infighting that crushed the dreams of all previous regimes. Unless Szass Tam's schemes can be thwarted, Thay will emerge from the turmoil as the most deadly threat to freedom in the Realms since the Tuigan Horde.

## The Course The Adventure

At the conclusion *Throne of Deceit*, the characters were informed by the Simbul that their supposedly successful mission to save Rashemen from Thayan invasion was actually part of a plan by Zulkir Szass Tam to embarrass his enemies and gain absolute power over the Red Wizards.

Now it seems Tam has one more plan to put into effect, and the PCs are asked to journey to the heart of Thay and enter the Citadel. Once there, they will attempt to identify and stop Tam's plan.

The adventurers are transported to central Thay, near Thaymount, where they must enter the Citadel and follow the route specified by a document written by Nathor, a Thayan refugee. The route to the place where Eltab sits upon *Thakorsil's Seat* is through the Paths of the Doomed, a labyrinth full of traps and guardians, and the deadly Devouring Portal. Once these obstacles are overcome, the characters arrive in time to destroy the first eight Runes of Chaos and set Azargatha free. Unfortunately, Eltab is a tanar'ri and the embodiment of pure treachery. He turns on both the PCs and Szass Tam. The characters and the Red Wizards will probably be forced into an alliance of convenience to finally defeat and imprison or banish Eltab, though Tam's scheme to enslave him has been ruined. (DMs take note that it is important for the characters to retain possession of the sword *Hadryllis*, which was awarded to them at the end of *Throne of Deceit*; this weapon is especially useful against Eltab and against the various tanar'ri encountered in this adventure. (See Card #6 for extended statistics of these creatures.)



Now, not surprisingly, the two Red Wizards seek to take vengeance on the PCs for destroying Tam's ongoing plot, and the adventurers face their final challenge. (With Aznar Thrul now in a perfect position to undermine Tam and steal his "empire," Tam, badly wounded, finds that his own plot to unite the bickering zulkirs has collapsed). Thay returns to its normal state, with zulkir struggling against zulkir. Tam is forced to retire to his manse for a time, to lick his wounds and begin again to scheme.

The PCs return to Aglarond, where the Simbul thanks them profusely, rewarding them with status as defenders of the realm and various other, more tangible objects.

This adventure is intended for the same adventurers who participated in *Throne of Deceit*, a party of five or more adventurers of levels 8-10. However, *The Runes of Chaos* features combat with tanar'ri, golems, and other high-level opponents that are magic-resistant and require enchanted weapons to turn, so the players should consider bringing additional characters of higher levels or obtaining enchanted weapons.





# Meeting with The Simbul



**T**he Simbul's message, received at the conclusion of *Throne of Deceit*, requests that the characters meet her at the old Macoley estate near the Halendos. Inquiry about that place, once the characters have returned to Aglarond, reveals that this was a manor farm with a large apple orchard. Overrun during the war between the half-elves of Yuir and the humans of Aglarond, the farm has been abandoned ever since.

Unknown to the characters, Szass Tam's agents have continued to keep watch on them and now follow them in hopes of catching both the adventurers and the Simbul in a trap—wounding, killing, or (better still from Szass Tam's perspective) capturing the troublesome Simbul. During the trip to the Macoley farm, the party's pursuers will keep themselves scarce, using magic and stealth to remain hidden (it is unlikely that the PCs see them—see below).

## The Macoley Farm

**T**he trip to the estate takes less than a day from Velprintalar, and no encounters are necessary. The farm itself is diagramed on Map #1.

### A. Sunken Road

As the adventurers approach the farm, read the following boxed text.

This road is seldom used and is overgrown with grass and weeds. Its ruts are full of rain water and clogged with fallen, rotting leaves. It is early winter, and the trees around you are bare, standing stark and black against a dark, gray sky. It rarely snows here, save in the mountains, but a cold rain is almost continuous.

Once, long ago, this road was heavily used and so is several feet below the surface of the ground. You ride along, your heads level with the last row of an ancient split-rail fence now festooned with blackberries and ivy. Ahead, you see a short spur road near a towering black oak.

The PCs' Thayan "shadows" realize that something is up and follow more closely here. The DM may allow any PCs who say they are on the lookout for anything unusual to make Intelligence rolls to spot the Thayans, but if they succeed, tell them only that they see what might be "shadowy figures." If the figures are investigated, nothing is found, although the PCs are now alerted and the Thayan forces cannot attack with surprise.

### B. Fence

A split-rail fence surrounds the farm. Much of it has collapsed and the whole is seriously overgrown.





### C. Orchard

Like the rest of the farm, the orchard has gone wild, overgrown with tangled grass, weeds, blackberries, creepers, and other shrubs. The apple trees, unpruned for many years, are gnarled and twisted, covered in moss and lichen. Since it is winter they are leafless, and the ground is covered with a fertile mix of old leaves and rotting fruit, giving the undergrowth even more incentive to take over.

### D. Barn

The ancient barn is mostly collapsed and overgrown with vines and moss. Several shadows hide here, preparing to attack.

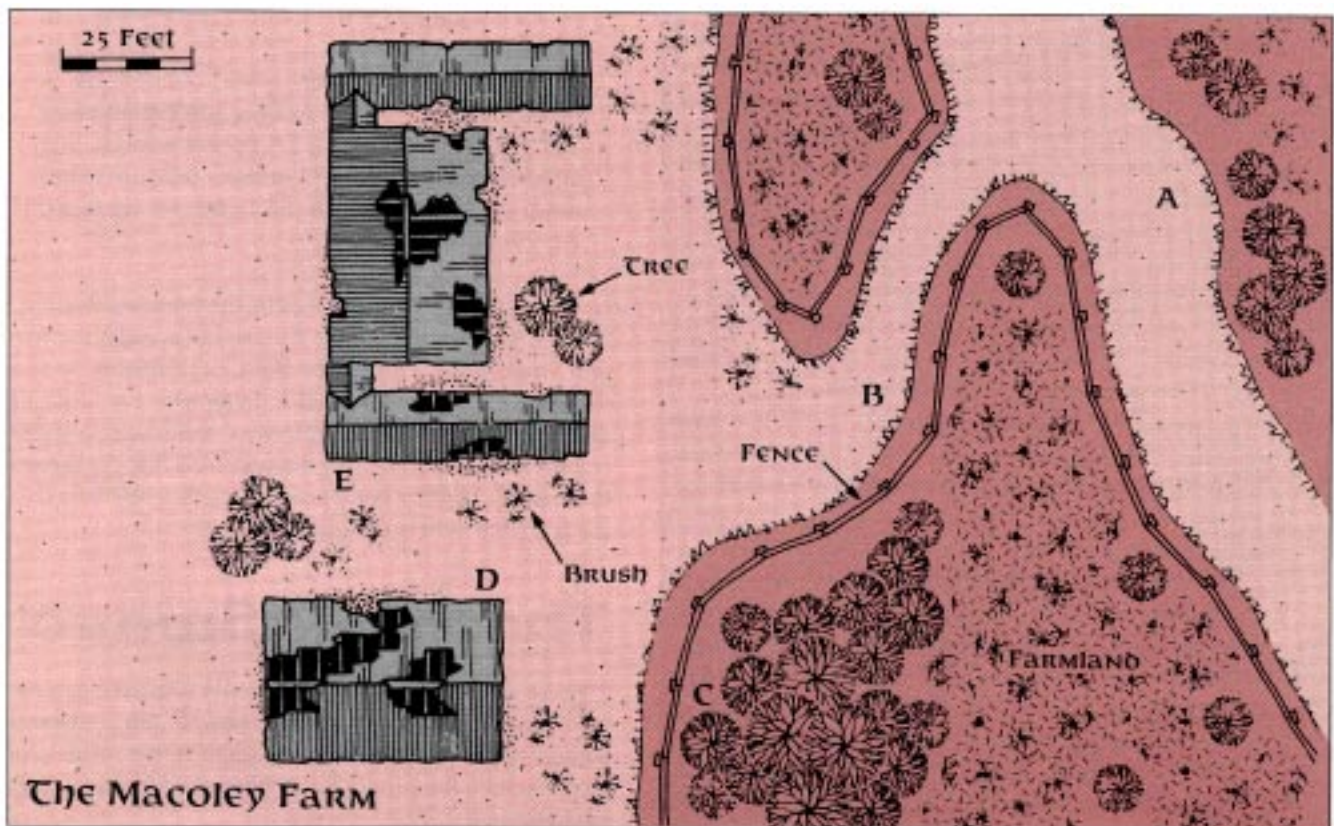
### E. Manor House

This once-proud manor house was built of field stone and roofed with slate. Since its abandonment, its old grandeur has faded and the wilderness has slowly reclaimed it. Great sections of the roof have collapsed, its glass windows (once the envy of all surrounding farms) lie shat-

tered and its main door has long since rotted away, lying and rotting amid fallen porch pillars. Fireweed, blackberry, vine maple, and many types of fern grow along what were once carefully manicured paths and graveled walkways. Nearby stand a number of old alabaster statues, wreathed in ivy and so thick with green moss that their original outlines are only barely visible. A chill, misty rain springs up, shrouding the area in damp gray.

As you approach the manor house, one of the mossy statues moves and speaks.  
 "You are here at last! What took you so long?"

It is the Simbul in one of her infamous disguises. After the adventurers have been scared out of their skins, she changes to her normal appearance—a pale, attractive, slender woman with tangled, unkempt hair and an intense, distant expression. After acquaintances are renewed and the characters vent their shock and surprise at the amused Simbul, she gets down to business. Read or paraphrase the following and allow the PCs to ask questions and interact with the Simbul.





"I wish you had arrived sooner," she says. "I asked you here because it is far from the prying eyes of the Thayans. Since their defeat by the Rashemaar, the three zulkirs who backed the invasion have all gone into seclusion and almost all the remaining zulkirs and tharchions have declared support for Tam.

"With Thay almost completely under his control, Tam will waste no time exterminating the last of his rivals, then turn his ambitions to conquering Aglarond, Rashemen, and Thesk. With these nations under Thay's control, there will be nothing stopping them from making war on the heartlands, possibly conquering all of Faerûn.

"What puzzles me is why he has not done so by now. My agents in Thay report that Szass Tam has hidden himself away in the Citadel, an ancient fortress deep in Thaymount. They say he is preparing some new outrage. What it is I do not know. What I can say is that he recently returned to Thay with a number of powerful enchanted items, and that Azargathe Nimune, a wizardess of Deepingdale and my friend, has disappeared. Those who witnessed the disappearance say that she was drawn into a whirling tube of blue-black energy. I have since discovered that the energy is the signature of Szass Tam's *mage-tunnel* spell. We can only assume that Tam himself is involved in her disappearance. This comes as no surprise to me since she has caused Tam a great deal of trouble in the past.

"In any event, Azargathe's disappearance can only be considered part of a larger puzzle. The fact is that Szass Tam is involved in some complex and powerful magical procedure important enough for him to delay the final destruction of his bitterest enemies in Thay. There is some magical interference, an enchanted noise, that prevented me from contacting you in Rashemen. This effect may be one result of Tam's castings.

"Does this say to you what it says to me? What Szass Tam is doing, deep beneath Thaymount, must be a terrible thing indeed. We have cause to worry both for Azargathe and for all of Faerûn.

"My resources are stretched thin, my friends. You must be our chosen champions in this matter. As for myself and my allies, we must remain inside Aglarond's borders and defend the land against any incursion from Thay. If I were to leave at this time, Tam's agents would learn of it instantly and his legions would be upon us in the blink of an eye. I must stay here, but I cannot spare any of my own warriors or wizards. I beg your aid."

Suddenly, the Simbul's expression changes. She becomes instantly alert, looking about like a hound trying to catch the scent of a fugitive hare

"Wait," she says, urgently. "Something is wrong. Something is here. . ."

## The Thayan Attack

With that dramatic pronouncement, the concealed Thayans attack. The assault is led by shadows and followed up by a number of human mercenaries under the command of a pair of vrock, summoned and controlled by Szass Tam.

**Shadows (10):** AC 7; MV 12; HD 3+3; hp 21; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 and special; SA Strength drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML Special; Int Low; AL CE; XP 420.

**Human Mercenaries (hm & hf F3 (20)):** AC 6; MV 12; hp 18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad swords or longbows); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL CE; XP 65.

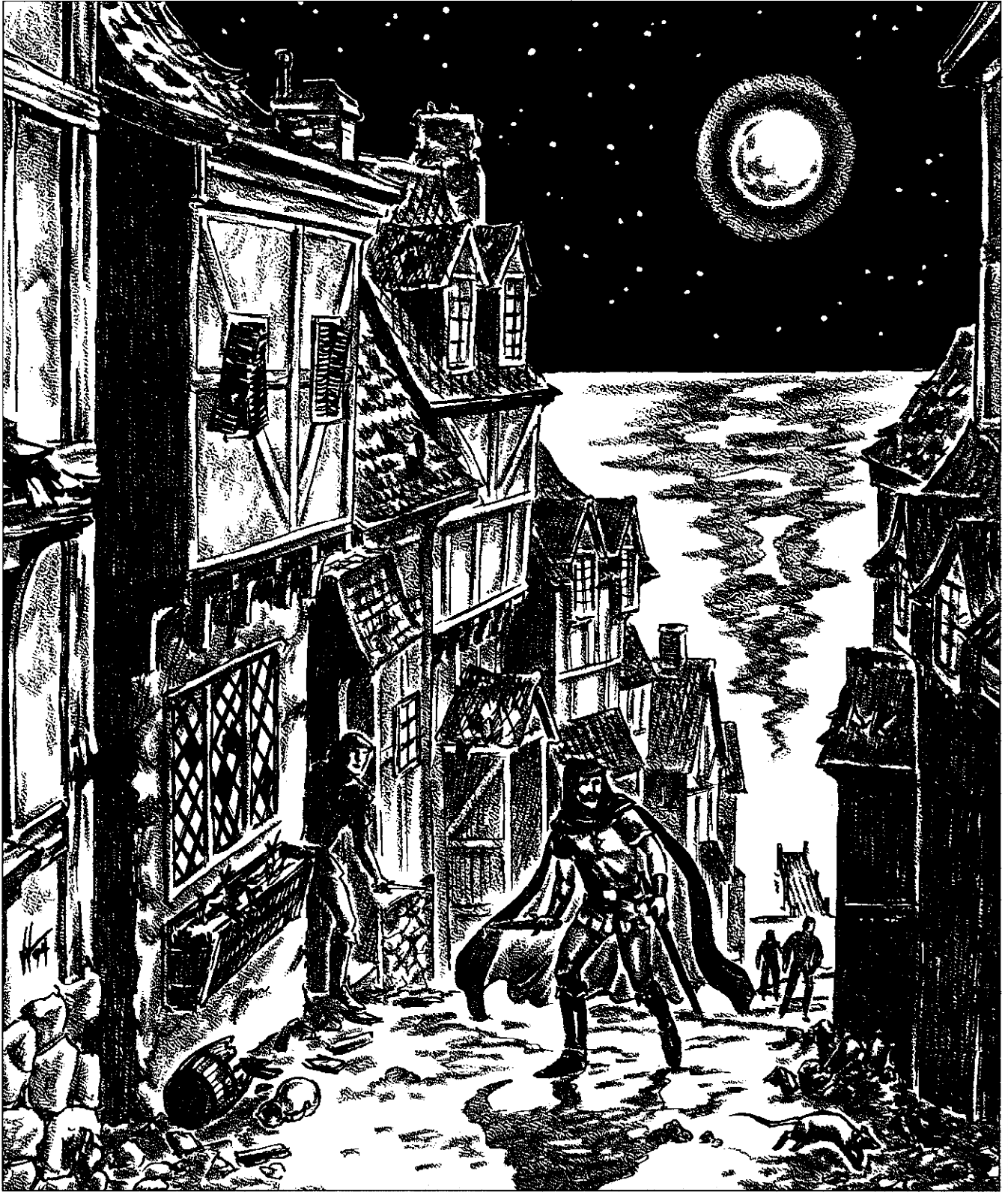
**Tanar'ri, Vrock (2):** AC -5; MV 12/F1 18; HD 8; hp 60; THAC0 13; #AT 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d8/1d6 +7 (Strength bonus); SA Spores, screech, first attack, *dance of ruin*; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, never surprised; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 18; Int High; AL CE; XP 19,000.

In the battle, the party must fight the humans, shadows, and one of the vrock while the Simbul engages the second vrock alone. During the fight, occasionally update the party on how the Simbul is doing with the vrock by describing flashing spells, explosions, fierce hand-to-hand combat, and so on. Her resources are such that she defeats the creature handily, but it keeps her sufficiently busy that she is unable to help the party.

## The Magic Sword

The sword *Hadryllis* is especially effective against tanar'ri, and this battle can provide the characters with an opportunity to see its powers in action. When the vrock attacks, the sword's owner hears the following, ringing in his or her ears.







“The call! The call! The enemy comes and it is an abomination. Take me into battle, brave warrior—I yearn for the song of endless battle and to cleave the flesh of chaos!”

*Hadryllis* is intelligent and somewhat demented. Should any powerful evil creature, especially tanar’ri, approach, the weapon loudly demands that its wielder use it in combat and “smite the foul body of chaos, slay the foes of law, spill the foul black blood of fiends,” and so on. The sword attempts to drag the PCs into battle. This may lead to a personality conflict (see appendix 3 in the *DMG*).

While *Hadryllis* is a useful (and later a vital) tool in the struggle against the Thayans, the weapon proves downright annoying on occasion and may get the party embroiled in avoidable fights.

Use the map of the farm to run the battle. The shadows attack from the shelter of the barn. While the humans move through the ancient orchard, with the twisted figure of the vrock towering behind them. *Hadryllis* of course, wants to fight the vrock immediately. Note the weapon’s special purpose power (see *Throne of Deceit*), which results in the vrock’s disintegration in the event of a failed saving throw and magic resistance roll.

## After The Fight

Once the enemy has been defeated or put to flight, the Simbul heals wounded PCs using *synostoweomer* (see the *Campaign Guide*). In extreme cases, she may have slain characters taken back to Velprintalar for resurrection, but this takes time she is reluctant to waste. She explains the situation to the PCs.

“If you are willing to help us, I can transport you to the interior of Thay, near Thaymount. I have managed to create a version of Szass Tam’s *mage tunnel*. It should work despite the magical interference at the terminal end. The tunnel cannot transport you into a building or cavern, so you will have to gain entrance to the Citadel and find Tam. You must identify and stop whatever mad scheme he’s weaving. You are our last hope, you must not fail.”

Needless to say, you will be performing an invaluable service for my kingdom, and you will be handsomely rewarded upon your return.”

If the adventurers agree to the mission, continue with the adventure; otherwise, with a flash of temper and a slip of a smile, she transports them anyway “for the good of the realm.” She telepathically implants the information below into their minds, but they do not have a copy of Nathor’s document for reference. The DM should allow the PCs to flounder about for a while and then allow them to find a guide or a copy of Nathor’s report. The only way back to Algarond is to do as the Simbul wishes.

If and when the particulars of the PCs’ mission have been worked out, the Simbul provides the party with a copy of a document dictated by Nathor, a former Thayan civil servant who witnessed much of what went on beneath Thaymount (the document is reproduced on the back of Card #8). Nathor vanished before he could reveal what Szass Tam was up to, but a transcript of his testimony has found its way to the Simbul. The transcript contains information about entering the Citadel and negotiating the Paths of the Doomed. Give the players Card #8 and allow them to read it.

Before the party leaves, the Simbul answers any questions about Thay which they might have. She gives them as much information as she can about the land, its rulers and politics, but she is ignorant of Tam’s immediate plans. Should the characters ask what Tam looks like, the Simbul can conjure an image of him. The image can be used later to create a disguise of the zulkir.

The Simbul tells the party to gather in a tight group, and begins to cast her spell.

A whirling, cone-shaped tunnel appears in front of you, lit by occasional flashes of electric-blue lightning. As the Simbul gestures with her staff, the cone inverts, then moves to surround you. With a sickening rush of motion, you suddenly plunge up and into the tube, tumbling and falling—your equipment, horses, and weapons tumbling with you.

“Goodbye!” echoes the Simbul’s voice. “Good luck to you! Our survival depends upon it!”





# The Paths of The Doomed

The sickening sensation of movement ends and you tumble to the hard, stony ground. Above you rises a flinty slope leading to a towering mass of rock, the mountain range known collectively as Thaymount. You seem to have landed in a sheltered ravine and, though you are badly shaken, you are alive and apparently unhurt.

The party must scout around a bit in order to find the gates to the Citadel. See the Citadel poster map for the area where the party appeared. Each turn they scout, there is a 10% chance of running into a gnoll squad on patrol.

**Gnolls (10):** Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SZ L; ML 11; XP 35.

**Flinds (2):** Int Average; AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 2+3; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4 (flindbars); SA disarm; SZ M; ML 12; XP 120.

Any gnoll survivors will escape, warning their commanders, but they cannot enter the citadel, which is forbidden to all but those authorized by Szass Tam. Gnoll prisoners might be persuaded to reveal the location of the main gates.

When the adventurers reach the gates, read the following:

Ahead of you, at the end of a short gorge, is a pair of towering doors, at least 20 feet high. They are crafted of a gleaming silver-green metal and in the center of each is the grim visage of what might be a lizard man. Its features are softer, however, and its eyes larger and more intelligent than the primitive creatures you know as lizard men.

One of the PCs must recite the words from Nathor's letter exactly. If a single mistake is made, the mouths of the lizard men on the doors open and three tanar'ri—two hezrou and a marilith—issue forth and attempt to destroy the party by the most direct means possible.

**Tanar'ri, True—Hezrou (2):** Int Average; AL CE; AC -6; MV 12; HD 9; hp 60; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d8; SA Bear hug, stench; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, half damage from other nonmagical weapons, never surprised; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 17; XP 14,000.

**Tanar'ri, True—Marilith:** Int Genius; AL CE; AC -9; MV 15; HD 12; hp 80; THAC0 9 (+ bonuses for magical weapons); #AT 7; Dmg 4d6/1d8 (broad sword)/1d8+1 (broad sword +1) /1d8+2 (broad sword +2) /1d8+3 (battle axe +3) /1d8+2 (scimitar of speed +2, attacks 3/2 rounds, first attack)/1d8+1 (broad sword, flame tongue); SA Magical weapons, constriction; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, never surprised, spell immunity; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 18; XP 23,000.

If the words are pronounced properly, the doors swing open without a sound. Once the characters are inside, the word *nyphar* must be uttered (this is told in Nathor's letter) or hundreds of *magic mouths* throughout the complex immediately appear and begin scream-





ing, summoning 30 ordinary gnolls and 10 flinds to deal with the intruders. If the word is uttered, the doors close soundlessly behind the characters.

## The Citadel

The party is now within the Citadel, an ancient complex originally built by the advanced lizard men who once lived in this area. The complex was further expanded by the Red Wizards of Thay. In scope, it is easily the size of such major complexes as Undermountain and Myth Drannor. This adventure deals only with one section of the Citadel, the region known as the Paths of the Doomed.

The chamber is 12-sided, as described in Nathor's letter, and crafted of black-veined white marble. On each wall, at about eye level, is a gleaming black rune rimmed in silver.

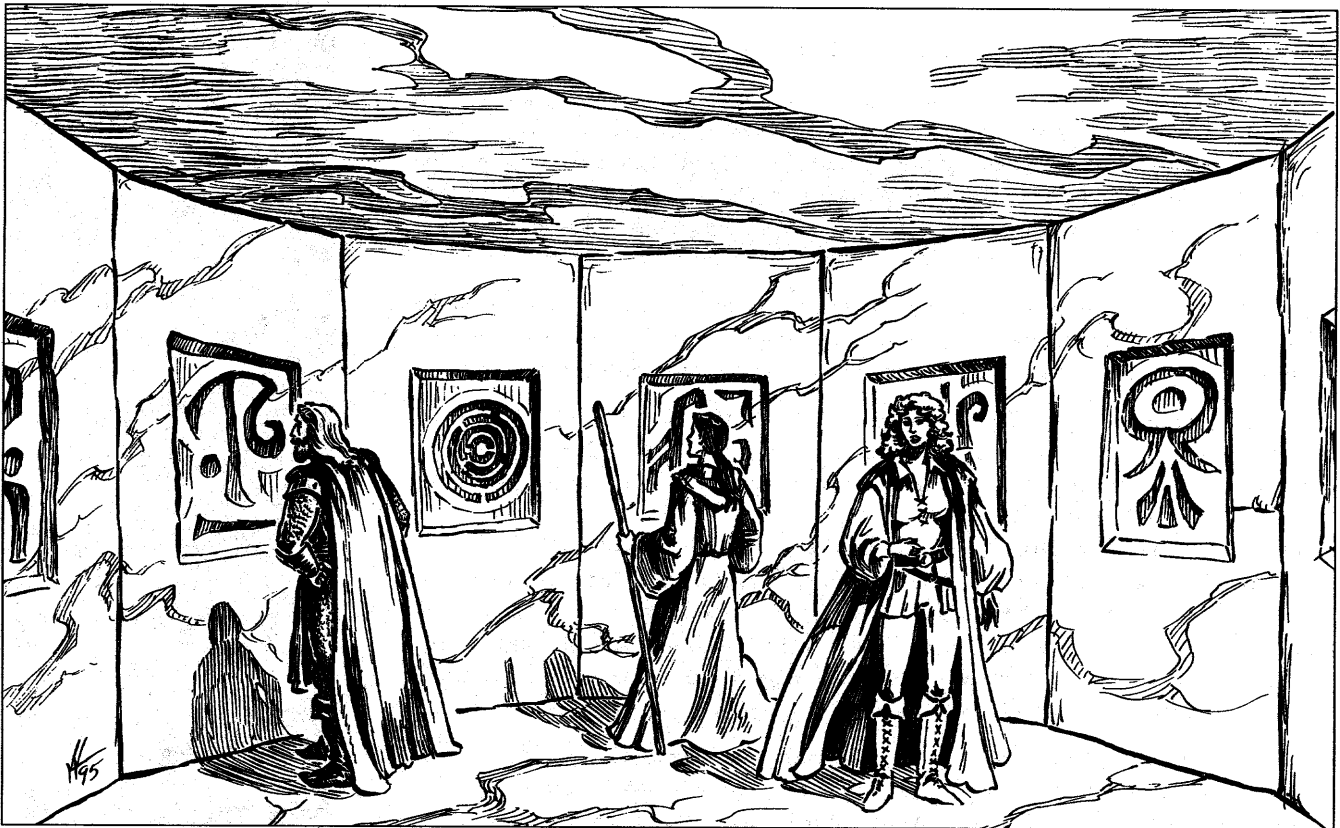
Each of the walls forms a doorway to a different part of the Citadel. DMs may develop other sections of the Citadel for future adventures; presently, the characters have access only to the Paths of the Doomed. If they follow the instructions on Nathor's manuscript, the wall vanishes, revealing a long, darkened hallway.

## The Paths of the Doomed

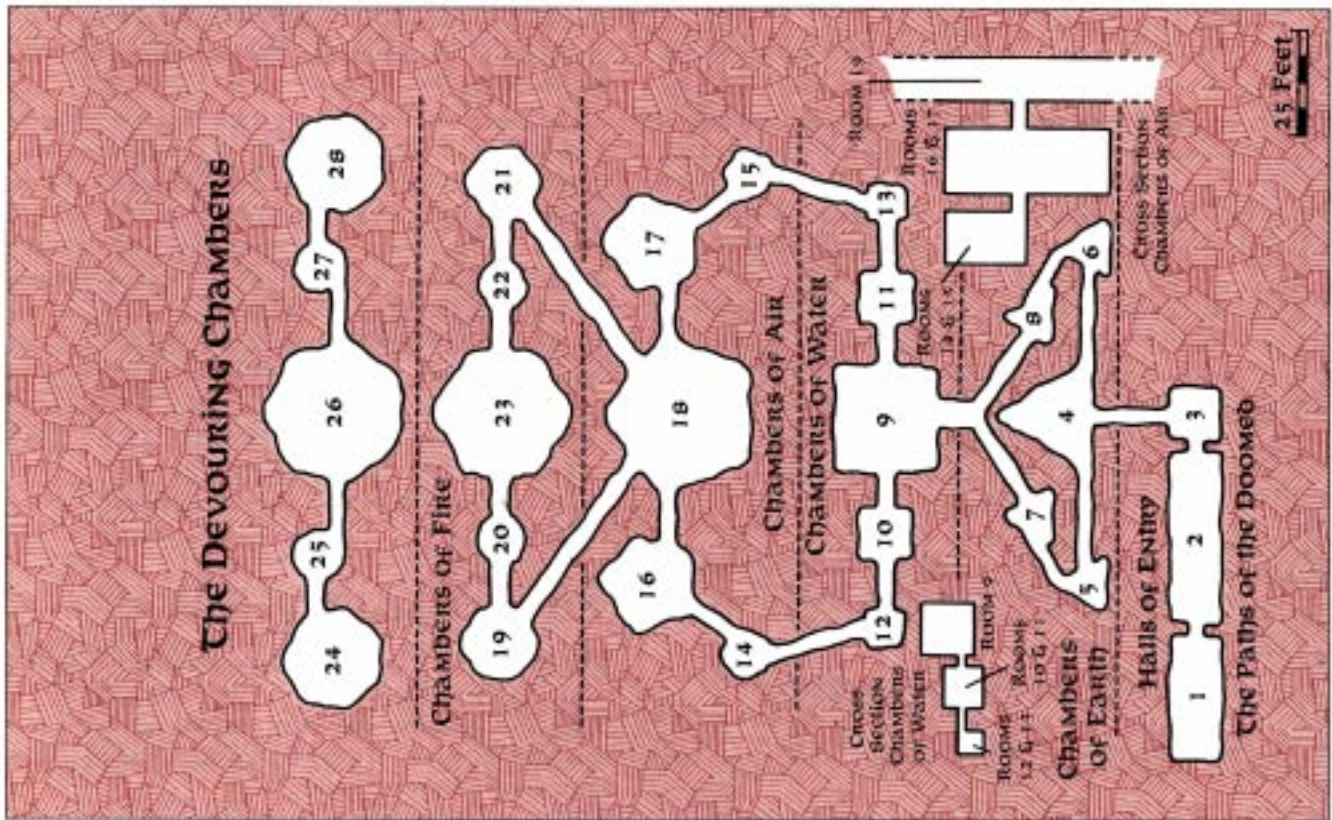
The Paths of the Doomed, shown on Map #2, is a labyrinth designed to protect the important chambers beyond. Authorized individuals know which routes are safe and how to circumvent the various guardians, while outsiders find themselves trapped, pursued, and invariably slain. Nathor's note provides a few clues, which the adventurers can use to their benefit.

The paths are divided into regions corresponding to each of the four traditional elements (Earth, Air, Fire, and Water). A final section leads up to the Devouring Portal. The PCs must pass through this portal to reach the Chamber of Twin Burnings, where Szass Tam intends to complete his scheme.

Each room contains guardians. All have passwords or ways of circumvention, though most of these are unknown to the PCs. (Some are found in Nathor's document and others may be determined by the PCs.)







## Halls of Entry

### 1. Main Hall

As soon as the party enters the main hall, the wall closes behind them, revealing another wall with a similar rune. The word *dahlal* is scrawled in the dust nearby and can be found with a successful find secret doors roll. Although Nathor's document fails to mention it, this is the exit word that allows the party to leave the Citadel.

The room is long and colonnaded, with an arched barrel vault overhead. It is indirectly lit from above, though the source of the light is not immediately apparent. The walls are built of gleaming white marble, while the columns are pale green and the floor is polished black. The chamber seems empty, but a high double door lies at the far end.

The doors are tall, 12 feet high and arched. The doors are not locked and open easily.

### 2. Hall of Statues

Beyond the doors is a long hallway much like the first, made of gleaming white and green stone, floored in black,

and indirectly lit from above. Set in the intervals between the pale green columns are statues crafted of some matte black substance. They are 10 feet tall and portray muscular reptilian humanoids with graceful features and wide, intelligent eyes. Should any characters investigate or ask, the humanoids are not saurials. Like the faces on the Citadel's main doors, these images are those of the highly evolved lizard men, far more advanced than any previously encountered.

The statues are not magical and cannot animate or attack. They are, however, virtually indestructible and almost impossible to move. They are made of an incredibly hard alloy created by the ancient lizard men, whose secret has since been lost. The Red Wizards themselves have attempted to move the statues and analyze them but have thus far failed.

A pair of double doors, similar to the last, lie at the far end of the hall.

### 3. Guardian Hall

This room is much smaller than the others. It is plain, of dark gray stone, and dimly lit. In front of a door on the opposite end of the room stands a robed figure, its face con-





cealed in the darkness of a hood.

The robed creature is a baneguard, an undead creature often used as a guardian by evil clerics. As the party approaches, the baneguard extends a bony hand, palm up. If the characters do not immediately pay the baneguard a Thayan gold piece, or if they attack it, 10 more baneguards and 5 direguards (powerful, armored baneguards created by priests of Cyric) instantly appear and attack the party.

**Baneguards (11):** Int Average; AL NE; AC 7; MV 12; HD 4+4; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA *Magic missile*; SD *Blink*; SZ M; ML 12; XP 975.

**Direguards (5):** AC 6; MV 12; HD 4+4; hp 25; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (2-handed sword); SA See invisible, *magic missile*; SD *Blink*; SZ M; ML 13; Int Average; AL NE; XP 1,200.

Once the guardians have been defeated, the adventurers may freely go through the door and into the Halls of Earth.

## The Chambers of Earth

After going through the door in the Guardians' Chamber, the party passes down a short hallway that ends in a triangular opening, leading to the Chambers of Earth. All the chambers here are triangular, three-sided pyramids. They are crafted of seamless gray stone and their portals are doorless, triangular openings in the walls. Thousands of tiny earth runes are carved into the walls of these chambers.

These rooms are pitch black and possess an oppressive, heavy air, imposing a -1 penalty on both attack rolls and saving throws of any races not used to spending long periods of time underground (such as dwarves, gnomes, and drow).

### 4. The Stone Chamber

This chamber is occupied by three stone golems, one in each corner. The golems were built by the Thayans to defend the room against unauthorized visitors.

When the party enters, the first golem, in the northern corner of the room, bellows in a deep voice, "In whose name do you come to this place?" (The answer is, "By earth, I come in the name of Zulkir Szass Tam," or a reasonable variation). The second shouts, "By what gods do you swear?" (The correct answer is Cyric, Kossuth, Loviatar, or any other evil Faerûn deity.) The third golem then shouts,

"For what purposes are you here?" (the correct reply is "For the Ritual of Twin Burnings," "To serve Szass Tam," "To seek the *Nine Runes of Chaos*," or something similar.)

The golems wait until all three questions are answered (regardless of whether the adventurers give the correct response) or until the PCs attack them or attempt to cross the chamber before acting. Those that were answered correctly remain in place, while those that received incorrect replies immediately attack. The golems continue to attack until they are destroyed or until they have killed the entire party and will pursue the adventurers into adjoining rooms if they flee.

**Stone Golem (3):** AC 5; MV 6; HD 14; hp 60; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 3d8; SA *Slow*; SD +2 or better weapons to hit; SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 8,000

### 5. The Copper Chamber

This chamber is green, sheeted in oxidized copper. The exit from the chamber, which leads to room 7 below, is blocked by an enormous copper column, triangular in cross-section, inscribed with an angular, runic script. Even bards cannot decipher the script.

There is only an inch or two of clearance between the column and the edge of the door, so the way is impassible without magical aid or the removal of the column.

The column may be removed with the incantation: *sholik'na*. This information may be obtained through the use of *legend lore*, *limited wish*, or similar spells. The column also has mechanical elements that can be operated by a thief. A successful find/remove traps roll must be made to locate the access panel in the side and a successful pick locks roll made to open it. Once open, the column requires three more find/remove trap rolls in a row, after which it silently slides up into the ceiling.

Brute force is the final means of defeating the column. It has 300 hit points and all attacks are automatically successful. This approach reduces the column to a twisted mass of oxidized copper sheeting, gears, rods, levers, and pulleys.

### 6. The Iron Chamber

Three iron golems occupy this chamber. They ask the same questions and respond in the same manner as the stone golems in room 4 above. In a corner of this room is a locked trunk. If the PCs open the trunk they will find: one emerald, one ruby, and one diamond. They will need these in *The Gem Chamber*.





**Iron Golems** (3): AC 3; MV 6; HD 18; hp 80; THAC0 3; #AT 1; Dmg 4d10; SA Breath weapon; SD +3 or better weapons to hit; SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 13,000.

## 7. The Gold Chamber

Everywhere in this room is the glint of gold. The entire room is cast of solid gold, but it is unlikely that anyone trying to steal it will survive to enjoy the proceeds. Each character hacking, prying, carving, or scraping at the walls can obtain 1d10 gp per round but must make also make a saving throw vs. death magic each round with a cumulative -1 penalty (After 3 rounds the saving throw penalty is -3.) If the roll fails, the character is sucked into the wall and begins to be absorbed into the room itself.

Characters are fully absorbed in 2d4 rounds. Other party members may attempt to pull the victim from the wall before he or she is completely absorbed. Each character attempting to pull receives an ability check vs. Strength each round. Eight successful Strength checks are needed to pull the character from the wall. (The absorbed character may also roll.) If eight successful rolls have not been made by the end of 2d4 rounds, the victim is completely absorbed into the wall, transformed into solid gold, gone forever. Nothing short of a *wish* or divine intervention can bring back a character lost in the wall.

Those attempting to scrape or pry gold from the walls may stop at any time without penalties. It is possible that the repeated call for saving throws may persuade the players that something is up and convince them to stop, but the characters must accept the consequences if they continue regardless.

## 8. The Gem Chamber

This chamber contains three gem golems: one emerald, one ruby, and one diamond. Each has a small trough in front of it, full of gems corresponding to the golem type. In order to pass by the golems, one gem of each type must be placed in the appropriate trough. If the party attempts to pass through the room without doing so, or tries to steal the gems in the troughs, the three gem golems shamble to the attack.

**Ruby Golem:** AC 0; MV 6; HD 10; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3d10; SD +1 or greater to hit, immune to electricity and heat attacks; MR 25% (nature-based magic only); SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 5,000.





**Emerald Golem:** AC 0; MV 6; HD 12; hp 55; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 4d10; SA *Lightning bolt, cloudkill*; SD +2 or greater to hit, immune to acid and heat attacks; MR 50% (nature-based magic only) SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 8,000.

**Diamond Golem:** AC 0; MV 6; HD 14; hp 60; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 5d10; SA *Sunray*, diamond chips; SD +3 or greater to hit, immune to heat, electrical, and acid attacks; MR 75% (nature-based magic only); SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 10,000.

Destroyed golems produce gems as described in the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*® booklet and the troughs contain 10d10 precious gems.

## The Chambers of Water

These square rooms are crafted of blue-veined green marble. Each room is at a progressively lower level (see cross section on Map #2) and is progressively deeper in water. The rooms are shadowy and murky, like sunlight at the bottom of a deep pool.

### 9. Green Chamber

This room, tiled in light sea-green, is awash in roughly 2 feet of water. As the party sloshes across the room, three large masses of water rise up in front of the two exits from the room (for a total of six creatures). These are aballin, liquid creatures made not of water but of weak acid. They do not attack the party unless its members attempt to leave by one of the two exit routes. (The party is free to go back to the Halls of Earth.) The three on one exit remain in place if the other three attack and vice versa.

The PCs must say, "By water, we come in the name of Szass Tam," or something similar. If they do so, the aballin collapse back into the water. Otherwise, they remain in place, attacking only if the characters try to leave the room through the guarded exits.

**Aballin (6):** AC 4; MV 6/Sw 15; HD 3; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg Special; SA Drowning; SD Special; SZ L; ML 14; Int Average; AL N; XP 270.

### 10. Blue Chamber One

Those who enter the two blue chambers must jump down from the green chamber, into approximately 5 feet of surprisingly warm water (see the cross section on Map #2). If the password "*thralliq*" is uttered before entry, a clear bubble of magical energy appears in front of the entrance, allowing travelers to step inside. The bubble then encloses and transports them through the water to the next room, keeping the occupants dry and preventing notice or attack from the room's inhabitants. Others who do not know the password, are attacked by the creatures in each room.

This blue chamber contains four sharks. Attacked characters may be dragged underwater, invoking the swimming and drowning rules in the *PHB*.

**Sharks (4):** AC 6; MV Sw 24; HD 6; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d20+40; SZ L; ML 10; Int Animal; AL N; XP 175.

### 11. Blue Chamber Two

This chamber is identical to room 10, but it contains a giant octopus.

**Giant Octopus:** AC 7; MV 3/Sw 12; HD 8; hp 48; THAC0 13; #AT 7; Dmg 1d4 (x7)/2d6; SA Constriction; SD Ink, color change; SZ L; ML 13; Int Animal; AL N; XP 2,000.

### 12. Aqua Chamber One

The entrance to the Aqua Chamber lies at the top of the rooms, while the exit is at the bottom, under 30 feet of water. Those traveling in a force bubble from the blue chambers must give the password "*ekkala*," after which the force bubbles move to the exit, up the ascending corridors and into the Chambers of Air beyond, under the watchful eye of the yugoloths who guard the rooms.

Those who do not know the password have a problem. They must first figure out a way to negotiate the 30-foot depths of the water-filled room, then swim up the 50-foot long ascending corridor to the Chambers of Air, all the while dealing with hostile yugoloths.

This room contains a pair of hydroloths and the various treasures they have accumulated over the years, but collecting the treasure from the bottom of the room might be difficult.

**Yugoloth, Hydroloths (2):** AC -2; MV 6/Glide 12 (E)/Sw 24; HD 7+14; hp 56; THAC0 13; #AT 3 or





5; Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d4/1d4/1d10; SA Sleep attack; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; MR 40%; SZ L; ML 14; Int Average; AL NE; XP 14,000.

The hydroloths' treasure consists of 8 gems; two bloodstones worth 50 gp each, a pearl worth 100 gp, one black pearl worth 500 gp, one topaz worth 500 gp, and one fire opal worth 1,000 gp. It also contains four art objects; an elven statue worth 200 gp, an ornate Moonshae brooch worth 500 gp, two matched ornamental gold and lapis boxes worth 250 gp each, a carved ivory figure from Kara-Tur worth 1,000 gp, and one ceremonial platinum-chased bowl worth 1,000 gp.

### 13. Aqua Chamber Two

This room is identical to room 12, but contains a single pisoloth and its loot.

**Yugoloth, Pisoloth:** AC -5; MV 6/Sw 18; HD 9+ 18; hp 90; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8/2d8; SA Severing, sting; SD Never surprised, +1 or better weapons to hit; MR 40%; SZ M; ML 14; Int Very; AL NE; XP 19,000.

The pisoloth's treasure holds 2,000 gp, and 900 pp.

## The Chambers of Air

The Chambers of Air are accessible through upwardly sloping passages from the Chambers of Water. Those in the chambers experience mild vertigo, which grows progressively worse the more time is spent in the rooms. For the first 4 turns, the vertigo has no effect; for turns 5-10, all who are not used to flying or spending time at high altitudes receive a -1 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws. The penalty rises to -2 on turns 11+. These rooms are five-sided, covered in pale blue tile, and their groined vault ceilings are progressively higher.

### 14. High Chamber One

The floors of the high chamber are level with the entrances, and the ceilings are at least 50 feet high. Passage through this chamber requires a statement to the effect of, "By air, we come in the name of Zulkir Szass Tam!" If such a statement is not made, a 16-HD air elemental immediately appears in the room and attacks the party.

**Air Elemental:** AC 2; MV F1 36 (A); HD 16; hp 96; THAC0 5; #AT 1; Dmg 2d 10; SA Whirlwind, bonus in aerial combat; SD +2 weapon or better to hit; SZ H; ML 17; Int Low; AL N; XP 11,000.

### 15. High Chamber Two

This room is identical to room 14, save that its guardian is the djinn vizier Amul al-Habn, who appears and attacks (albeit reluctantly) if the PCs do not declare that they enter in the name of Szass Tam.

**Amul al-Habn (djinn noble):** AC 4; MV 9/F1 24; HD 10; hp 75; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3d8; SA Magical abilities, whirlwind; SD +4 save vs. spell (gas or air-based); SZ L; ML 14; Int High; AL CG; XP 11,000.

Amul has been compelled to serve the Red Wizards, a task he finds utterly repellent, but he does so because must. If the party does not immediately attack when Amul appears, he receives a saving throw vs. spell. If Amul's roll succeeds, he is able to keep from attacking the party for 1d4 rounds, and he tries to manipulate them into telling him that they come in the name of Szass Tam.

He may say something like, "In whose name do you come here?" and, if the party does not reply properly, say, "It wouldn't be in the name of Szass Tam, would it?" (After some unfortunate incidents, Tam forbade him to directly inform travelers of what they needed to say, leaving him to maneuver the adventurers into asking.) In desperation, he goes so far as to say, "I must attack you unless you tell me in whose name you come," and the like. If the party is too thick headed to figure his suggestions out, Amul resignedly attacks.

Should the PCs be persuaded to announce that they come in the name of Szass Tam, Amul relaxes and makes the following statement.

The djinn smiles. "Thank you. I was afraid it had slipped your minds that you come here on business of the foul, disgusting, wicked, evil, shambling undead necromancer Szass Tam. You certainly do not look like his friends, but who am I to judge, after all?"

However, since you seem to have forgotten the proper passwords, I think that I will refresh your memory as to how to traverse the remaining Chambers of Air. Upon entering either of the adjoining chambers, call out, 'By air I come, in the name of Szass Tam!' and a minor elemental will appear to transport you through the last chambers. Remember, though, that





when the servant carries you into the last chamber, the Endless Chamber, to call out the word 'aekos!' or the creature will drop you, and let you fall forever. I realize, of course, that as friends of the cruel and devious Szass Tam, you already know all this information, but I tell you as a service, nonetheless."

Amul can provide no further information regarding the Paths of the Doomed or the chambers that lie beyond, but he is friendly and willing to use his powers to aid the party, though he is unable to leave the room. During his term of service to Szass Tam (which still has 500 years to run), he is unable to grant wishes. A wish will set Amul free, although his binding is far too powerful to be dispelled through a remove curse spell. If freed, Amul accompanies the party for the remainder of the adventure.

### 16. Sky Chamber One

Both sky chambers are 100 feet in height, and their entrances and exits are at the midpoint of their walls (see the cross section accompanying Map #2). Characters must fly across the rooms, climb down one wall and up the other, *feather fall* down and climb up, etc. The "official" way to cross is to call out "By air, I come in the name of Szass Tam!", in which case an aerial servant appears to transport party members across the room. If the phrase is not uttered, no guardian appears and the characters are forced to make their own way across the room.

### 17. Sky Chamber Two

This room is identical to room 16, and its aerial servant is summoned in the same manner.

### 18. The Endless Chamber

The Endless Chamber is exactly what it sounds like—it is apparently bottomless and roofless, extending up and down as far as the eye can see. Like the sky chambers, its entrance and exit are in the middle of the wall and must be traversed while dealing with the room's guardians.

Official Thayan travelers are brought here by aerial servants from the Sky Chambers. Once entering this room, however, they must shout "aekos!" or the servants vanish, leaving them to fall through space. Once a character has fallen for five minutes or so, he or she is *teleported* back to the "top" of the room, to plunge through space once more, tumbling past the original entrance, *teleporting* again, and contin-





uing to fall. The party will have to come up with some means of saving such victims, who otherwise continue to fall forever. (The exact consequences of such a fall are to the DM.)

## The Chambers of Fire

A short hallway leads from the Chambers of Air to the Chambers of Fire. Hexagonal in shape, these rooms are made of a dark red marble, shot with orange and carved with fire runes that possess a smoldering yellow glow. Each room is successively hotter than the last and has consequences to those entering them, as noted in the room descriptions.

In addition to their regular inhabitants, the Chambers of Fire are infested with various mephits and imps. The imps are mischievous, essentially vermin, and engage in various hijinks whether the party manages to circumvent the rooms' other guardians or not.

The imps attempt to distract and annoy the adventurers, capering about in front of them, grabbing weapons or equipment, pulling hair (and possibly setting it on fire in the process), biting noses and fingers, and the like. They speak in a high-pitched gibber, occasionally stopping to demand "Look at me!" "Don't you want to talk to us?" "Can I be your friend," or similar statements.

### 19. The Glowing Chamber

Although this room glows like a dark cloud and is uncomfortably hot, characters suffer no penalties for being here. There are four iron golems in the room, red-hot, standing motionless against four of the room's six walls. Their near-molten fists inflict 5d10 points of damage rather than the normal 4d10. Those entering the chamber must call out, "By fire, we come in the name of Szass Tam!" or the golems attack.

A dozen malevolent lava imps also occupy the room and swarm over the PCs, behaving in the annoying manner described above. If the PCs ignore them, the imps grow ever more nasty, eventually attacking outright. They attack whether or not the characters neutralize the iron golems.

**Iron Golems (4):** AC 3; MV 6; HD 18; hp 80; THAC0 3; #AT 1; Dmg 5d10; SA Breath weapon; SD +3 or better weapons to hit; SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 13,000.

**Magma Mephits (12):** AC 6; MV 12/F1 24; HD 3; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1/1; SA Additional

1d8 points heat damage, breath weapon; SZ M; ML 8; Int Average; AL CE; XP 420.

### 20. The Smoldering Chamber

The walls of this chamber are hot to the touch, and the air is thick and heavy. Any characters without *fire resistance* or similar protection fight at -1 on attack rolls and saving throws.

Those entering this chamber must say that they come by fire and in the name of Szass Tam, then utter the word "*khalos!*" or a bound efreet immediately attacks. The room also holds a dozen fire mephits.

**Efreet:** Int Very; AL LE; AC 2; MV 9/F1 24; HD 10; hp 65; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3d8; SA Magical abilities; SD Immune to normal fire, -1 to opponents' attack with magical fire; SZ L; ML 16; XP 8,000.

**Fire Mephits (12):** Int Average; AL CE; AC 5; MV 12/F1 24; HD 3+1; hp 19; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3; SA Additional 1 point heat damage, breath weapon, *heat metal*, *magic missile*; SZ M; ML 8; XP 420.

### 21. The Smoking Chamber

This room is thick with smoke. Characters who remain in the room without any magical means of breathing suffer a penalty of -1 on attack rolls and saving throws. In addition, each turn (every 10 rounds) they must save vs. breath weapon or pass out from asphyxiation. Asphyxiated characters must then save vs. death magic each subsequent turn or die of suffocation. They can only be revived if taken from the chamber.

The password "*olash!*" must be uttered or a nabassu appears and attacks. The room is infested with 15 smoke mephits.

**Tanar'ri, Nabassu:** AC -5; MV 12/F1 15; HD 7+20; hp 64; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d4+7; SA Death gaze, backstab, paralyzation; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 16; Int High; AL CE; XP 16,000.

**Smoke Mephits (15):** AC 4; MV 12/F1 24; HD 3; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d2/1d2; SA Breath weapon, *invisibility*, *dancing lights*; SZ M; ML 8; Int Average; AL CE; XP 420.

### 22. The Burning Chamber

This entire chamber glows with heat. PCs not protected from fire in some way must save vs. breath weapons each





round they occupy the room or sustain 2 points of heat damage. (A successful save reduces this to 1 point per round.) In addition, they suffer a -1 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws while in the room.

Four salamanders occupy the room, standing motionless in front of the two northernmost and the two southernmost walls. The room is also occupied by 11 fire mephits, who do their best to annoy and divert the party.

When the party enters, one of the salamanders slithers forward, a long glowing spear at the ready, and says, "In whose name do you come here?"

If the party has managed to crack the code on previous rooms, they will probably say, "We come by fire in the name of Szass Tam," or something similar. Unfortunately, these creatures are rebels who participated in the Salamander War and were punished by Lord Kossuth of the Elemental Plane of Fire by being set to serve here for 1,000 years. In order to get past the salamanders, the party needs to say something along the lines of, "We come in the name of Lord Kossuth of Fire." If this is not said, the salamanders attack with delight.

**Salamanders (4):** AC 5/3; MV 9; HD 7+7; hp 50; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 2d6/1d6; SA Heat 1d6; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; SZ M; ML 13; Int High; AL CE; XP 2,000.

**Fire Mephits (11):** AC 5; MV 12/F1 24; HD 3+1; hp 19; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3; SA Additional 1 point heat damage, breath weapon, *heat metal*, *magic missile*; SZ M; ML 8; Int Average; AL CE; XP 420.

## 23. The Fiery Chamber

This entire chamber is filled with flames, and any characters without *fire protection* or similar defenses suffer 4d6 points of damage per round. (A successful saving throw vs. breath weapon halves this damage.)

The room also contains two fire elementals, four fire mephits, three smoke mephits, and five lava mephits.

In the center of the room is a hexagonal panel made of a glossy, golden material. This is the teleportation device that will carry the party to the Halls of Devouring; it is the only way to reach it. There is no password; the party needs only to step onto it.

**Fire Elementals (2):** AC 2; MV 12; HD 12; hp 72; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 3d8; SD +2 weapon or better to hit; SZ H; ML 16; Int Low; AL N; XP 6,000.

**Fire Mephits (4):** AC 5; MV 12/F1 24; HD 3+1; hp 19; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3; SA Additional

1 point heat damage, breath weapon, *heat metal*, *magic missile*; SZ M; ML 8; Int Average; AL CE; XP 420.

**Magma Mephits (5):** AC 6; MV 12/F1 24; HD 3; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1/1; SA Additional 1d8 points heat damage, breath weapon; SZ M; ML 8; Int Average; AL CE; XP 420.

**Smoke Mephits (3):** AC 4; MV 12/F1 24; HD 3; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d2/1d2; SA Breath weapon, *invisibility*, *dancing lights*; SZ M; ML 8; Int Average; AL CE; XP 420.

If the invocation "*Hala vikk thora!*" is shouted upon entering the room, the flames die and the fire elementals remain in place as the characters approach the hexagonal teleportation pad.

## The Devouring Chambers

These chambers are heptagonal (seven-sided), made of a black material shot through with blue and crimson. These rooms do not require passwords, but their guardians attack anyone who has not been previously identified by Szass Tam as acceptable. The PCs may try to elude the guardians by using magical concealment, or other unusual tactics, perhaps one of their number impersonates Szass Tam, who will "clear" the party. (Such a ruse should earn considerable experience points.)

## 24. Guardians

There is a heptagonal panel in the center of this room, where the party arrives from the transport pads in the Chambers of Fire. Two tanar'ri, a marilith named Xabb'arnah and a molydeus called Th'kalar, sit in the doorway of room 26, playing "pickup sticks" with a pile of bones.

**Xabb'arnah (Marilith):** AC -9; MV 15; HD 12; hp 80; THAC0 9 (+ bonuses for magical weapons); #AT 7; Dmg 4d6/1d8 (broad sword)/1d8 (long sword)/1d8+2 (*broad sword* +2) /1d4+2 (*dagger* +2)/1d6+3 (*trident* +2) /1d6+1 (*spear* +1); SA Magical weapons, constriction; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, never surprised, spell immunity; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 18; Int Genius; AL CE; XP 23,000.

**Th'kalar (Molydeus):** AC -5; MV 15; HD 12; hp 80; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 2d6/1d6/2d10+5 (battle axe); SA *Vorpal and dancing battle axe*, poison; SD Affected







only by cold iron weapons, never surprised; MR 90%; SZ H; ML 20; Int High; AL CE; XP 21,000.

The tanar'ri ignores the PCs until they step off the pad, at which time the molydeus's dog head looks up and speaks while its snake head continues to observe the game. The marilith is apparently oblivious to the characters' presence as she painstakingly lifts a thighbone off a crossed pair of tibia. Read the following out loud.

"I note that you are not authorized to be here," says the dog head in a surprisingly cultured voice. "We are familiar with all the hateful little necromancer's friends, and he has bound us to slay all others. We are, however, absorbed in our game, and do not care to inconvenience ourselves by killing you, so we now give you permission to depart. If you attempt to pass through this doorway, however, we will become irritated and must destroy you in the most efficient and painful manner possible. Note, please, that the choice is yours. Now, I wish to return to our game. I must watch this creature constantly, lest she attempts to cheat."

The marilith frowns. "I, at least, do not have two heads, enabling me to cheat twice as effectively. I would watch my tongues if I were you." That said, she goes back to the game.

True to their word, the tanar'ri remain intent on their game and take no action unless the characters attempt to leave the room or attack first. Should either of these things happen, the tanar'ri attack the party, bellowing their annoyance that the game has been interrupted. The molydeus uses its lightning bolts and a vorpal weapon while the marilith uses *cloudkill*, *cause serious wounds*, and attempts to *gate* in more tanar'ri.

If the PCs fall back to the teleportation pad, it takes them back to the Chambers of Fire where they may regroup and attack again. If the characters return, the tanar'ri are back at their game, acting as if they have never seen the party before. (Their memories are quite short, owing to the magical services compelled by Szass Tam and their exclusive concentration on the game of pickup bones.) They also have a tendency to attack even the friends of Szass Tam, claiming not to remember who they were, but Tam suspects this is all a sham and that the tanar'ri are just doing it to annoy him.

The party is likely in for a beating if they try to fight the guardians, even with the services of the sword *Hadryllis*, which will demand to attack the tanar'ri immediately.

The PCs' best bet is to persuade the two tanar'ri to fight each other, and the most efficient way to do this is to convince one that the other is cheating—the DM needs to stress the fiend's mistrust of each other. There are several ways of doing this: Magically nudging one of the pieces; suggesting that one of the tanar'ri made an illegal move; distracting their attention while a thief grabs a bone and adds it to one of the tanar'ri's piles, then pointing it out.

Once the characters have convinced one of the tanar'ri that the other is cheating, a battle royal erupts between the two, allowing the party to slip past them. (The characters might catch a stray lightning bolt or two, and so should use caution.)

### 23. Feyr Chamber

Szass Tam has bound a number of feyrs to this room, magically compelling them to attack anyone not specifically identified and "cleared" by himself. Of course, this includes the characters, although they might be able to circumvent the feyrs through the use of *invisibility* or other spells. They have been reduced to essential mindlessness, however, and attempts to impersonate Szass Tam or other subtle tactics do not work. It is possible that characters affected by the creatures' fear attack will be forced to flee back into the room with the tanar'ri, who may or may not still be fighting.

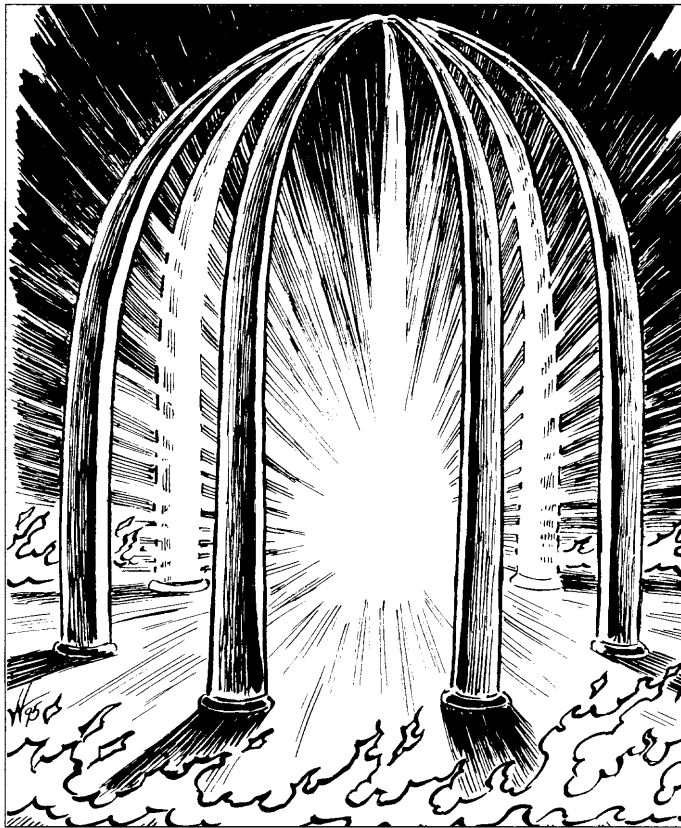
**Feyrs (8):** AC 2; MV 12; HD 4; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA Fear; MR 10%; SZ S; ML 18; Int Low; AL CE; XP 975.

### 26. Fiend Room

A glabrezu tanar'ri occupies this room, with orders to defend against those not specifically cleared by Szass Tam. It is nowhere near as preoccupied as the fiends in room 24 and fights the characters without hesitation. The glabrezu has not been compelled to serve here but is well paid by Szass Tam. Its horde, stored in one corner of the room, consists of 16,000 sp, 8,000 gp, 14 gems; 10 perfect violet garnets worth 500 gp each, a rose pearl worth 300 gp, an amethyst worth 100 gp, one chrysoberyl worth 100 gp, and one ruby worth 2,500 gp; a *potion of invisibility*, a *potion of super-heroism*, a *scroll of protection from magic*, a *spear +3*, a *wand of magic missiles*, and a *horn of Valhalla*.

**Tanar'ri, Glabrezu:** AC -7; MV 15; HD 10; hp 65; THAC0 11; #AT 5; Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3/1d3/2d4+ 1; SA Grab; SD +2 or better weapons to hit; SZ H; ML 18; Int Exceptional; AL CE; XP 44,000.





## 27. Great Feyr Chamber

A single great feyr has been bound to this room, and it attacks anyone not previously identified by Szass Tam. The adventurers may be able to avoid the feyr, or it might believe a PC who has been *polymorphed* or disguised as Szass Tam. (Make an Intelligence roll against the great feyr, Int 14, to see if it is fooled).

**Great Feyr:** AC -2; MV 12/F1 18; HD 16; hp 96; THAC0 5; #AT 4; Dmg 2d6/2d6/2d6/2d6; SA Emotion control; SD Invisibility; SZ M; ML 18; Int High; AL CE; XP 13,000.

## 28. The Devouring Portal

The Devouring Portal, final gate to the Halls of Twin Burnings, where the adventurers will finally confront Eltab and Szass Tam, requires much more than brawn and destructive magic to overcome it. The Devouring Portal tests those who pass through it by displaying wicked or imperfect acts from their pasts. The portal does not make such a display to Szass Tam or those cleared by him, but outsiders may be reduced to gibbering wrecks, incapable of continuing. Fortunately for chaotic characters, their in-

dividualistic natures make them more resistant to the agonies displayed by the portal, while lawful individuals are far more likely to be assailed by guilt.

Lambent blue faerie fire flickers across the floor, creating a wavering reflection on the black mirror surface of the walls rather like a black opal shot through with kingfisher blue and crimson. In the center of the room are seven tall, tapered columns, bending together to meet in the center. A blue-white light glows in the center of the columns.

When the party enters the chamber, read the following:

On the wall you will see images, figures appearing out of the shimmering lines of faerie fire. The images seem to be of people from your own past.

The walls show scenes of anger, regret, violence, or betrayal from players' past. Those DMs who have kept track of or generated histories for characters should be able to draw out several incidents in which the characters betrayed someone, caused pain to innocents, or the like. Scenes of anger, regret, violence, and hatred play out on the walls, visible to the entire party. Characters must save vs. spell or be overwhelmed by guilt. Modifications to the roll are based upon PC alignment, per the following chart.

PC Alignment	Modification
Chaotic	+2
Neutral	0
Lawful	-5

Those who fail their saving throws are reduced to a comatose state, incapable of movement, speech or any other actions. They remain so for the entire time the party occupies the room; if removed, they receive a normal saving throw vs. Constitution each turn (10 minutes) in order to recover, although the horror of the experience reduces Con by 3 for 1d2 days.

There may also be in the party that rare character who has never done anything to be ashamed of—and knows it. Such individuals still experience some mental effects (the Portal finds their weak points and tries to exploit them), but receive an additional +5 bonus to their die rolls. Of course, almost everyone has done something for which they feel guilty and ashamed.

Those still on their feet after the chamber makes its display are free to advance through the portal. Comatose characters may be carried through the portal and are transported along with everyone else, into the Chambers of Twin Burnings, to the final confrontation with Szass Tam and his minions.





# The Ninth Rune



he Chambers of Twin Burnings is a complex specially created by Szass Tam and linked to the Devouring Portal. Here, the PCs must find Azargathe Nimune, find *Thakorsil's Seat*, and defeat Szass Tam's scheme to enslave the tanar'ri lord Eltab.

In the two years since Szass Tam's meeting with the lich Larloch he has worked for this moment, imprisoning Eltab in *Thakorsil's Seat*, inscribing eight of the nine *Runes of Chaos*, while at the same time consolidating his power within Thay. Now, as the moon wanes and the time of Twin Burnings once more approaches, Szass Tam can finally inscribe the ninth Rune of Chaos and control Eltab completely, giving himself access to near-godlike power.

## Arrival

Szass Tam anticipates that the Paths of the Doomed will take care of most unwanted visitors, but the Chambers of Twin Burnings are nonetheless well guarded. Soon he and a handful of picked apprentices will complete the final Ritual of Twin Burnings and achieve total control over Eltab. When the PCs arrive, they are not actually in the chamber, but will shortly arrive from elsewhere in the Citadel. The conspirators will be most distressed to see the PCs' meddling.

### 1. Arrival Chamber

Once through the Devouring Portal, the PCs appear in this room where a platoon of chosen ones, mindless minions created by the Red Wizards, stand guard with orders to attack anyone not personally accompanied by Szass Tam or any of his allies.

**Chosen Ones (12):** AC 7; MV 12; HD 3; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d4 (x2); SA Poison; SZ M; ML 18; Int Low; AL CE; XP 175.

### 2. Guard Rooms

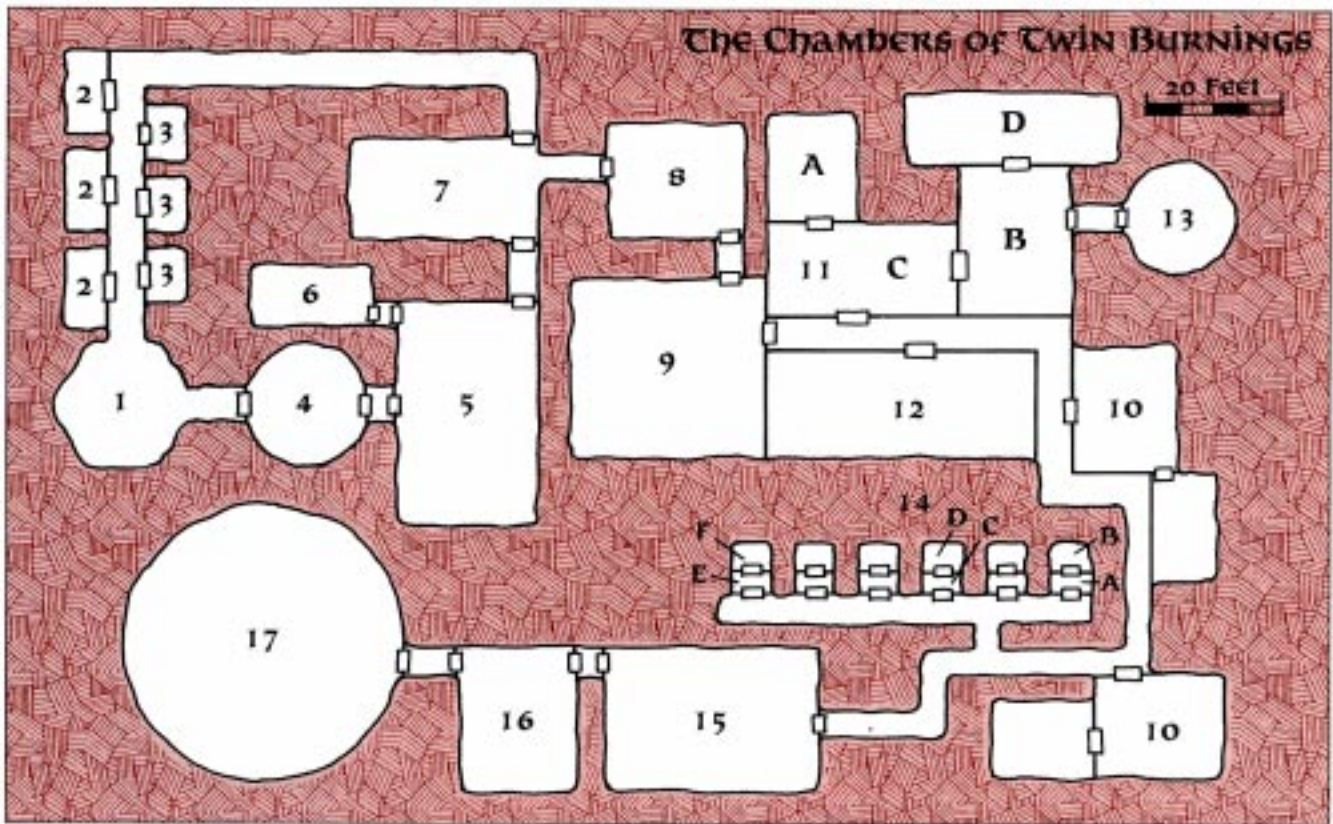
Some of Szass Tam's most trusted and elite gnoll infantry are assigned here as guards. Each of these chambers contains a squad of 12 gnolls, each with a single flind officer. They are superstitious and hesitate to leave their chambers for fear of Tam's creatures. However, they come out if summoned, if they hear voices in the hallway which cannot be readily identified as Tam or his allies, or if the sounds of fighting break out. Due to nervousness about their current surroundings, the gnolls might have to check morale if any explosive magic (*fireball*, *lightning bolt*, *ice storm* and the like) is used against them.

**Gnolls (12):** AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8; SZ L; ML 11; Int Low; AL CE; XP 35.

**Flind (1):** AC 5; MV 12; HD 2+3; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4 (flindbars); SA disarm; SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL LE; XP 120.

Each of the guard rooms contains the following: 2d4x100 sp, 1d6x100 gp, and 2d6 gems. One of the guard rooms also contains a gem of seeing mixed in with the nonmagical gems.





### 3. Storage

This room contains dried meat, fruit, preserved vegetables, wine, and tuns of water for the gnolls and other living visitors to the complex. The room also holds weapons (swords, spears, daggers, crossbows), clothing, blank parchment, ink, quills, and various spell components in jars and sacks.

### 4. Antechamber

This round, domed chamber is built of pale green marble, with black columns around the outside. Several couches line the walls. Visitors wait here before audiences with Szass Tam. Four apparently empty suits of armor stand along the walls, holding axes. Should anyone except Szass Tam or his allies enter the room, the suits of armor animate and attack, revealing themselves as helmed horrors.

**Helmed Horrors (4):** AC 2; MV 12/F1 12; HD 14; hp 74; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword); SD Healed by *magic missile*; SZ M; ML Special; Int High; AL N; XP 4,000.

### 5. Audience Chamber

This room contains a long marble table with comfortable, leather chairs. At one end is a raised dais where Szass Tam sits during audiences. The room's secondary purpose is as a conference room and dining hall where Tam plots strategy with his supporters and allies. It is here that those zulkirs who have declared for Tam met with him and discussed his plans to become Emperor of Thay.

### 6. Kitchen

Food for Tam's living guests is prepared here, usually by skeletons—though most visitors don't know it. (They might lose their appetites if they did.) The room contains a stone oven, magically fired stove, racks of spices, and numerous pots, pans, and utensils. A large closet near the back of the room, labeled "pantry," actually contains six skeletons who shamle out and start miming the actions of meal preparation if disturbed. If attacked, the skeletons defend themselves.

**Skeletons (6):** AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SD Half damage from edged





weapons, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold*; SZ M; ML Special; Int Non; AL N; XP 65.

## 7. Library

This room has bookshelves up to the ceiling, sliding ladders for easy access, comfortable chairs, and a writing desk. The library contains many books on history, many of which shed a great deal of light on unknown aspects of Thay's past. There are also volumes that deal with Thay's relations with the rest of Faerûn, with magic, natural history, tanar'ri and other extra-planar monsters, and golem construction. (In particular, there are several of the texts Aznar Thrul used to perfect his gem golems).

If the characters know what they're looking for, they might be able to find some useful information here. If the party stops to inspect the books, have the players describe what they are looking for and make Intelligence checks to decide if they find anything. The Intelligence roll may be modified by the specificity of the information required. The roll to answer a general question such as "Who is Szass Tam?" would have no penalty, for example, while "How do we stop the gem golems?" results in a penalty of -8 or more.

The DM may also allow the characters to browse through the books, then make rolls to learn if anything interesting or useful is discovered. The chances of finding anything are 1%, cumulative, per minute spent browsing. The exact information, and exactly how useful it is, is up to the DM.

Possible results of a search through the books include control words for Thayan golems, which might be used to stop or redirect attacking golems; information about new or unknown monsters (such as black unicorns and chosen ones); Red Wizard spells such as *flensing*, or Nybor's various spells of punishment and correction.

More importantly, several of the historical texts contain information on Eltab and how the great tanar'ri lord aided the Thayans in their war with Mulhorand and was imprisoned; others concern the *Death Moon Orb*, *Thakor-sil's Seat*, and the *Runes of Chaos*. This information is of particular use later in the adventure, when the PCs actually encounter Eltab himself and must deal with the runes, the seat, and the orb.

Each turn the party remains in the library, however, there is a cumulative 1% chance that a party of gnolls and a flind officer enter on patrol.

**Gnolls (12):** AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SZ L; ML 11; Int Low; AL CE; XP 35.

**Flind (1):** AC 5; MV 12; HD 2+3; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4 (flindbars); SA disarm; SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL LE; XP 120.

## 8. Sitting Room

Tam uses this room for reading and reflection, and for intimate conversations with individuals or small groups of visitors. It is made of dark stone, dimly lit and decorated with sculpture and paintings of a dark and unpleasant nature. A long couch fills most of the northern wall. There is a reddish black, hardwood table in the center of the room and several large chairs. Two zombies normally lurk in the shadows, serving Tam and his guests and they attack the party if it enters—in the dim light, all attack rolls are reduced by 1.

**Zombies (2):** AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SD Spell immunity; SZ M; ML Special; Int Non; AL N; XP 65.

## 9. Laboratory

This room is Tam's private lab, workshop, and spellcasting chamber. The door to this chamber from room 8 is crafted of blackwood and covered in silver runes and filigree work in the form of burning cities and conquering armies. The door is double *wizard locked* and requires an intricate silver key always kept on Szass Tam's person. The lock is -35% to pick. An unsuccessful attempt triggers a poison gas trap that releases the equivalent of a *cloud kill* spell into the hall. This trap is -20% to find and remove.

The interior of the laboratory is a dark wonderland of evil magic and paraphernalia. The light is dim, provided by more glowing globes, but can be brightened to blinding daylight at Szass Tam's command. The ceiling is hung with various strange items: preserved animals (lizards, bats, turtles, snakes, and some strange and unidentifiable creatures); sprigs of dried herbs; bundles of tree branches; skulls and bones of various creatures; silver and iron sigils and medallions; globes containing various liquids and gasses; several small, glowering implike creatures.

These last are extraplanar imp's that Tam has preserved for research purposes. If freed they dart about the laboratory, chattering and screaming, breaking items, pulling hair, kicking and scratching, doing a variety of mischief and, after several minutes, they vanish in puffs of flame. They are immune to all attacks, magical and otherwise, but cannot exist on the Prime Material Plane for long; they are eventually forced to return to their home realm.







Other globes restrain magically reduced *berbalang* and fire imps, which will grow to their normal size if liberated. If set free, the imps and *berbalang* fight for 1d4 rounds before vanishing back to their home planes.

**Fire Mephits (5):** AC 5; MV 12/F1 24; HD 3+ 1; hp 19; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3; SA Additional 1 point heat damage, breath weapon, *heat metal*, *magic missile*; SZ M; ML 8; Int Average; AL CE; XP 420.

**Berbalang (5):** AC 6; MV 6/F1 24 (B); HD 4+ 1; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4(x2)/1d6; SZ M; ML 10; Int Very; AL CE; XP 65.

Several large cages also hang from the ceiling. Some hold mundane creatures (rats, rabbits, snakes, lizards, scorpions, and spiders), while others restrict skeletons or are unoccupied. One large cage displays a full human-sized skeleton in perfect condition.

The lab itself contains long tables full of glassware, tubes, flasks, urns, mortars and pestles, and other alchemical or magical supplies. Beneath the tables are sacks of precious metals and gems. The sacks contain 5,000 sp, 2,500 gp, and 100 gems.

The walls are lined with bottles and jars containing various spell components, and a glass cabinet contains numerous potions labeled with a coded runic script readable only by Szass Tam (or a *read magic* spell). For game purposes, there are about 200 bottles in the cabinet; some (10%) contain useful potions, while others (10-20%) are hazardous or poisonous. The PCs can take all the potions if they wish and the DM can determine the number obtained and their usefulness later. Otherwise, using potions requires a random roll.

The walls also hold four hidden panels that open to reveal four iron golems.

In addition to the storage shelves, several interesting items hang from the walls. These include skulls from various species of *tanar'ri*, *yugoloth*, and *baatezu*, plus mirrors, small pieces of sculpture, and various wands and weapons.

Most of these items are unenchanted, there for decoration or in preparation for eventual enchantment, but a few are actually magical. The DM may determine the nature of these magical objects, but suggested items include a *mirror of life trapping* (covered by a black cloth), a mirror of mental prowess, enchanted weapons varying from + 1 to +3, one or more *figurines of wondrous power*, masks or sculptures containing *eyes of the eagle*, *charming*, or *minute seeing*, a *brazier of commanding fire elementals*, a

*chime of opening*, enchanted wands or staves, and similar items.

Although the defenses in the rest of the Citadel are formidable, Szass Tam believes that it is unlikely any enemy can penetrate the complex this far. In spite of that, he has left the laboratory guarded. Should the PCs disturb any thing in the room, the four panels in the walls open and four iron golems attack.

**Iron Golems (4):** AC 3; MV 6; HD 18; hp 80; THAC0 3; #AT 1; Dmg 4d10; SA Breath weapon; SD +3 or better weapons to hit; SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 13,000.

## 10. Guest Quarters

Szass Tam's living guests stay in these well-appointed, two-room suites. Furnished with rich blackwood furniture and comfortable beds, these rooms also contain writing desks, chairs, and small dining tables where guests are personally served by Tam's shambling undead minions. Each room has a closet containing an animated skeleton assigned to act as valet and butler for the room's occupant. Some squeamish guests sometimes ask that the skeletons be removed, a request to which Tam invariably complies, smiling and chuckling to himself.

**Skeletons:** AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SD Half damage from edged weapons, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold*; SZ M; ML Special; Int Non; AL N; XP 65.

## 11. Tam's Quarters

Although he is no longer alive, Szass Tam never lost his love for mortal luxury, and his private chambers reflect this. These rooms are filled with furniture skillfully carved from Chultan hardwoods, expensive artwork, rich carpets, rare books, and other lavish trappings. The air is constantly scented with incense from *Semphar* (the incense also serves to cover up the occasional whiff of Szass Tam's moldering remains whenever he forgets to use his preservative spells), and soft, magically produced music. The lighting is dim and indirect.

### 11a. Private Library

A small room houses Szass Tam's private book collection. Its walls are covered with glassed-in bookcases. Light is provided by a spherical globe that emits a warm yellow





glow, suspended in midair about a foot below the center of the ceiling. Tam's collection includes spellbooks and a collection of rare works from all across Faerûn, including specific information about Eltab and Tam's various artifacts. The chances of the characters finding anything useful while searching this room rise to 5% per turn, cumulative.

The library also includes the following: a *book of infinite spells*, a *book of vile darkness*, a *manual of golems*, and a *tome of understanding*.

The room is guarded by an undead beholder created by Szass Tam, that has been *polymorphed* into the form of a light globe, which floats near the ceiling. If unauthorized visitors open the glass bookshelves, the beholder transforms into its true form and attacks.

**Undead Beholder:** AC 0/2/7; MV F1 2 (C); HD n/a; hp 65; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA Magic; SD Anti-magic ray; SZ L; ML 18; Int Non; AL LE; XP 13,000.

### 11b. Private Dining Room

Although Szass Tam is well beyond the need to eat, he maintains this small, elegant chamber for entertaining guests. In the center is an octagonal marble table with eight chairs, over which hangs a glowing light globe. (This one is real, however, and shatters if it takes any damage at all.) Cabinets contain dishes and utensils.

### 11c. Bedroom

Szass Tam does not sleep, which enables him to devote himself to his schemes around the clock. This bedroom is maintained, however, for he occasionally wishes to rest, reflect, and perhaps try to recall the simple pleasures of sleep he knew as a living man.

The room contains a sideboard, table, desk, and canopied bed, all made of carved blackwood. Light is provided by another magical globe. Nothing of real value is kept here, so the room is unguarded and unprotected.

### 11d. Cloakroom

Numerous robes and tunics fill this room, hanging from rods or neatly folded on shelves. Most are dark red or black and emblazoned with the flames of Thay. The room also contains Tam's robe of eyes and *robe of stars*. When the PCs arrive Tam is elsewhere, wearing his robe of the *archmagi*, which is normally stored here.

## 12. Undead Storage

Szass Tam uses this large chamber to store his various undead servants. It is dark and crowded with the standing forms of various humanoids and skeletal bats hanging from the ceiling. They await Tam's call to service here, locked in a magical stasis. The following creatures are found here.

**Skeletons (20):** AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SD Half damage from edged weapons, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold*; SZ M; ML Special; Int Non; AL N; XP 65.

**Zombies (20):** AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SD Spell immunity; SZ M; ML Special; Int Non; AL N; XP 65.

**Bonebats (20):** AC 7; MV 3/F1 18 (C); HD 4; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA Paralysis; SD Half damage from edged weapons, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold*; SZ M; ML Special; Int Low; AL NE; XP 975.

**Heucuva (10):** AC 3; MV 9; HD 2; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA Disease; SD Hit only by silver or +1 weapons; SZ M; ML 11; Int Semi; AL CE; XP 270.

If the party enters the room, the magical stasis that keeps the undead still is broken and they stir to life. In 1d4 rounds, 2d6 of the undead in the room move to attack. In another 1d4 rounds, 3d6 of the remaining undead come to life, followed by the remainder of the room's occupants within another 1d4 rounds. If the party leaves the room, the undead cease to reanimate, but those already animated continue to be. They move out of the room and pursue the adventurers unless the door is barred, *wizard locked*, or otherwise blocked.

## 13. Summoning Room

As soon as they enter, the characters feel a sense of unease and vague horror about this room. It is built of black stone with gold and silver highlights here and there, and a dim globe of light glows near the ceiling. In the center of the room is a magical circle inscribed in silver and other precious substances, which Szass Tam uses to summon and bind *tanar'ri* and various other creatures of the planes. The purpose of a bloodstained altar nearby is obvious to the PCs and contains such a residue of evil magic that it is repellent even to look at. Lawful good characters feel an overwhelming urge to deface the circle and destroy the altar.







## 14. Cells

The door here, both conventionally (-25% to pick) and double *wizard locked*, leads to a complex where Szass Tam keeps his prisoners. Several enemies and potential sacrifices are imprisoned here, including the wizardess Azargathe Nimune, the final victim needed to create the ninth and final rune.

Needless to say, these cells are well guarded, by individuals whom Szass Tam knows he can trust: undead, bound fiends, and automatons. Each occupied cell has an antechamber that contains one or more guardians. These guardians are bound to fight to the death and must be overcome before the prisoner can be liberated.

### 14a. Helmed Horrors

Three helmed horrors stand guard here and attack as soon as the characters enter the room.

**Helmed Horrors (3):** AC 2; MV 12/F1 12; HD 14; hp 74; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword); SD Healed by *magic missile*; SZ M; ML Special; Int High; AL N; XP 4,000.

### 14b. Shadarakk

This unfortunate Red Wizard was caught actively plotting against Szass Tam and has been placed here before interrogation, torture, sacrifice, and conversion to undead status. Needless to say, he has become somewhat disillusioned by the life of Red Wizards. He would be only too happy to leave Thay and take up trade as a shopkeeper in Waterdeep or Suzail. Shadarakk has no spells left (he can relearn them should the characters have the appropriate books) and is reluctant to fight. He will beg and plead for the PCs to rescue him.

**Shadarakk (hm III5):** AC 10; MV 12; HD 5; hp 11; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2 (fist); SZ M; ML 9; Int High; AL N (E); XP 65.

### 14b. Golems

This room contains two iron golems that move to attack immediately.

**Iron Golems (2):** AC 3; MV 6; HD 18; hp 80; THAC0 3; #AT 1; Dmg 4d10; SA Breath weapon; SD +3 or better weapons to hit; SZ L; ML 20; Int Non; AL N; XP 13,000.

### 14c. Tharman

Tharman the Warrior is the last survivor of a party of Dalelands adventurers who attempted to penetrate the Citadel. Caught elsewhere in the labyrinth, Tharman abandoned his fellow adventurers and tried to flee but was captured, all his comrades were slain. He now sits and broods, consumed with guilt. He hopes to redeem himself with the heroic death that the adventurers might be able to provide him.

**Tharman (hm F10):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 60; THAC0 11; #AT 3/2; Dmg none; SZ M; ML 9; Int Average; AL CN; XP 1,400.

### 14d. Tanar'ri

Szass Tam has set a Nabassu to guard this room, the antechamber to the cell where his most important prisoner is kept.

**Tanar'ri, Nabassu:** AC -5; MV 12/F1 15; HD 7+20; hp 64; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d4+7; SA Death gaze, backstab, paralyzation; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 16; Int High; AL CE; XP 40,500.

### 14e. Azargathe Nimune

The kidnaped Deepingdale sorceress is held here, chained and relieved of her spells. (Like Shadarakk, she can relearn any appropriate spells in PCs' spellbooks.) She has been *feble-minded* by Szass Tam and presently has the mind of a child. If the *feblemind* is eliminated with a *heal* or *wish* spell, Nimune becomes aware of her surroundings and remembers that she was kidnaped by Szass Tam, an enemy she whose hostile encounters she has dealt with in the past. She does not know why Tam kidnaped her but will happily aid the party against him. She also wishes to retrieve her *staff of wizardry*, which Tam has taken.

**Azargathe Nimune (hf M10):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg none; SZ M; ML 18; Int Genius; AL CG; XP 1,400.  
*Spells:* 4/4/3/2/2 (selected by DM).

## 15. Guardians

The double doors at the end of the hallway open into room 15. They are inscribed with silver symbols of power





and magical script runs around their outer edges, reading (should the characters try to decipher the script or use *read magic*): "Here lies the Chamber of Twin Burnings, where Eltab sits upon *Thakorsil's Seat* and the *Death Moon Orb* shines over all."

On either side of the door are two helmed horrors that attack if the party touches or attempts to open the doors. They were created by a 10th-level priest and have increased abilities based upon their higher Hit Dice.

**Helmed Horrors (4):** AC 2; MV 12/F1 12; HD 14; hp 74; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (broad sword); SD Healed by *magic missile*; SZ M; ML Special; Int High; AL N; XP 4,000.

The door itself has been triple *wizard locked* and must be opened with a key kept by Szass Tam. No traps have been set on this door, however.

## 16. Antechamber

A circular domed chamber lies beyond the doors. Two babau stand guard here, against opposite walls. Sworn to

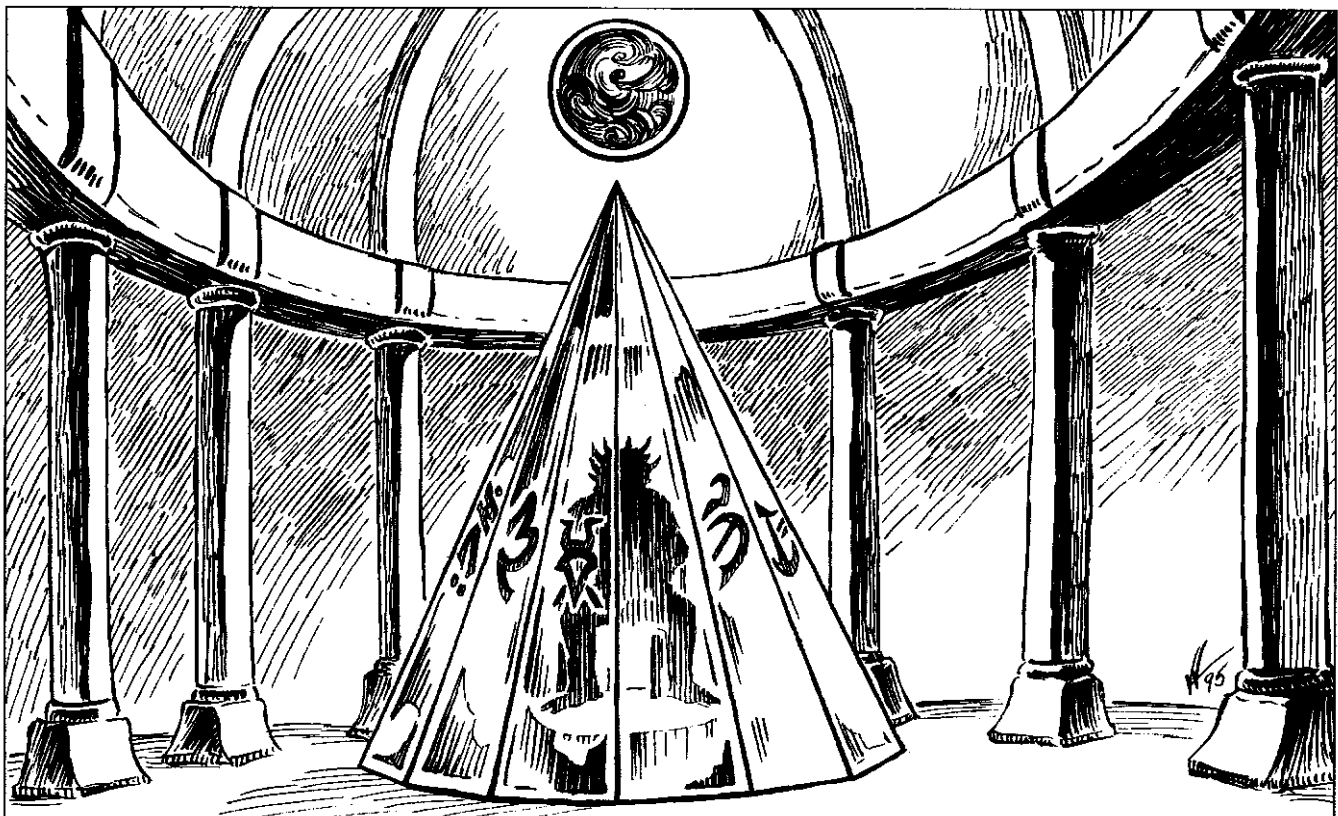
100 years of service to Szass Tam, they attack anyone not specifically accompanied by Tam, in person. They can neither be fooled by illusion nor disguise, nor can they be bargained with in any way.

**Tanar'ri, Babau (2):** AC -3; MV 15; HD 8+ 14; hp 65; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/2d4 or by weapon + 7 (Strength bonus); SA corrosion, gaze, backstab; SD +1 or better weapons to hit, thief abilities; MR 50%, SZ M; ML I5; Int High; AL CE; XP 17,500.

## 17. Chamber of Twin Burnings

The room is a vast domed chamber built of pale pink marble, veined with black and white. In the center is a tall, nine-sided pyramidal structure, seemingly crafted of crystal. On eight of the nine sides are strange, jagged runes inscribed into the crystal itself. Above the pyramid hovers a violet-black sphere with a glassy surface that shifts and shimmers like oil on water.

Three low tables made of black stone are spaced around the pyramid, but otherwise the room is featureless.





In the center of the pyramid, you see the vague form of a giant humanoid figure, seated on an elaborate throne. As you approach you can pick out some details—it is covered in dark red, bony plates and has a fanged, bestial head, sprouting numerous horns and large glowing yellow eyes.

A faint voice, like a thunderous bellow from an incalculable distance away, echoes in your ears.

“Outsiders! Enemies of Szass Tam! I beseech your aid! I am the god Eltab. I was imprisoned by the Red Wizards many years ago. Now Szass Tam has placed me upon this throne, using the orb above me. Eight *Runes of Chaos* have been inscribed on my crystal prison. When Tam inscribes the ninth, I will be his slave for all eternity, and all my power will be at his disposal. You must destroy the eight runes and set me free, or Tam will have access to limitless power. I beg you, destroy the runes!”

This is Eltab, the tanar’ri abyssal lord who helped the Thayans defeat the Mulhorand god-kings. Though he is not actually a god, he is very close.

If Azargathe Nimune is with the party, she warns them of Eltab’s true nature. (She is familiar with him and his history.) Should she do so, Eltab immediately confirms her story using a little honesty to win the party’s trust, but he swears that he will return to the Abyss and not trouble Faerûn if only he is set free. He goes on to say that if the party does not destroy the runes, his powers will all be turned against Faerûn in any event, at the command of Szass Tam, the greatest enemy of law and freedom on Toril.

*Hadrillis*, of course, immediately detects Eltab’s true nature and demands that the party attack and destroy him. Remember the sword’s special powers over tanar’ri should the party fight Eltab.

The party is left with a rather tricky dilemma. If they break the runes, Eltab will be free but tanar’ri are infamous for their treachery and he might turn on the party. On the other hand, if they leave the runes in place, Tam will eventually complete the rituals and Eltab will be entirely in his power. In that case, his complete control of Thay and utter domination of all eastern Faerûn is virtually assured.

Allow the players to discuss matters for a few minutes; this is, after all, a monumental decision, with the potential for terrible consequences.

## Showdown

The remaining events are up to the players. DMs have several options based upon their actions. If the characters do not free Eltab, they may simply fight Szass Tam when he shows up. Tam is a powerful spellcaster and should give the party a run for their money; add apprentices and extra minions (undead, gnolls, and so on) if needed. In this case, Tam should be allowed to escape or the characters allowed to flee, and Tam’s scheme for controlling Eltab will go on, with the exact consequences up to the DM.

If the PCs do not free Eltab and the DM wishes the adventure to continue as described below, without Szass Tam having a shot at ultimate power, then Tam enters the room with a 10th-level transmuter apprentice, Renho Thane. The apprentice sees the PCs and casts fireball, lightning bolt, or similar spell. Tam screams, “No, you fool!” and the spell strikes the pyramid containing *Thakorsil’s Seat*, shattering the runes, sending the *Death Moon Orb* plummeting to the ground and freeing Eltab. (Note that in neither case is the orb actually destroyed—it is simply sent flying off into the planes and may show up elsewhere in Faerûn.)

The most likely route for the characters to take, however, is to free Eltab and hope for the best, in which case read the boxed text below. If Renho foolishly fires off his spell and frees the tanar’ri lord, paraphrase the following as necessary.

Slowly, but with increasing speed, a fine network of cracks spreads outward from the eight Runes of Chaos with the sound of shattering glass. Overhead, the Death Moon Orb swirls black and purple, but flashes of red and green flicker across its surface. Suddenly, the entire pyramid explodes into glassy fragments and the orb vanishes in a flash of bright violet light.

In the center of the place where the pyramid once stood, a great, humanoid being rises from an elaborately carved ebon throne. The fiend is at least 15 feet tall and covered in heavy red and black plates. Its toothy, heavily muzzled head sprouts dozens of horns and antlers, both large and small. From its back unfurl wings like those of a gigantic insect.

The creature fixes you with glaring, red-slitted yellow eyes.

“I am Eltab, Lord of the Hidden Layer,” it growls. “You have freed me. Your reward is to become my first servants or, if you refuse, my first prey. What is your pleasure?”





Before you can respond, the doors to the chamber open, revealing a number of humans dressed in red robes emblazoned with yellow flames. In the lead is a lean, pale, black-bearded man bearing a blackwood staff. Beside him is a bald-headed man with heavy black eyebrows.

When he sees Eltab standing amid the ruins of the crystal pyramid, he bellows, "You fools! What have you done?"

Eltab swivels his hateful gaze onto the bearded man and his companions. "Szass Tam!" it spits. "My beloved tormentor. Were you not already dead, I would kill you slowly. But now I will take your worthless life-force instead!"

Fire leaps from Eltab's fingertips, slashing through the ranks of Red Wizards, slaying several, and sending the remainder scattering.

A crackling nimbus of protective energy springs up around Szass Tam and he shouts at you.

"You freed him, you idiots! Aid us now or we are all dead! We will settle our own scores later!"

The two lead Red Wizards are, of course, Szass Tam and his apprentice Renho. They immediately made their way to the Chamber of Twin Burnings when they noted that Nimune was missing from her cell. Now it seems that their would-be slave is free, and Tam's centuries-old plan has been thwarted.

The characters have yet another series of choices. They may join with Tam and Renho Thane to fight Eltab. Together, they will eventually injure the dread tanar'ri abyssal lord sufficiently to force him to flee (though he now nurses a deep grudge against the characters and will plot revenge at a later date). Once this is done, however, Szass Tam will take his frustrations out on the PCs.

On the other hand, the characters may, for reasons known only to themselves, decide to help Eltab fight the Red Wizards. The outcome will be similar. The PCs' intervention will defeat the Thayans, killing most of the low-level wizards, forcing Szass Tam to flee, and badly wounding or even killing the wicked Renho Thane.

Finally (and most sensibly), the characters may attempt to flee the scene of carnage, allowing Tam, Renho and Eltab to fight it out (and may the worst being win). The fight between Eltab and the two wizards will rock the entire complex, causing tremors, collapses, fissures, and other catastrophes. If the party is delayed too long by any of these incidents, the winners of the struggle in

the chamber may come after them, intent on vengeance.

In any event, the combatants have the following statistics. Keep track of the spells expended by Tam and his allies; they will turn them against the characters once Eltab has been vanquished.

**Eltab, Lord of the Hidden Layer** (tanar'ri, abyssal lord): Int Supragenius; AL CE; AC -8; MV 18/F1 36; HD 37; hp 185; THAC0 1; #AT 2; Dmg 4d8(x2); SA Terror, impalement, death gaze; SD +3 or better weapons to hit; MR 80%; SZ L; ML 18; XP 39,000.

**Zulkir Szass Tam**, lich (Nec29): AC 0; MV 6; hp 64; THAC0 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 + paralysis or by spell; SA spells; SD +1 or better magical weapon to hit; immune to *charm*, *cold*, *electricity*, *enfeeblement*, *insanity*, *polymorph*, *sleep*, and death spells; SZ M; MR 5% (robe of the archmagi); ML 19; Int Supragenius; AL NE; XP 17,000.

#### Spells:

**Level 1:** *Armor*, *burning hands* (x2), *chill touch*, *detect undead*, *jump*, *summon undead*, *magic missile* (x2).

**Level 2:** *ESP*, *flaming sphere* (x2), *glitterdust*, *irritation*, *pyrotechnics*, *shatter*, *spectral hand*, *web*.

**Level 3:** *Feign death*, *hold undead*, *fireball*(x2), *haste*, *infravision*, *monster summoning I*, *preservation*, *vampiric touch*.

**Level 4:** *Beltyn's burning blood*, *contagion*, *dimension door*, *extension I*, *fire trap*, *ice storm*, *polymorph other*, *stone skin*, *wall of ice*.

**Level 5:** *Animate dead* (x2), *cloudkill*, *dismissal*, *extension II*, *magic jar*, *monster summoning III*, *summon shadow*, *teleport*.

**Level 6:** *Anti-magic shell*, *chain lightning*, *death spell*, *extension III*, *fiendform*, *globe of invulnerability*, *monster summoning IV*, *stone to flesh*.

**Level 7:** *Acid ruin*, *animate dread warrior*, *control undead*, *delayed blast fireball*, *finger of death*, *Mordenkainen's sword*, *power word*, *stun*, *spell turning*.

**Level 8:** *Clone*, *glassteel*, *incendiary cloud*, *mind blank*, *monster summoning VI*, *power word*, *blind*, *prismatic wall*, *Serten's spell immunity*.

**Level 9:** *Energy drain*, *gate*, *imprisonment*, *meteor swarm*, *monster summoning VII*, *Ritual of Twin Burnings*, *time stop*, *wish*.

Tam is wearing a *black robe of the archmagi*, which provides him with a +1 on all saving throws, he also possesses a *ring of protection +2* and a *wand of whips*.





**Renho Thane (hm Tra10):** Int Genius; AL CE; AC 6 (*scale mail +1, staff of power*); MV 12; hp 70; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (*vampiric dagger*) or 1d6+2 (*staff of power*); SZ M; ML 18; XP 15,000.

**Spells:**

**Level 1:** *armor, burning hands, magic missile (×2), shield, shocking grasp.*

**Level 2:** *Darkness (15' radius), flaming sphere, fog cloud, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, shutter.*

**Level 3:** *Blink, fireball ×2, Melf's minute meteors, wraithform.*

**Level 4:** *Confusion, dimension door, extension I, fire shield, wall of fire.*

**Level 5:** *Conjure fire elemental, extension II, fabricate, telekinesis.*

**Acolytes (hm &hf Nec5 (10)):** AC 10; MV 12; HD 5; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (*dagger*); SZ M; ML 13; Int High; AL NE; XP 420.

**Spells:** 6/4/3 (selected by DM).

## Szass Tam's Revenge

The most likely outcome if the party stays and fights is that the characters aid Tam against the freed tanar'ri, especially if they are dragged into battle by the combative sword *Hadryllis*. In this case, Eltab is likely to be defeated, although he will probably not be killed. He flees back to the Abyss if he is reduced to 25 hit points or less. In this case Szass Tam is free to take out his frustrations on the adventurers.

The room is in chaos. The crystal pyramid lies in shards, the strange black throne is blown to pieces, the black and violet sphere has vanished, and the gleaming walls are stained with soot and black burn marks. Bodies of slain Red Wizards lie everywhere.

Szass Tam stands amid the carnage. The spells that concealed his true appearance seem to have weakened; he resembles a well-preserved corpse now, and the scent of decaying flesh wafts in your direction.

"He is gone," Tam hisses. "You have destroyed everything I have worked for. The plans of centuries lie in ruins, thanks to you meddling fools. Be grateful that I now reward you with a quick death."

The party may flee, in which case Tam and any surviving Red Wizards give chase, or they may choose to fight the zulkir and his allies. (Remember how many spells the Red Wizards have left.) If Tam is reduced to 25 hit points or less, he too will flee, using *teleport* or some similar means that he keeps in reserve.

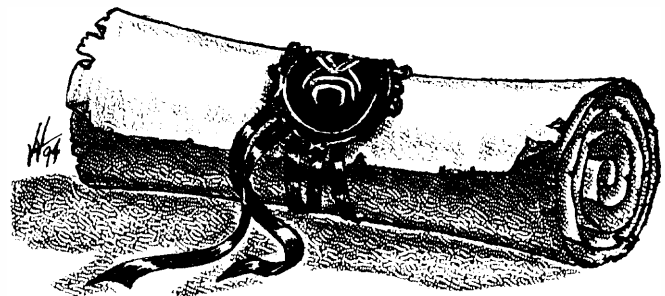
With Tam out of the picture, Aznar Thrul is free to pursue his more subtle strategies, with the appropriate consequences for Thay.

Once Tam has been driven off, the party still faces escaping from the Citadel and returning to Aglarond.

## Escape from The Citadel

The party may flee from the Citadel in a number of ways. If the characters have been badly bloodied, the DM should tell them that the Devouring Portal *teleports* them outside the Citadel, where the Simbul creates another *mage-tunnel* to bring them home. Alternatively, the adventurers may have to wait a few days for the Simbul's tunnel to arrive, dodging gnoll patrols and vengeful Red Wizards, or they may even have to flee across Thay itself.

Once they have returned to Aglarond, the adventurers are healed, treated, allowed to rest, and ushered into a debriefing with the Simbul, who tells them the results of their mission, and its effects on the land of Thay.





# Epilogue



The Simbul fills the characters in on any details they failed to learn—the entire story of Eltab and Tam’s plans to enslave him and of the possible new threat in Aznar Thrul. She also rewards the party with 5,000 gp each as well as a selection of suitable magical items, as determined by the characters.

Characters receive XPs based upon foes thwarted but also receive bonuses for achieving various goals in the course of the adventure. These goals are group awards to be divided equally among party members.

If the adventurers managed to outwit any of the Citadel’s occupants (such as the pick-up-sticks playing *tanar’ri*) without bloodshed, they are awarded half the XPs they would have won by slaying them. If they freed Eltab, the party receives 5,000 bonus XPs. If Szass Tam was wounded and forced to flee, the PCs receive 15,000 bonus XPs. Should the party have managed to actually kill Tam, they receive 20,000 XPs, but the undead wizard does not remain dead for long andretums to Faerûn eventually. If Eltab was forced to flee, they receive 10,000 bonus XPs. The DM may award other bonus points based on the PCs’ actions.

## The Situation in Thay

In all likelihood the PCs have shattered many of Szass Tam’s plans. Badly wounded, and seriously overextended by his exertions, Tam flees to his private demesne to recover, and Thay goes to pieces in his absence. Emboldened as rumors of Tam’s defeat and the escape of Eltab spread, Lauzoril and Nevron (if he still lives) speak openly against the necromancer. Mythrell’aa, a vital ally in Tam’s strategies, again retires to her tower and declares her neutrality.

Aznar Thrul managed to survive the debacle by remaining aloof from Szass Tam’s machinations. The Tharchion of the Priador is now free to pursue his own goals and could even rehabilitate Szass Tam if he needed him. Thrul is now in a position of greater power than he was before Tam’s advent. The Zulkir of Invocation and Tharchion of the Priador is now set to establish his own supremacy in Thay.

The various tharchions and Red Wizards who once supported Tam now either declare neutrality or seriously reduce their enthusiasm for his plans.

The upshot of the entire affair is to return Thay to its original state—that of a land of near-anarchy, with power divided between squabbling wizards and tharchions. Szass Tam continues to be a major Thayan zulkir and continues to scheme for absolute power, possibly falling back on alternate plans which he developed but held in reserve.

If the adventurers did not free Eltab but instead chose to flee, Tam’s plans are delayed. If he succeeds in enslaving Eltab, Thay becomes a united empire under his rulership, immediately descending upon the surrounding lands in a war of conquest.

Alternately, the DM may determine that the delay in creating the ninth rune gives Tam’s enemies enough breathing room to marshal their forces and fight, possibly even freeing Eltab and spoiling Tam’s plans themselves, returning Thay to its original state.

Whatever the outcome, the adventurers’ exploits in both *Throne of Deceit* and *The Runes of Chaos* have changed the face of Thay and brought about titanic events. This alone should assure their place in the history of Faerûn and provide a gateway to further excitement and adventures.





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# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons



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# Cat, Great, Snow Tiger



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<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Subarctic to temperate
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Uncommon
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Solitary
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Day
<b>DIET:</b>	Carnivore
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Semi- (2-4)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	Nil
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Neutral
<hr/>	
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	1d4
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	5
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	12
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	6+3
<b>THAC0:</b>	15
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	3
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	1d6/1d6/1d10
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	Rear claws (2d4 each), speed burst
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	Never surprised, camouflage
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	Nil
<b>SIZE:</b>	L (7'-10' long)
<b>MORALE:</b>	Average (8-10)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	975



The great snow tiger is a carnivorous beast found throughout northern and eastern Faerûn, though it is most common in Rashemen. There, berserkers revere its speed, strength, and hunting skill, and often try to emulate its appearance and behavior—there is a Rashebaar Snow Tiger berserker lodge.

The Rashebaar's admiration for the snow tiger does not preclude hunting the beast; in fact, it is considered a singular honor to have taken one single-handedly. Hunting snow tigers alone, unarmored, and armed only with a broad sword or a bow is a popular sport among Rashebaar nobles.

Snow tigers are vividly portrayed in Rashebaar legends, where they are credited with all manners of cunning, intelligence, and ferocity. Though dangerous predators and a fierce challenge to hunt, snow tigers are simply another large predator fighting for survival in Rashemen's harsh climate. Tales of intelligent tigers luring prey to its doom are but tales.

**Combat:** The snow tiger attacks with a savage bite and raking claws. Like other great cats, the snow tiger has large and powerful rear claws. If both front claw attacks hit in a single round, the tiger automatically rakes with both rear claws, scratching opponents for 2d4 points of damage each.

Snow tigers change color with the season as do other subarctic and arctic species. During spring and summer they are pale brown, striped with green. In fall the snow tiger's coat slowly fades to white and black stripes. In either case, the tiger blends in quite effectively with its surroundings and is treated as a hidden object, gaining automatic surprise when attacking from hiding. Snow tigers are never surprised.

When attacking, snow tigers are capable of blinding bursts of

speed, moving at double rate for 1d4 rounds without a penalty to attack or damage rolls.

**Habitat/Society:** Normally solitary, snow tigers may be encountered in mated pairs during spring and summer. During this period there is a 25% chance that a pair will have 1-2 cubs (no combat abilities). Rashebaar hunters sometimes take cubs and raise them as pets, training them to hunt. In order to be successfully trained, the cub must be less than three months old and the trainer must make three successive animal training proficiency checks. Only one check may be made per week, and if one fails the trainer must start all over again. Once a cub is over three months old, it cannot be trained and is usually returned to the wild.

Cloaks of snow tiger fur are symbols of status among the Rashebaar. They are never sold and may only be worn by individuals who successfully slew the tiger that became the cloak. Individuals who wear cloaks they are not entitled to are usually attacked by Rashebaar who learn their secret.

**Ecology:** A cunning and resourceful predator, snow tigers prefer larger prey such as deer, mountain goats, sheep, and horses. During the depths of winter, snow tigers are sometimes reduced to stalking mice, rabbits, foxes, and other small game.

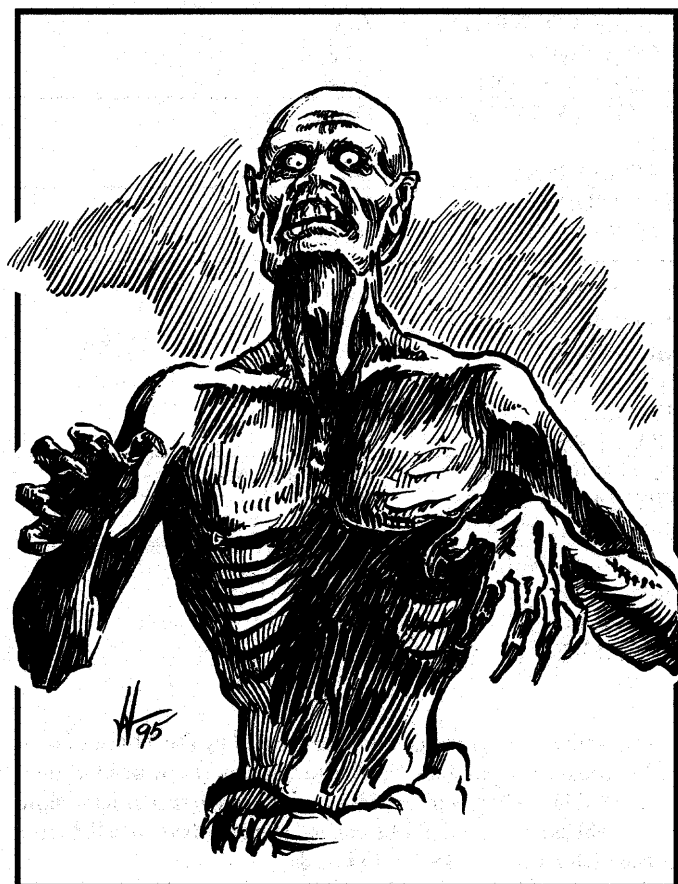
A few are intelligent enough to realize that humans are relatively easy prey, but this is rare. Most snow tigers avoid humans and attack only if cornered or starving.

# Chosen Ones



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<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Any
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Rare
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Band
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Any
<b>DIET:</b>	Carnivore
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Low (5-7)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	Nil
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Chaotic evil
<hr/>	
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	3d10
<b>ARMORCLASS:</b>	7
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	12
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	3
<b>THAC0:</b>	17
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	3 or 2
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	1d8/1d4/1d4 (or 1d8 and weapon)
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	Poison
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	Nil
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	Nil
<b>SIZE:</b>	M
<b>MORALE:</b>	Fanatic (18)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	175



Chosen ones were once human slaves, but they have been subjected to torture and magical procedures (see the 5th-level spell *create chosen one* in the *Campaign Guide*) to turn them into violent guardians under the control their Red Wizard creators.

Driven by rage, chosen ones seek to avenge themselves upon those who caused their pain and suffering, but their anger is magically redirected from their creators. In effect, each chosen one is compelled to see everyone except its creator and his companions as the cause of its pain and consequently attacks all others with unstoppable fury.

The magical spells that create them twist their appearances into hideous caricatures of humans; faces contort, teeth elongate, and the skin transforms into a tough, leathery protective coating. Chosen ones' hands are gnarled and stretched, ending in wicked, filthy claws.

The Red Wizards use chosen ones primarily as guards for their homes or important places such as laboratories, treasure vaults, and dungeons. Once created, a chosen one can only be restored to humanity by a *wish* or similar powerful magic.

**Combat:** If a Red Wizard is compelled or held hostage, a special code word can be uttered to compel the chosen ones to attack their creator's captor.

In battle, chosen ones attack fearlessly, biting with fangs and slashing with filthy claws. Some chosen ones are equipped with weapons that replace the claw attacks.

Victims of a chosen one's bite must save vs. poison or suffer an additional 1d8 points of damage per round for the next 1d6 rounds.

Chosen ones are not completely reliable. Occasionally, their conditioning breaks down and memories of their past lives as well as the true cause of their pain flood their heads. Each round a chosen one is

in combat after the fifth, there is a 1% cumulative chance that it goes berserk. (For example, this increases to 5% after 10 rounds.) If that happens, the chosen one screams horribly and immediately leaves combat, running away to find its master and take revenge as quickly as possible, fighting only those who stand in its way.

**Habitat/Society:** The occasional instability of chosen ones is a price the wizards are willing to pay for useful slaves. The death of the Red Wizard Thamarrak and several of his guests, whose 20 chosen ones unaccountably went berserk simultaneously during a dinner party, is considered an aberration. (On the other hand, several Thayans have speculated that it was the work of one of Thamarrak's enemies, who discovered how to circumvent the magical programming).

Many Red Wizards and tharchions see the military applications of the chosen ones, foreseeing the creation of legions of chosen ones, which can be unleashed upon neighboring states without commanders. The current political tumult in Thay has so far prevented this. Of course, the possibility of large numbers of chosen ones going berserk and taking vengeance in Thay may put an end to the plan until chosen ones can be more readily stabilized.

**Ecology:** Chosen ones play virtually no role in Thay's ecology, although captives have been known to escape and terrorize innocents for a time before being hunted down and destroyed.

# Dread Warrior



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CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Band
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Day or night
DIET:	None
INTELLIGENCE:	Low
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral evil
<hr/>	
NO. APPEARING:	1d12
ARMOR CLASS:	2-4
MOVEMENT:	9
HIT DICE:	4
THAC0:	17
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d8+2 or by weapon +2
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M
MORALE:	Fanatic (18)
XP VALUE:	175

Dread warriors are enhanced undead created by the Thayan Zulkir of Necromancy, Szass Tam. Similar to zombies, dread warriors must be created immediately after death so that they retain at least minimal intelligence. They must be created from the body of a fighter of at least 4th level, dead for less than a day.

Zulkir Szass Tam created the dread warriors over 20 years ago, intending them for an invasion of Rashemen. Myrkul's Legion, a force made up entirely of dread warriors, was unleashed on the berserkers and the coastal cities in 1357 DR, but was turned back after furious fighting. Many dread warriors fell to the spells of the Rashemaar witches, and more were destroyed by the Rashemaar nature spirits. The powerful place-magic of Rashemen apparently affected the dread warriors as well, for many misinterpreted orders and some even turned on each other, destroying entire companies.

Dread warriors are found primarily in the retinue of Szass Tam, although he has loaned a few to trusted allies. They form a part of Cyric's Legion, one of Szass Tam's largest military units. Recently Szass Tam has been creating more dread warriors in anticipation of a large-scale civil conflict, possibly against the tharchions and zulkirs who continue to hold out against him.

**Combat:** As former fighters, dread warriors retain their desire to fight and are both strong and skilled. A dread warrior's Strength is 18/01 and, although this does not provide the creature with an attack bonus, it does grant +2 to all inflicted damage (making its standard unarmed damage 1d8+2). They are armed with whatever weapons they carried as living fighters, though none have the sophistication to use bows or crossbows. They can be ordered to throw spears or javelins with minimal accuracy (-4 to hit).

Dread warriors are capable of following simple orders such as "advance and attack the enemy," "stay here and defend this hallway against all attackers," and so on. They are not at all sophisticated, however, and complex orders simply confuse them. Orders of up to 12 words cause no problems; there is a cumulative 5% chance for every word after the 12th that a dread warrior will misinterpret the



order—does the exact opposite, goes berserk and begins attacking anything nearby, or stands around doing nothing. This percentage is doubled if the dread warriors are in Rashemen, where the powerful magic of the spirits of the land disrupt the evil necromantic spells of the Red Wizards. Additionally, dread warriors suffer a -2 attack roll penalty when in combat with witches or Rashemaar nature spirits.

Dread warriors may be turned by clerics as shadows. A *raise dead* spell destroys a dread warrior entirely, while a *resurrection* spell requires the dread warrior to make a saving throw vs. spell (save as 4th-level fighter). If the saving throw fails, the dread warrior is instantly destroyed. If it succeeds, the dread warrior is restored to life, fully regaining the form it had in life.

**Habitat/Society:** Dread warriors exist exclusively as soldiers and guards for the Red Wizards and Szass Tam in particular. When not in combat they are usually kept in "cold storage" in dungeons or barracks, since Tam is reluctant to use his valued elite warriors as domestic servants. His associates have been known to use his dread warriors in this manner, but this almost always results in a sharp rebuke from the Zulkir of Necromancy, who sees little humor in such shenanigans.

**Ecology:** Dread warriors have little if any impact on the land's ecology since their very existence geared to the defense of Thay and the mad schemes of its rulers. Those who break free of control sometimes wander the countryside, shambling about in a twisted caricature of their old lives, sometimes challenging passersby to fights, sometimes breaking into homes to steal food (even though they can no longer eat), or otherwise terrorizing the innocent.

# Eltab



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<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	The Abyss
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Unique
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Planer ruler
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Any
<b>DIET:</b>	Carnivore
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Supragenius
<b>TREASURE:</b>	G×5
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Chaotic evil
<hr/>	
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	1
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	-8
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	18, F1 36 (B)
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	37
<b>THACO:</b>	1
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	1 or 2
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	By weapon or 4d6/4d6
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	Terror, impalement, death gaze
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	+3 or better weapons to hit
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	80%
<b>SIZE:</b>	L (15' tall)
<b>MORALE:</b>	Fanatic (17-18)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	39,000

Eltab is an ancient and powerful abyssal lord who has ravaged this region of Faerûn on many occasions. Legends call him the Lord of the Hidden Layer and he holds many other titles in the Abyss. His forces won the day many times for the tanar'ri in the Blood War with the baatezu, earning him great power and the envy of many tanar'ri nobles. In a great conflict, Eltab killed or drove off several influential fiends, taking their titles and followers. After centuries of success in the Abyss and beyond, Eltab journeyed to the Prime Material Plane to the world of Toril, to carry on his conquest.

Many centuries ago, the Rashemaar say that Eltab arrived in their land with a horde of tanar'ri and other fell beasts, intent on either destroying the land or moving it to the Abyss to become part of his realm. The hero Yvengi, son of a Rashemaar lord slain by Eltab's legions, prayed to the spirits of the land to provide him with a weapon mighty enough to defeat the rampaging tanar'ri, and he was rewarded with the magical sword *Hadryllis*. Yvengi led a band of Rashemaar berserkers against Eltab and faced the great fiend in single combat. Seriously wounded, his minions defeated or slain, Eltab gave up the fight, fled the battle, and left Rashemen free.

Defeated but not destroyed, Eltab next appeared when the Red Wizards of Thay struggled for independence against the corrupt Empire of Mulhorand. Summoned and compelled to service, Eltab helped defeat the god-kings, but the Thayans discovered that, once called, an abyssal lord is somewhat difficult to dismiss. To prevent Eltab from ravaging Thay, they imprisoned him under Eltabbar.

A series of runes was crafted to keep Eltab imprisoned, the largest of these being the canals of the city of Eltabbar, capital of Thay. There the matter rested for years, occasional earthquakes and disturbances marking the restless imprisonment of the once-mighty tanar'ri noble. Through a bizarre and unanticipated form of sympathetic magic, accurate maps of Eltabbar acted to drain energy from the network of runes. When one of these maps was destroyed, the



runes prison weakened slightly. The Red Wizards sought to prevent anyone from owning accurate maps of Eltabbar, so mere possession of one was a capital crime. But the maps continued to be drawn and the runes grew weaker as the years went by.

It fell to Szass Tam, Zulkir of Necromancy, to realize the inevitable fact that someday the great Eltab would free himself and all of Thay would tremble. Tam hatched a plan to not only reimprison Eltab, but to turn him into a slave to Tam's own will providing godlike power to Szass Tam.

Eltab is a tall, muscular, humanoid creature. His body covered in bony, dark red plates, and his head is like that of a muzzled beast. He sprouts dozens of horns and antlers. His eyes are narrow and yellow, slitted a glowing red.

Today, Eltab is a grim, hateful creature, weary of centuries of captivity and burning for vengeance.

Eltab has few allies today as most of his fellow tanar'ri believe he is dead and many of them would be happy to "honor" his memory.

**Combat:** Eltab is a terrifying opponent. His very presence carries the effects of a *fear* spell, and he can use a *death gaze* once per turn. Victims who meet Eltab's *death gaze* must save vs. death magic or instantly perish. When unarmed, he fights with his two heavily clawed hands, each inflicting 4d8 points of damage. If both claw attacks hit, Eltab may then impale his opponent on his horns, inflicting an additional 3d10 points of damage.

Eltab is hard to injure. His natural 80% magic resistance is coupled with an immunity to all magical weapons of less than +3 enchantment.

# Golem, Gemstone



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	Ruby	Emerald	Diamond
<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Any	Any	Any
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Very rare	Very rare	Very rare
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Solitary	Solitary	Solitary
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Any	Any	Any
<b>DIET:</b>	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Non-(0)	Non-(0)	Non-(0)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	See below	See below	See below
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	1	1	1
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	0	0	0
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	6	6	6
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	10 (50 hp)	12 (55 hp)	14 (60 hp)
<b>THACO:</b>	11	9	7
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	1	1	1
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	3d10	4d10	5d10
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	Nil	<i>Lightning bolt,</i> <i>cloudkill</i>	Diamond chips, <i>sunray</i>
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	+1 or better to hit, immune to electrical and heat-based spells	+2 or better to hit, immune to acid and heat-based spells, 50% damage from electrical attacks	+3 or better to hit, immune to heat, electricity, and acid based attacks
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	Nil or 25%	Nil or 50%	Nil or 75%
<b>SIZE:</b>	L (8' tall)	L (9' tall)	L (10' tall)
<b>MORALE:</b>	Fearless(20)	Fearless( 20)	Fearless( 20)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	5,000	8,000	10,000

Gemstone golems were originally created long ago by the god-kings of Mulhorand. These fearsome creatures are highly resistant to damage and, once set in motion, virtually unstoppable. Some observers link these gemstone golems with rumors of “statues that walk” in Mulhorand, claiming that the two share similar magical technology and construction techniques, but others claim that they are an entirely different phenomenon.

Ancient documents speak of powerful, gleaming warriors that sometimes aided the god-kings in their wars of conquest. Most scholars simply assumed them to be animated statues or conventional golems—until the Red Wizards rediscovered the god-kings’ secrets.

Recently, the Red Wizards (and in particular, Zulkir Aznar Thrul) discovered the ancient Mulhorand manuals used to guide construction of gemstone golems and, with the aid of a Conjuring/Summoning apprentice, unleashed them upon the Rashemaar, whose powerful spirit- and place-magic have so often frustrated Thayan armies.

Although the ancient god-kings were able to set their gemstone golems in motion without constant oversight, Thrul’s golems are not so dependable. A *circle* of at least 12 Red Wizards, led by a spellcaster of at least 12th level, is required to control and direct the golems in battle. Each circle can control all gemstone golems within a 1-mile radius, so few wizards are assigned to such duties. The circle cannot take any other actions while doing so, and if the circle is disrupted, the golems under its control stop fighting and wander aimlessly. Additionally, the circle can only maintain control of the golems

within the 1-mile radius when the circle is first formed—they may not add more golems or take control of another circle’s golems.

When finally slain, gemstone golems collapse into piles of rough-cut gems identical to their type. Each golem produces 10d10 gems of the precious category, with values determined using Table 86 in the *DMG*. The remainder is powder, useless for most purposes, though some wizards and alchemists may be able to use it for spell components.

So far, only three major types of gemstone golems have been created—ruby, emerald, and diamond. Thrul has experimented with other stones, with mixed success.

The secret of the creation of gemstone golems remains in Thrul’s hands and should it ever get out, the Red Wizards will have yet another potent weapon for their arsenals. As long as Thay remains in its current chaotic state, the wizards are as likely to use their gemstone golems against each other as against neighboring nations so Thrul keeps the secrets of golem-making close.

Thrul and his allies are eager to turn the golems against the berserkers and witches of Rashemen, for they have discovered that the magical process used to create gemstone golems produces sorcerous effects inimical to nature-based enchantments and spirit-powers. A few experimental raids into Rashemen have proved the value of the gemstone golems, and no defenders have yet survived to alert their compatriots to the danger. Now, a larger force of gemstone golems is under construction and Aznar Thrul is considering sharing the secret of their creation with some of his allies—but he trusts no one.

# Golem, Gemstone



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## Ruby Golem

Ruby golems stand 8 feet tall and weigh over 3,000 pounds. They resemble statues of dark red, glossy humans clad in armor or robes. Their surfaces are slick and hard, and the Thayans often craft them with the heads of fanciful monsters or armored humans.

**Combat:** Ruby golems strike in combat with stone-hard fists. They are completely mindless in battle, directed by the controlling wizard's circle. For purposes of lifting, breaking, and throwing, they have a Strength of 20.

Ruby golems are immune to all normal weapons, and can only be hit by magic or by weapons of +1 or greater enchantment. They have a 25% resistance to cleric spells of the Animal, Elemental, Plant, Sun, and Weather spheres, all spells cast by druids, Rashebaar witches, and the magical abilities of the nature spirits of Rashemen. They take half damage from such spells, even if they do not resist them. They are completely immune to all electric- and heat-based spells.

A *rock to mud* spell immobilizes a golem for 2d4 rounds, while a *crystalbrittle* spell causes one to become vulnerable to normal weapons and eliminates its resistance to heat and electricity. The spell *shatter* inflicts 5d6 points of damage on a ruby golem, while a *mending* spell heals all of the golem's damage.

## Emerald Golem

Emerald golems resemble tall, muscular human males carved of glittering green stone. Most of those created by Aznar Thrul resemble normal, physically perfect males.

**Combat:** Emerald golems are immune to all weapons of less than +2 enchantment and possess a 50% immunity to nature-based magic. They are also completely immune to acid- and heat-based attacks, but take half damage from electrical attacks.

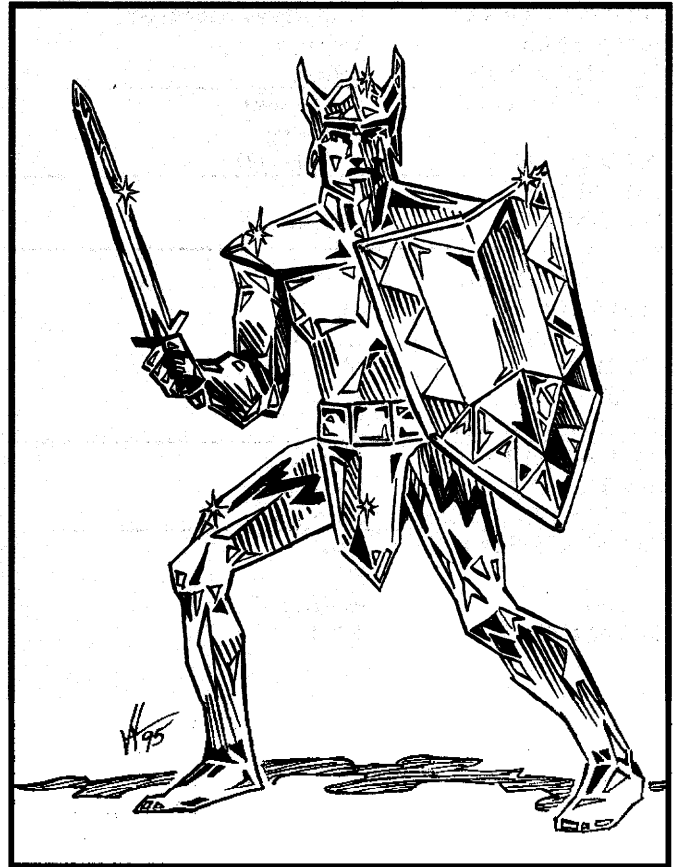
In combat emerald golems strike with their fists. For purposes of lifting, breaking, and throwing, emerald golems have a Strength of 22. Three times a day an emerald golem can shoot a flickering green *lightning bolt* that inflicts 8d8 points of damage. Once a day an emerald golem can release a cloud of green gas that acts as a *cloudkill* spell.

*Shatter* inflicts 4d6 points of damage on emerald golems, while *crystalbrittle* eliminates their immunity to magic and causes them to be vulnerable to +1, rather than +2, weapons. A *mending* spell restores 2d6 lost hit points, while *glassteel* completely restores all damage done to them.

## Diamond Golem

Diamond golems are the most powerful of the gemstone golems created by Aznar Thrul. They resemble tall, muscular humans clad in armor and carved out of multifaceted diamond. They are often armed with swords or carry shields, although these are merely for decoration and do not provide the golem with any additional armor or advantages in combat. They are completely immune to heat-, electricity-, and acid-based attacks.

**Combat:** Diamond golems fight with their fists and have a Strength of 24 for purposes of throwing, breaking, and lifting. They are immune to attacks from all weapons of less than +3 enchantment and are 75% resistant to nature-based magic and Rashebaar creatures.



Three times a day a diamond golem may emit a cloud of tiny diamond chips in all directions, inflicting 10d8 points of damage on all within a 25-foot radius. Also, three times a day, diamond golems may emit a blinding light equivalent to the *sunray* cleric's spell.

*Shatter* causes 3d6 points of damage to diamond golems, while *crystalbrittle* reduces diamond golems' nature-magic immunity to 25% and its immunity to heat, electricity, and acid to 50%, also rendering it vulnerable to +2 and above weapons, rather than +3. *Mending* restores 2d6 lost hit points, while *glassteel* restores all damage.

**Habitat/Society:** The use of gemstone golems is still rare in Thay. Aznar Thrul has shared the secret of their creation with no one. He keeps it from other Zulkirs for fear they will steal it and use it against him. Thrul uses gemstone golems extensively as guards, and a few are found throughout Thay in the employ of Thrul's close associates (at his command).

Currently, Thrul is creating an army of over 100 gemstone golems of all types for an invasion of Rashemen. He hopes that their resistance to the nature magic of the Rashebaar witches will help this invasion to succeed where others have failed.

**Ecology:** Gemstone golems do not eat, sleep, or have any biological functions. When not in use by their controllers they are deactivated by the controlling circle. While they are most often used in combat or as guardians, they are sometimes used as servants.

# Hag, Bheur



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CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Cold regions (Rashemen)
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Day or night
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Very (11-12)
TREASURE:	(D)
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil

NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	-3
MOVEMENT:	12, F1 48 (A)
HIT DICE:	10
THACO:	11
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2d6/2d6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Staff of frost
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	40%
SIZE:	M
MORALE:	Fanatic (17)
XP VALUE:	4,000

The bheur, or “blue hag,” of Rashemaar legend is said to be the bringer of winter, capable of spreading deadly cold over a wide area. Rashemaar tales are uncertain whether there is only one bheur or many, but in all stories she is a powerful and malevolent creature who serves the useful purpose of helping to bring winter. She is invariably defeated and driven off each spring.

In most stories the bheur resembles a hideous, wrinkled old crone with pale blue-white skin and snow-white hair, wrapped in a tattered gray-blue shawl. She carries a gnarled gray staff taller than she is, and her voice howls of icy winds.

Some stories tell of the bheur and orglash working in concert to mislead, attack, and devour travelers. No one knows whether tales of cooperation between blue hags and orglash are true; witnesses are unlikely to live to tell the tale.

Other legends speak of epic battles between high-ranking *wych-laran* and the bheur, and of the early onset of spring as a result of victory by the witches. The witches themselves believe that the bheur is a natural part of the land and serves a useful purpose, but they will fight the blue hag if she begins to act arbitrarily or cruelly. As the witches say, winter is the best part of the year, but even winter pales in the month of Hammer.

**Combat:** The bheur fight by laying their cold palms upon victims, causing intense pain and 2d6 points of damage from pure frost. Flame-based creatures take double damage.

A bheur carries her *staff of frost*, which functions in the same manner as a *wand of frost* save that it never needs recharging. The staff functions only for a bheur; out of her hands, it is useless. If a bheur's staff is lost or destroyed, she must leave the Prime Material Plane for a year in order to regain a new one.

The bheur is entirely immune to all cold-based attacks, and suffers only half-damage from fire-based attacks. It sustains double damage from acid and electricity. The bheur is reluctant to engage wizards who use those spells in combat.



**Habitat/Society:** Some claim that the bheur themselves bring the cold, others that the cold draws the bheur.

As the skies turn slate-gray and snow swirls down from the sky, driven on howling winds, the Rashemaar shut their doors tightly, make certain that they have laid in enough wood and food for the winter, and cower in the terrible weather. During this time the bheur is abroad, and most Rashemaar fear her greatly.

Like the dreaded uthraki shapechangers (described later in this booklet), bheur prefer to prey upon lone travelers, freezing them and devouring their frozen bodies. The bheur is also said to sneak into people's homes if the doors and windows are not properly sealed, where they snatch away young children or unsuspecting residents. Such stories are probably cautionary tales against leaving windows and doors open, but they usually do the job keeping young Rashemaar in line for fear of the blue hag.

**Ecology:** No one has ever seen two blue hags together, leading to a widespread belief that there is only one bheur in all of Rashemen. After freezing victims, the bheur dines on the icy corpses, and it is said that anyone who sees a bheur devour its victim may be struck blind or driven mad. Characters who witness such an act must successfully save vs. death magic or be blinded (75%) or driven insane (25%). Insane characters flee (50%), attack anyone nearby, friend or foe (30%), or collapse in a catatonic heap, incapable of speech or movement (20%). The madness lasts 2d6 days unless the victim receives a *cure disease* or *remove curse* spell.

	Red	Black
<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Any	Any
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Uncommon	Uncommon
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Tribal	Tribal
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Any	Any
<b>DIET:</b>	Carnivore	Carnivore
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Average (10)	Average (10)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	L (C, O, Qx10, S)	L(C, O, Qx10, S)
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Lawful evil	Lawful evil
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	10d10	10d10
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	3 (6)	5 (10)
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	6 (12)	8 (14)
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	5 4	
<b>THAC0:</b>	15 17	
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	1	1
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	By weapon	By weapon
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	War cry	Nil
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	Nil	Camouflage
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	Nil	Nil
<b>SIZE:</b>	MM	
<b>MORALE:</b>	Champion (15-16)	Elite (13-14)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	270	175
Sergeant	420	270
Officer	650	420
General	975	650

For many decades Thayans have tried to create their own race of orcs, violent but loyal to Thay. The neo-orog is a magical hybrid of ordinary orcs, ogres, and other creatures. Tall and muscular, with large hooded eyes, tough leathery skin, and snouted bestial faces, neo-orogs seem to embody all the worse aspects of the creatures that went into their creation.

The two breeds of neo-orog, red and black, are warrior creatures, loyal and skillful, who live for battle. Their only weakness is their slow rate of reproduction—Thayans have managed to field only a few companies.

## Red Neo-Orog

These creatures were bred as elite troops. Their skin is dark, mottled red, and their eyes are deep yellow. They are well equipped and revel in bloodshed and violence.

**Combat:** Red neo-orogs fight with the following weapons: Broad sword (20%); axe (20%); warhammer (10%); mace and dagger (10%); axe (10%); spear and shield (20%); crossbow and sword (10%).

In battle, red neo-orogs can scream their unique war cry, which causes all orcs, ogres, and neo-orogs within earshot to fight at +1 on attack and damage rolls for 2d4 rounds. The effect is not cumulative, and individual neo-orogs cannot be affected by it more than once a day. They fight at an additional +1 on attack rolls when defending Red Wizards.



## Black Neo-Orog

The black breed of neo-orogs were bred to act as scouts, archers, and infiltrators. They are leaner, slightly taller than reds, and their skin ranges from dark green to deep, sooty black. Their facial features are slightly less bestial and their eyes are smaller and completely black.

**Combat:** Camouflage masters, black neo-orogs hide so effectively that even observers who know what they are looking for have only a 20% chance of detecting them. Normally alert observers have a 10% chance, while casual observation yields only a 5% chance. The camouflage is negated if the creature moves or attacks.

Black neo-orog fight with the following weapons: Broad sword/short bow (20%); broad sword/crossbow (10%); broad sword/long bow (15%); spear/dagger (20%); short sword/short bow (15%); short sword/spear (20%).

**Habitat/Society:** All neo-orogs live in barracks built by the Red Wizards. No independent groups of them exist. They are organized into large military units. For every 10 neo-orogs in a group, there is one sergeant with maximum hit points. For every 20, there is one officer with 6 HD (THAC0 15) and a +1 on all damage rolls. Each barracks is commanded by a neo-orog general with 7 HD (THAC0 13), a +2 on all damage rolls, and having AC 2 (5).

**Ecology:** Neo-orogs have only marginal impact on ecology.



# Spirit, Forest



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<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Forests (Rashemen)
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Very Rare
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Solitary
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Any
<b>DIET:</b>	Special
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Genius (18)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	Nil
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Chaotic good
<hr/>	
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	1
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	-6
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	24
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	20
<b>THACO:</b>	3
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	2
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	3d10/3d10
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	Crush, throw
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	Regeneration, immune to fire and electricity
<hr/>	
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	50%.
<b>SIZE:</b>	G (50' tall)
<b>MORALE:</b>	Fearless (20)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	20,000

Of all the nature spirits of Rashemen, the most powerful is the great being known as the wood man. Towering 50 feet in height, the wood man resembles a vast, oversized humanoid made of living wood, with great root-bound feet and gnarled, club-like hands, ail sprouting branches, leaves, and needles of a dozen different tree species.

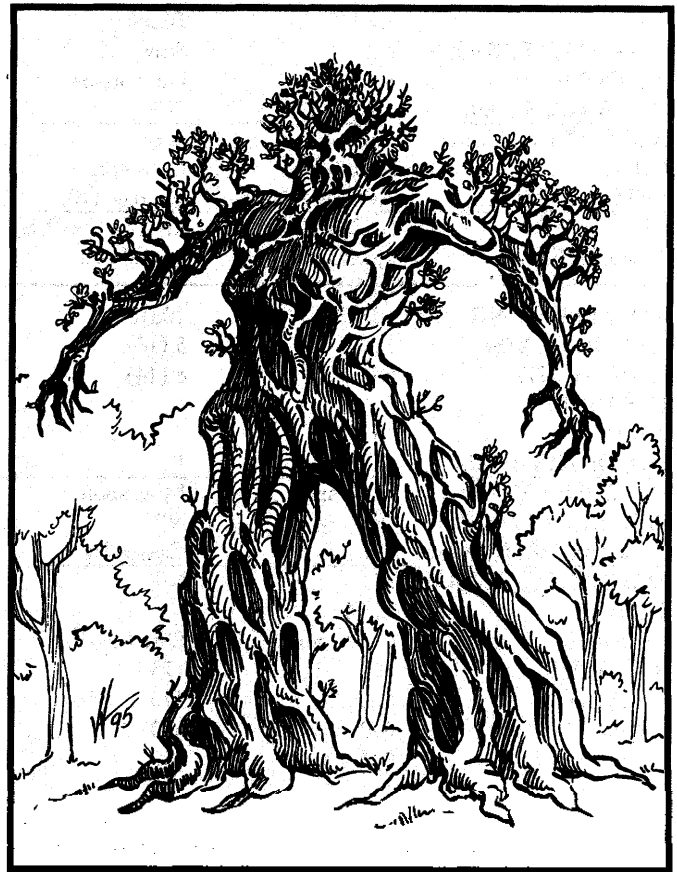
The Rashemaar fear this mighty creature, as its thirst for vengeance is said to occasionally extend to Rashemaar who have not been unswerving in their dedication to the land and its people. Cautionary tales warn commoners and nobles alike to maintain their respect and love for both the land and the Witches, lest the wood man be sent to correct their behavior.

The wood man appears to defend Rashemen against foreign invaders. Terrifying in combat, the wood man serves as a potent morale-builder for Rashemaar forces. Though its combat abilities are formidable, the wood man is not invincible. The Tuigan Horde is said to have destroyed one during the invasion of 1359-60, and a unit of Thayan bombarders damaged a wood man sufficiently to force it into retreat in one of the Red Wizards' many campaigns against Rashemen. The bombarders were later overrun and destroyed by the berserkers. Though the weapons are highly effective against the Rashemaar in general, and the wood man in particular, their extreme value and the difficulty of dragging them to Rashemen have prevented the Red Wizards from using bombarders since then.

**Combat:** The wood man attacks by smashing its foes with great, club-like hands, each hitting for 3d10 points of damage. If both hands hit, the wood man automatically inflicts another 5d10 points of crushing damage.

An opponent held with both hands may also be thrown: The victim flies 10d10 yards and suffers 6d8 points of damage when he strikes the ground.

A wood man has a 50% resistance to most magic, but this rises to 80% resistance against the evil magic of the Red Wizards. A wood



man is also immune to all fire- and electricity-based attacks.

Literally rooted to the land of Rashemen, a wood man is a growing creature. It regenerates 4 hp per round and must be reduced to -50 hp in order to be destroyed. Thus, a wood man is virtually immortal and very difficult to kill.

**Habit/Society:** A wood man (usually there is only one, though legend holds that several may be summoned if the need is great enough) appears in times of great need or crisis—the very glimpse of one is enough to convince most Rashemaar that doomsday is at hand. Exactly how they are called is not known. Some claim they may be summoned by the witches, though a few who are aware of the existence of the *oremyonni* believe that these powerful, old male sorcerers are responsible for calling up the wood man; still others believe they are servants of the gods.

The Red Wizards and their troops are terrified of wood men, and the mere sight of one is enough to send a Thayan army fleeing. Fortunately for the Thayans, the wood man (or men) is very rare, putting in an appearance only when the entire land is in deadly peril. So far, the Rashemaar have become so skillful in dealing with Thayan invasions that the wood man seems almost unnecessary.

**Ecology:** The wood man is a literal extension of the land. Rather than affecting the nation's ecology, it is the living embodiment of the ecology. Though its passage is always destructive—trees tom up, hills displaced, valleys devastated and rivers redirected—all damage magically heals itself within a matter of days, soon all is as if the wood man had never been there.

# Spirit, Ice



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CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Mountains, icy regions of Rashemen
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Unknown
INTELLIGENCE:	Average (10)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic neutral
<hr/>	
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	0
MOVEMENT:	12/Fl 24 (D)
HIT DICE:	8
THACO:	13
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d8/1d8
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	<i>Cone of cold</i>
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Immune to cold spells, regeneration
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	See below
SIZE:	M
MORALE:	Fanatic (18)
XP VALUE:	2,000



Orglash are Rashemaar ice spirits that protect high mountain peaks but descend to lower levels in winter. They are chaotic and unpredictable but valued for their role as protectors. They can exist in temperatures above freezing and are sometimes summoned by Rashemaar witches during the spring. In summer and fall, orglash are vulnerable and actually suffer damage at higher temperatures.

Orglash are spirit creatures, wispy and insubstantial, small whirls of wind and snow. If stared at long enough, a tiny pair of black eyes can be faintly seen in the midst of the whirlwind, shifting in and out of view as the wind whips chips of ice and thick flakes of snow.

Like the thomil rock spirits (see Spirit, Rock), orglash are viewed with mixed emotions by the Rashemaar themselves. Although they defend the land against the Red Wizards and other foreign invaders, they have also been known to set upon a lone Rashemaar or small parties of travelers. Fickle creatures with little apparent regard for other living things, orglash are a source of great fear and apprehension.

The witches say that the orglashes' link is to the land, not to the people. By defending Rashemen against alien assaults, the orglash are looking out for their own and the humans of Rashemen are merely the accidental beneficiaries.

**Combat:** Orglash attack with tendrils of icy force, lashing their opponents with razor-sharp shards of ice, flung by the swirling winds that form their bodies.

Three times a day, an orglash can unleash a freezing blast of ice equivalent to a cone of cold.

Orglash are immune to all cold-based spells, but suffer double damage from all heat-based spells such as *fireball*. In freezing weather, orglash regenerate 1 hp per round. In temperatures above 60° Fahrenheit, orglash take 1 point of damage per round. They can-

not exist at temperatures over 100° Fahrenheit and automatically dissipate. Dissipated orglash do not die, they are reduced to an insubstantial form. They must return to an area where the temperature is 40° Fahrenheit or lower, where they revert to their original form in 24 hours.

Orglash are highly resistant to Thayan magic. They have a 50% magic resistances to spells cast by Red Wizards and never check morale in direct combat with Red Wizards.

**Habitat/Society:** Solitary creatures, orglash are viewed as the protectors of Rashemen despite the fact that their hostility to other living things sometimes extends to the Rashemaar.

A single orglash roams a single mountain peak, valley, or other cold place. When winter spreads its icy net across Rashemen, however, they wander the entire land. Most of the time orglash stand at a distance and watch passersby, their black eyes fading in and out of whirling nimbuses.

Orglash seem capable of sensing the presence of foreigners, and outsiders are invariably attacked by orglash.

**Ecology:** Most of orglash ecology is a mystery. Unlike the thomil that were specifically created or summoned, orglash are natural creatures, bound to the land itself. They are apparently sexless, though some observers claim to have seen them giving "birth" to smaller versions of themselves, but this has never been confirmed. They seem to derive sustenance from cold weather, ice, and snow, and they have never been seen eating or consuming anything.

# Spirit, Rock



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<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Mountains/rocky terrain (Rashemen)
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Very rare
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Solitary
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Any Mineral
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Average (10)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	Q (x), X
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Chaotic neutral
<hr/>	
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	1 (see below)
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	-3
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	5
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	5
<b>THAC0:</b>	15
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	2
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	1d10/1d10
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	Envelopment, smash
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	Block
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	Nil, 25% or 50%
<b>SIZE:</b>	M
<b>MORALE:</b>	Fanatic (17-18)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	975

Thomil are spirit creatures that inhabit and guard rocky and mountainous places in Rashemen. Rocks inhabited by thomil radiate magic but are otherwise indistinguishable from other rocks until the thomil becomes active. Then, the rock rises, flowing into rough human form—two arms, chest and head. The torso rises out of the ground, remaining connected to it while moving and fighting.

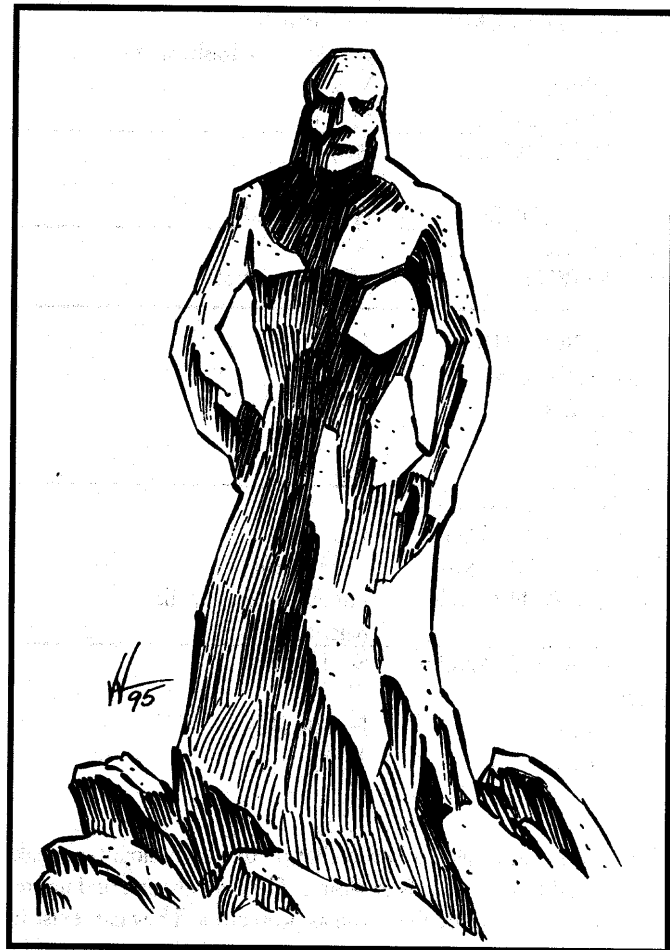
The thomil are part of a pantheon of spirits and enchanted creatures that populate Rashemaar folklore. While the common people of Rashemen hold the thomil in high regard, they also fear them, for although they defend the land from foreign invaders, the thomil also punish those Rashemaar who are so greedy or short-sighted that they neglect to pay proper homage to the land and its spirits.

Legend maintains that the thomil were sent (or summoned) to Rashemen in response to the evil, unnatural magic of the Red Wizards. Resistant to all forms of magic, the thomil emerged from the earth to throw back the invaders.

**Combat:** Thomil guardians attack despoilers of the land. They rise out of the ground to batter opponents with rocky fists. If both attacks hit, the thomil envelopes its opponent and inflicts an additional 2d10 points of crushing damage.

Though thomil normally adopt a semi-humanoid appearance, they are amorphous, capable of taking shapes appropriate to their opponents. Thomil may take the form of a massive club or battering ram, smashing opponents with one devastating attack, inflicting 3d10 points of damage but with a -3 attack roll penalty if they do so.

When defending, thomil can transform into solid blocks of stone that give them an AC of -10. In block form, however, they can neither move nor attack. They often take block form against missile weapons or magic.



Like most of the spirit creatures native to Rashemen, thomil have an inherent resistance to magic. The resistance is normally 25%, but against the evil and corrupt nature of the spells cast by the Red Wizards of Thay it goes up to 50%.

**Habitat/Society:** The origin of the thomil is uncertain—perhaps they were created by the ancient gods or summoned by the *vremyomni*, the ancient male wizards who live in isolated caves in Rashemen, to defend the realm.

Most thomil are solitary. Anyone who tries to mine, destroy natural formations, or invade with hostile intent against Rashemen triggers attack by the thomil. Should the Rashemaar themselves wish to build or mine in an area of the thomil, Rashemaar witches of level 10 or higher who petition a thomil to be gone have a 50% chance of success.

Larger or more important sites such as mountains, sacred valleys, and territory near the caves of the *vremyomni*, are defended by larger numbers of thomil. In such places as many as 20 thomil may be found.

**Ecology:** Thomil are not natural creatures, they were apparently created or summoned from another plane to act as guardians. They derive their sustenance from the land itself, absorbing minerals and necessary elements. They spend most of their time in a dormant state, inhabiting natural rock formations and become active only if called upon to defend their districts.

# Sprite, Seelie



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<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Forests, sylvan settings
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Very rare
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Community
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Any
<b>DIET:</b>	Omnivore
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Average-high (10-12)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	D
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Chaotic neutral
<hr/>	
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	10d10
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	5
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	6/Fl 18 (B)
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	1-1
<b>THACO:</b>	20
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	1
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	By weapon
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	Spell
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	Invisibility
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	25%
<b>SIZE:</b>	T (1"-1' tall)
<b>MORALE:</b>	Steady (11-12)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	270
Noble	420
Monarch	650

In the mystical reaches of the Yuirwood, where the ancient Yuir elves once walked and worshiped strange gods, are unusual creatures that have been seen nowhere else in Faerûn.

Whether the seelie are unique to the Yuirwood or whether groups of them exist elsewhere on Toril is not known for sure—they are furtive and shy, reluctant to make contact with the outside world and often mischievous and annoying when they do. The seelie claim that there are others, perhaps on the elven isle of Evermeet, but this is impossible to verify.

Seelie faeries vary greatly in appearance. Most resemble diminutive humans of great beauty and grace. Though some are distorted or implike, they still possess an otherworldly aura. Some have animal heads, tails, or limbs, while still others are entirely alien in appearance, though still strangely beautiful. All seelie can fly, though some have translucent, membranous wings; They range in size from one inch to one foot in height and seem to have control over their actual size—individual seelie have been encountered at one size, then seen later in larger or smaller forms.

**Combat:** Seelie are mischievous and have little stomach for direct combat. They can become invisible at will, using this power to engage in ambushes often involving the use of tiny swords (1d2 points of damage) or bows (1 point of damage) treated with sleep poison. Anyone hit by these weapons must save vs. spell or fall into a deep sleep for 2d4 hours; victims must successfully save each time they are hit, making mass attacks by seelie faeries surprisingly effective.

Seelie are also known to ride large insects such as dragonflies, bumblebees, and hornets. They carry small lances (inflicting 1d4 points of damage) that are sometimes treated with sleep poison.



The seelies' most popular forms of attack, however, are magical. All seelie have innate magical abilities. Each can cast at least one spell of any level, once a day. Each seelie's spell is fixed and must be determined by the DM. Most are nonlethal but annoying, such as *sleep*, *dancing lights*, *shocking grasp*, *fog cloud*, *irritation*, *improved phantasmal force*, *stinking cloud*, *slow*, etc. Spells such as *Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter*, *polymorph other*, and *Otto's irresistible dance* are popular, for to the seelie they have hilarious results.

**Habitat/Society:** Seelie society is divided into commoners, nobility, and royalty. Seelie nobles can cast two spells a day, while royals can cast at least three.

Seelie claim to live in fanciful palaces invisible to normal eyes—these may be small demiplanes connected to Toril via the residual magic of the Yuir. Their days are dedicated to feasting and reveling, and they never seem to work.

The only thing the seelie seem to take seriously is the threat represented by their chaotic evil cousins, the unseelie. The wicked unseelie are locked in a centuries-long war with the seelie, a war that neither seems capable of winning. Hatred is strong and they attack one another on sight.

**Ecology:** Seelie faeries seem to have very little effect on the outside world. The seelie appear to derive sustenance from the tiny demiplanes where they keep their palaces and homes, and rarely hunt or forage in the Yuirwood.

# Sprite, Unseelie



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<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Forests, sylvan areas
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Very rare
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Tribal
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Night
<b>DIET:</b>	Omnivore
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	Average (10)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	D
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Chaotic evil
<hr/>	
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	10d10
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	6
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	6/18 F1 (B)
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	1-1
<b>THACO:</b>	20
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	1
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	By weapon
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	Cause horror, spell
<b>SPECIAL DEFENSES:</b>	Invisibility
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	25%
<b>SIZE:</b>	T (1"-1' tall)
<b>MORALE:</b>	Steady (12)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	420

Twisted and evil cousins of the seelie faeries, the unseelie are ugly, dark-skinned creatures. They have tattered insect wings, long thin arms, and broad, large-nosed faces. Like the seelie, the unseelie vary greatly in appearance, often with the faces or limbs of beasts with claws, fangs, or oversized, monstrous eyes. Individual unseelie are able to manipulate their size, ranging from one inch to one foot in height.

The unseelie fight an endless war against the seelie. They probably originated in the same region and may have been brought to Aglarond by magical *gates* opened by the ancient Yuir elves. While the seelie are merely mischievous, the unseelie are sadistic and murderous. Seelie merely taunt and annoy those outsiders who blunder into their realms; unseelie take delight in the infliction of pain and killing.

**Combat:** Unseelie can become *invisible* at will and use the ability to follow, terrorize, and eventually ambush victims. The mere sight of an unseelie is terrifying to ordinary mortals and has the effect of a *fear* spell on all observers.

Unseelie fight with small weapons (swords inflict 1-2 points of damage, bows inflict 1 point) sometimes treated with the same sleep poison used by their seelie cousins (victims must save vs. spell or fall asleep for 2d4 hours). Victims often waken to find themselves bound and tormented by dozens of wicked unseelie, who derive great amusement from the pain and suffering of others. Unseelie faeries also ride common bats or stirges into battle, attacking with lances and inflicting 1d4 points of damage. These weapons are also sometimes treated with sleep poison.

Each unseelie can cast one spell a day (noble and royal unseelie are unknown). The spell can be of any level, but it is usually something both damaging and painful such as *magic missile*, *lightning bolt*, *cloudkill*, or *monster summoning*.

**Habitat/Society:** Unseelie faeries live in communities located in dark, twisted places, like gnarled trees, grim swamps, and dreary,



weed-infested meadows. Their palaces, located in small demiplanes, are ugly black structures bristling with spikes, carved skulls, and images of horrifying monsters.

Unseelie live under a malevolent anarchy, each individual doing as he or she pleases, usually at the behest or under the control of the individual with the most powerful magical abilities. These individuals often style themselves king, queen, or emperor, but they are just as often deposed.

The unseelie have always fought their seelie cousins. The two battle across the length and breadth of the Yuirwood, and woe be unto any travelers caught in the middle.

Grief comes also to anyone getting caught in unseelie territory after nightfall. They are merciless with captives, often inflicting evil torments before finally killing the victims. Even those who escape have problems—they often do so *polymorphed*, with the head of a goat and the legs of a beetle, dancing, itching, or laughing uncontrollably.

**Ecology:** Though the unseelie seem to gain their sustenance from the tiny pocket dimensions where their palaces are located, they have a significant effect on the surrounding ecology, hunting animals for the fun of it, despoiling pleasant glades, felling trees, and attacking human and half-elf travelers. Experienced explorers know the signs of a nearby unseelie settlement: twisted and blackened vegetation, animals killed and left to rot, smashed trees, and poisoned water. Those who know the Yuirwood are always careful to avoid such regions.

# Unicorn, Black



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CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Forests, plains (Thay)
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Night
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	High (13-14)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil
<hr/>	
NO. APPEARING:	1d4
ARMOR CLASS:	3
MOVEMENT:	24
HIT DICE:	4+4
THAC0:	17
NO. OF ATTACKS:	4
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d4/1d6/1d6/1d10
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Charge, <i>cause light wounds</i>
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	<i>Teleport</i>
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	L
MORALE:	Elite (14)
XP VALUE:	975

The black unicorn is one of the results of Thayan experimentation into the corruption of existing life forms. Black unicorns resemble their white relatives, but they are twisted and evil. Black unicorns have become a mainstay of the Thayan military, and many are kept as pets by Red Wizards.

Black unicorns are coal-dark creatures sporting silky black manes and burning red eyes. Their horns are long and spiraled, chased with silver and they are quite beautiful. Male black unicorns are bearded and the females more slender than the males, but they retain a heavy musculature.

Highly intelligent, black unicorns can be taught to speak Common, and there are rumors that Red Wizards are trying to teach them spells with purely verbal components.

Despite their success and usefulness in combat, black unicorns are fickle and chaotic, mostly concerned with their own safety rather than that of their riders or companions. It is not at all unusual for a black unicorn to flee combat when the tide turns against it, dislodging riders or *teleporting* away by itself and leaving others to fend for themselves. Just the same, black unicorns serve in large numbers with the Thayan military. Several major units made up of black unicorns and evil-aligned female riders serve the zulkirs. The Sisters of Cyric, a prominent regiment sworn to serve the Zulkir Aznar Thrul, consists of evil female priestesses of Cryic mounted on black unicorns.

**Combat:** Although black unicorns do not have the ability to move silently or sense the presence of enemies, they are never surprised and fight in battle with front hooves and horn, biting with sharp-edged teeth. A black unicorn's horn does not have any attack roll bonus. Like normal unicorns, black unicorns can make a charge attack. If a black unicorn moves at least 30 feet over open ground, its horn can strike for 3d12 points of piercing damage. They may not attack with their front hooves in the round they charge.

Black unicorns can cause light wounds three times a day and can instantly *teleport without error* once a day. To *cause light wounds* the unicorn must touch its opponent, and this may be used in conjunc-



tion with a horn attack. The *teleport without error* includes the unicorn itself but not its rider, and such riders often find themselves abandoned in the midst of bad combat situations by their chaotic mounts.

**Habitat/Society:** These foul creatures were created by the Red Wizards, who fused the blood of tanar'ri and other evil creatures with that of ordinary unicorns, creating a hateful, demented creature that lives for violence and combat.

Black unicorns only allow themselves to be ridden by human or drow females of evil alignment. Evil-aligned females must petition a suitable unicorn; if the female is acceptable, the unicorn will serve. If not, it immediately attacks the supplicant, making service with the Thayan black unicorn cavalry a hazardous proposition.

**Ecology:** Most black unicorns are kept as pets by Red Wizards or serve in the Thayan military. A few wild specimens have escaped, however, and some small herds roam Thay and its vicinity. These herds are dominated by their strongest member, male or female, and appear to inflict pain and suffering on those around them for the sheer joy of it. They are especially fond of attacking horses and normal unicorns, which they passionately hate.

Black unicorns are carnivores especially fond of the flesh of humans, elves, horses, and ordinary unicorns.

The horns of black unicorns are highly prized. In powdered form it can be used to create a potent poison equivalent to a Type N contact poison (DMG Table 51). When fixed to a lance and wielded by a charging, mounted user, it inflicts the normal black unicorn charge damage.

# Uthraki

<b>CLIMATE/TERRAIN:</b>	Forests (Rashemen)
<b>FREQUENCY:</b>	Rare
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Solitary
<b>ACTIVITY CYCLE:</b>	Special
<b>DIET:</b>	Carnivore
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	High (11-12)
<b>TREASURE:</b>	F
<b>ALIGNMENT:</b>	Chaotic evil
<hr/>	
<b>NO. APPEARING:</b>	1
<b>ARMOR CLASS:</b>	4
<b>MOVEMENT:</b>	18
<b>HIT DICE:</b>	5
<b>THACO:</b>	15
<b>NO. OF ATTACKS:</b>	2
<b>DAMAGE/ATTACK:</b>	1d6/1d6
<b>SPECIAL ATTACKS:</b>	Strangle
<hr/>	
<b>MAGIC RESISTANCE:</b>	Nil
<b>SIZE:</b>	M
<b>MORALE:</b>	Steady (12)
<b>XP VALUE:</b>	420

Uthraki are malevolent shapechanging spirits which haunt the dark woods and lonely roads of Rashemen, Uthraki are said to take the form of harmless companions, befriend lone travelers, and then kill and devour them.

No one is certain what an uthraki looks like in its natural form, but they are said to be hideous, twisted, hairy creatures with eyes all around their head, so they are never surprised.

The tales are true, but few can confirm them since uthraki leave few survivors. They resemble bent, hunchbacked apes with long snarled gray fur and small humanlike faces. Their eyes are entirely black, with no visible iris or pupil.

**Combat:** Uthraki speak Common and are capable of changing into the form of any human, demihuman, or humanoid creature. The disguise is magical and cannot be detected save through *true seeing* or similar spells. Detect magic reveals an aura about the creature but nothing more.

Uthraki usually remain disguised when attacking, preferring to change to true form immediately before the victims' deaths to further terrorize the prey. They attack with powerful hands, slashing with claws. If both claw attacks hit, the uthraki has latched onto its victim's throat and automatically inflicts an additional 2d8 points of damage each round after that. The victim may attempt to dislodge the uthraki by making a Strength check at a -4 penalty. A successful roll breaks the uthraki's stranglehold.

Uthraki are strong during the day, but prefer to attack at night, for once the sun has set they regenerate 2 hp per turn.

Although they are dangerous, terrifying creatures, uthraki have vulnerabilities. They take double damage from heat-based spells. Earth-based weapons such as stone or wooden clubs and flint-tipped



arrows automatically inflict maximum damage. No one can be certain why this is, but some witches have theorized that uthraki are of a spirit form that is inimical to earth-based substances.

**Habitat/Society:** Lone, spiteful creatures that hate all other living things, even their own kind, uthraki live in distant wilderness areas, roaming isolated roads and highways seeking victims. Their lairs are in deep burrows beneath tree roots or between rocks.

**Ecology:** Uthraki are natural shapechangers and prefer to take a familiar and comforting form—a lost child, friendly minstrel, jolly merchant, merry elven travelers, gruff but friendly dwarven warriors, cute halflings, gnomish acrobats, and the like. Such forms are intended to win a victim's confidence, for the uthraki wants to wait until dark to unleash its deadly attacks.

Uthraki avoid settled areas, preferring to stalk their prey in isolated wilderness areas. Hunting in cities is far too hazardous, for the shapechangers can be detected through *true seeing* or similar spells and the witches will hunt down and destroy uthraki wherever they are found.

Uthraki also feed on small mammals such as rats, rabbits, squirrels, and the occasional carcass found deep in the woods. More cunning uthraki masquerade as prey animals, then turn on predators expecting an easy meal.





# Thay Adventure Hooks

The following adventure hooks are meant to be flexible enough for the DM to use them at any point in an ongoing campaign. It should be noted that even a brief excursion into Thay is dangerous at best; strangers are not well regarded in Thay (seen as spies or worse from neighboring countries, or even rival Thayans), and those who flaunt themselves often end up as targets of the Red Wizards' scrutiny.

It is also crucial to remind PCs that, while the Red Wizards are unquestionably malevolent, most denizens of the country are ordinary folk laboring under an unbending yoke. PCs should not be attacking ordinary Thayan citizens under some misconception that "they're all evil." While few Thayans maintain optimistic or altruistic philosophies, not all are irrevocably evil.

To get the PCs to Thay, try the following hooks:

- Someone they know (a friend, an acquaintance, or an employer's child) has been kidnaped or seduced by a slave trader. Following the trail, they discover it leads to Thay and the slave markets of Bezantur.

- If the PCs have contacts with Harpers or Harper agents, they may be asked to go to Thay on any number of potential missions.

- Failing that, hints about the wondrous new spells, magical items, and mystery-filled lands are often enough to motivate any PC group.

Once the PCs are in or near Thay, expand on these adventure hooks:

- Thayan slaves (both native and outlander) taken from their families and homes need to be rescued, and escaped slaves need to be safely gotten out of Thay. Perhaps an ambitious escaped slave wants to set up a slave-escape network, and she requests the PCs' help.

- Red Wizards are fond of using extraplanar beings as pawns. A powerful fiend has become tired of this and begins a campaign to turn the tables. A major tanar'ri invasion threatens, and as tempted as the PCs might be to let the Red Wizards suffer the consequences of their actions, the rest of Faerûn is not as deserving.

- The cult of Elemental Fire is growing as Kosuth looks for more influence in Thay. Fiery outbreaks are common, and elemental creatures are everywhere. The PCs must close the gate or stop the summoning priest.

- Farmers in the Priador appeal to the PCs to stop the horribly mutated monsters ravaging their homes and farms. These escaped Red Wizard experiments often have abilities in addition to their native ones; assign random spell-like abilities to just about any creature the Red Wiz-

ards would have had access to, and let it run wild.

- In Bezantur, a minor Thayan noble disappears and is later seen as one of Zulkir Mythrell'aa's mindless servants. The family wants him back and is willing to pay a great deal. Will the group dare to invade her tower or to kidnap the servant when he next appears on the streets of Bezantur?

- Ruvya the toymaker has decided to retire, and he's taking Red Wizard secrets along with him. Though the Thayans are for the moment still unaware of his status as a Harper agent, his eagerness to be rid of Thay may draw suspicion upon him. The PCs must help Ruvya escape Thay.

- An ambitious Red Wizard has devised a lofty plan which he believes will weaken Aglarond long enough for Thayan legions to conquer it. His complex plan consists of several parts. He intends to send agents to stir up racial hatreds between the Altumbel humans and the Fangers against the half-elves; at the same time, he wants to infiltrate the more radical half-elf groups and urge them to drive out the humans once and for all. While the Simbul is distracted by the threat of civil war, a two-pronged attack occurs by Thayan legions and Red Wizards: a modest attack on the eastern side of Aglarond (where most previous Thayan attacks have originated) and a massive sweep along the Sea of Fallen Stars at the coastal cities from Ingdal's Arm to Dlusk, perhaps aided by an alliance with the pirates of the Fallen Stars. Obviously; this plan requires a huge amount of planning, set up time, and a buildup of Thayan naval forces (as well as an unprecedented amount of cooperation among the Red Wizards). The wizard is biding his time for the moment, waiting for the current political upheaval to shake itself out. He intends to propose his plan to the winner and look like a genius (and hopefully win a zulkir's or tharchion's title for himself).

# Thay Encounters Chart

## Cities and Populated Regions of Thay

2d10	Encounter
2	Undead, servant
3	Undead, free-willed
4	Neo-orog (patrol)
5	Human, priest (of evil god)
6	Human, escaped slave
7	Human, wizard (Red Wizard)
8	Human, soldier (patrol)
9	Human, farmer
10	Human, bandit or thief
11	Human, slaver
12	Orcs or Gnolls (patrol)
13	Goblins (patrol)
14	Darkenbeast
15	Human, adventurer
16	Ogre (Red Wizard servant)
17	Human, Harper agent
18	Slave, any race
19	Drow
20	Lycanthrope, wererat

## Wild Regions of Thay (Thal hazard, Surmarsh)

2d10	Encounter
2	Ankheg
3	Undead (warrior ghosts, Thal hazard)
4	Neo-orog (patrol)
5	Human, priest (of evil god)
6	Human, escaped slave
7	Human, wizard (Red Wizard)
8	Orcs or Gnolls (patrol)
9	Human, soldier (patrol)
10	Black unicorn (patrol)
11	Goblins (patrol)
12	Human, pirate
13	Human, slaver
14	Darkenbeast
15	Black dragon (Surmarsh)
16	Lizard man (Surmarsh)
17	Otyugh (Surmarsh)
18	Bulette
19	Lycanthrope, wererat
20	Lizard man shaman (Surmarsh)

## Wild Regions of Thay (the Priador, Delhumide)

2d10	Encounter
2	Ankheg
3	Fly, giant horsefly
4	Neo-orog (patrol)
5	Human, priest (of evil god)
6	Human, escaped slave
7	Human, wizard (Red Wizard)
8	Orcs or Gnolls (patrol)
9	Human, soldier (patrol)
10	Black unicorn (patrol)
11	Goblins (patrol)
12	Human, bandit
13	Human, slaver
14	Darkenbeast
15	Beholder-kin (Delhumide)
16	Meazal or Jermlaine (Delhumide)
17	Elemental, fire (Priador)
18	Bulette
19	Lycanthrope, wererat
20	Escaped experiment (Priador)

## Waters of Thay (Lake Thaylambar, the Alambar)

2d10	Encounter
2	Dragon turtle
3	Kelpie
4	Ixitxachitl
5	Human, priest of Umberlee
6	Human, escaped slave
7	Human, wizard (Red Wizard)
8	Human, slaver/pirate
9	Human, fisherman
10	Human, merchant
11	Lacedon
12	Giant eel
13	Scrag
14	Thayan patrol vessel
15	Other nation's patrol vessel
16	Merchant vessel
17	Kraken
18	Giant shark
19	Sahuagin
20	Lycanthrope, wereshark

# Aglarond Adventure Hooks

The people of Aglarond are usually friendly, but they are isolated from most of Faerûn and somewhat suspicious (at least at first) of strangers lest they turn out to be Thayan agents. On the surface, Aglarond is not a land of high adventure but sturdy and peaceful farmers and fisherfolk. The nation is far from without conflict, however, and both internal mysteries and outward threats make Aglarond a land ripe for adventuring.

While it may be easy to for the DM (and players) to say “the Simbul will take care of things,” the fact remains that despite her awesome power she is still only one person. She has more than the concerns of a single country and its politics to deal with; simply foiling the malevolent random plots of the Red Wizards (never mind the constant danger of an outright invasion) takes up much of her time. She cannot drop those concerns and check out every situation herself. And while she may be a powerful ally or patron, PCs should not expect to simply “drop in” and expect her to be there; she is often gone from Aglarond (and sometimes from Toril itself) for weeks at a time.

To get the PCs to Aglarond, try the following hooks:

- The PCs are sent by leaders of another nation or region to open diplomatic talks with Aglarond, to make that nation more a part of Realms affairs. Nearly any starting point will do; a Sea of Fallen Stars coalition of nations is a natural starting place, as is any realm with a strong Harper presence.
- Rumors of the magic of the Yuirwood have reached the PCs’ ears; characters of elven descent are especially likely to be curious about the lost race of Yuir elves and their descendants.

Once the PCs are in or near Aglarond, expand on these adventure hooks:

- The debt owed by the Aglarondans to the galeb duhr, incurred in the time of King Brindor, finally comes due. Perhaps they need help fending off an invasion of xorn into their deep homes, or perhaps drow from the Underdark have broken through into their private tunnels; whatever the reason, they come asking for help.
- Agitators in Findar and Dahst—mostly youngsters—are calling for their villages’ inclusion in the Aglarondan council. While the Simbul is in favor of this, she fears the agitators may stir up old resentments, causing the Fangers to unite in some plot against half-elves or even against the current political structure that favors equality. Diplomacy is necessary to encourage the youngsters to find a more subtle way of bringing their beliefs about.
- On the other hand, a group of radical half-elves who long for the return of the ways of the Yuir is trying to frighten away the humans whose homes and farms lie near the Yuirwood. While no violence has yet been done, the farmers have complained about the appearance of elven totems and occasional mysterious crop failures on their land.
- Deep in the Yuirwood, planar gates are opening and many different creatures are finding their way through. Some are good, some evil. Will the PCs help, resist, or try to close the gates? Trovar Halaern can guide PCs to the vicinity of the gates.
- The city of Tilbrand asks for Aglarond’s protection against Thay, wishing for a greater alliance. The half-elves are in favor, wishing to aid the prominent half-elven Waverunner clan.
- While the PCs are in an Aglarondan city, they witness a potentially fatal case of mistaken identity: A young Aglarondan woman who displayed magical power of some sort (she was born in the Halendos Village) is mistaken for a Red Wizard and is being chased by a mob through the marketplace. She needs to be rescued and taken somewhere she can develop her powers safely. If the Simbul is not available (a likely event), the PCs may hear about the Masked One and visit her to determine if she would be a fit (or willing) teacher.
- For a longer-term campaign theme, the PCs may be asked by the Simbul to help her make Aglarond more involved in Realms affairs. With Aglarond as their base, they travel to the various nations along the Sea of Fallen Stars, promoting trade and commerce with the Simbul’s country (or protecting Aglarondan diplomats who do so).

# Aglarond Encounters Charts

## Coastal Regions

2d10	Encounter
2	Peryton
3	Owlbear
4	Leech, giant
5	Hag, sea
6	Wizard (Simbul's apprentice)
7	Griffon
8	Halfling
9	Human or half-elf, farmer/herder
10	Human or half-elf, soldier (patrol)
11	Human or half-elf, middle class
12	Human or half-elf, merchant/trader
13	Human or half-elf, gentry
14	Mermaid
15	Elf, aquatic
16	Troll, skrag
17	Cat, great (mountain lion)
18	Ogre
19	Selkie
20	Dragon, topaz

## Yuirwood

2d10	Encounter
2	Planar creature (any)
3	Feyr
4	Lycanthrope, wereboar
5	Bird, owl (talking)
6	Faerie, seelie
7	Beetle, giant (stag)
8	Lycanthrope, werebear
9	Troll
10	Bear, brown
11	Human or half-elf, adventurer
12	Ogre
13	Human or half-elf, ranger (patrol)
14	Faerie, unseelie
15	Cooshee or Cath shee
16	Dragonet, faerie dragon
17	Treant
18	Ettercap
19	Dryad
20	Satyr

## Interior Uplands

2d10	Encounter
2	Lycanthrope, werebear
3	Griffon
4	Plant, intelligent (hangman tree)
5	Wolf
6	Shadow
7	Snake, poison (normal)
8	Sprite
9	Human or half-elf, adventurer
10	Human or half-elf, farmer/herder
11	Human or half-elf, soldier (patrol)
12	Brownie
13	Halfling
14	Cat, great (mountain lion)
15	Ogre
16	Troll
17	Bear, black
18	Greenhag
19	Dragonet, pseudodragon
20	Owlbear

## Aglarondan Cities

2d10	Encounter
2	Wild peacocks (Furthinghome)
3	Wizard (Simbul's apprentice)
4	Wizard's familiar
5	Domesticated animal
6	Human, xenophobic
7	Human, sailor (Sea of Fallen Stars)
8	Human or half-elf, fisherman
9	Human or half-elf, farmer/herder
10	Human or half-elf, soldier (patrol)
11	Human or half-elf, cleric
12	Human or half-elf, merchant/trader
13	Human or half-elf, gentry
14	Adventurer, any race
15	Traveling carnival
16	Half-elf, xenophobic
17	Halfling
18	Elf, aquatic (coastal cities only)
19	Selkie (coastal cities only)
20	Red Wizard (disguised spy)

# Rashemen Adventure Hooks

Rashemen is an old land filled with old magic. Nature spirits are everywhere, and the land itself seems alive. The mysteries of this ancient nation have barely been explored, even by the witches and barbarians who dwell there.

Adventures in Rashemen tend to be active, filled with combat and external conflict (in contrast to Aglarond and Thay, where conflict is often more subtle). But others than warriors can win respect from the Rashemaar: a priest who speaks in the name of her god (with impressive results), a bard who can bring tears to the eyes of battle-hardened warriors, or a ranger who can track a white rabbit in a snowstorm is just as acclaimed as the fiercest berserker. Mages and thieves may have a harder time proving themselves, but even their skills can be proven useful and admirable to the Rashemaar.

To get the PCs to Rashemen, try the following hooks:

- The PCs are hired to protect a merchant caravan on its way to Shevel or Mulptan.
- The group meets a young Rashemaar youngster on dajemma, who invites them back to his homeland after they help him defeat some large monster (possibly saving his life).
- If the PCs have Harper ties, they may be sent to discover whether the Witches of Rashemen would make fit Harper allies—or are another threat to peace in the Realms.
- As impartial bystanders (which few Rashemaar are, tending to make their allegiances swiftly and thoroughly), the PCs are asked to mediate a dispute between two berserker lodges. They must judge tests of skill while preventing the competition from turning deadly when at least one of the contestants takes offense at their rulings.
- The PCs must lay the unquiet ghost of a Rashemaar or Tuigan warrior to rest, preferably without combat. This requires fulfilling some task, from simply finding the warrior's widow and telling her where he had buried the family's treasure, to demands that the characters hunt down the warrior's killer so that they may fight again in a "fairer" combat. (The ghost insists he was killed by a "dishonorable" strike from behind.)

Once the PCs are in or near Rashemen, expand upon these adventure hooks:

- PCs mistakenly encroach on the witches' territory and must complete a set task or face punishment. Many of the following hooks can follow on the heels of this natural mistake for newcomers to Rashemen.
- The witches ask them to retrieve magical item components for the vreyonni—perhaps part of a creature (dragons' scale, nereid's shawl), a rare element, or purest water from the heights of Ashane.
- A white dragon has recently laired in northern Rashemen. The witch who was sent to deal with the beast has not returned; the PCs are sent to either defeat the dragon or to retrieve the witch's mask (a magical one) from the lair of the dragon.
- The PCs are called upon to help fend off an invasion of nomads from Narfell or the eastern waste. If they help, they may be accepted as honorary Rashemaar; if they refuse, they will probably be exiled from Rashemen or at least ignored as cowards by every Rashemaar they encounter.
- Having won the trust of Rashemaar warriors, the PCs are invited to go hunting for ice trolls or other monsters that trouble the land.
- A young warrior has been stolen away by a spirit of Immil Vale. The characters have to get him back, preferably *without* killing the spirit.
- Something is killing miners in the mines of Tethkel: a xorn, shadow dragon, or something worse?
- Despite their position in Rashemaar society (as distant, aloof guardians), the Witches of Rashemen are still human. A young apprentice witch falls in love with one of the characters . . . and while such relationships are not forbidden, they are difficult to maintain in the face of tradition. If the PC returns her affections, he has to plead their case to the elder witches to be allowed to continue the relationship.
- The ruins of Citadel Rashemaar have become a haven for bandits. Their presence is a menace to the trade routes and merchants along the eastern edge of Rashemaar, and they need to be removed by any means necessary.

# Rashemen Encounter Charts

## Coastal Regions

2d10	Encounter
2	Behir
3	Bird, raven (huge)
4	Plant, intelligent (quickwood)
5	Hag, bheur (winter only)
6	Bear, brown
7	Wolf, winter
8	Wolf
9	Human, merchant
10	Human, soldiers (patrol)
11	Human, berserkers
12	Human, farmer/herder
13	Cat, great (giant lynx)
14	Ogre
15	Rat, giant
16	Owlbear
17	Troll, skrag
18	Troll
19	Orglash (winter only)
20	Elemental, water-kin (nereid)

## Mountains/Hills

2d10	Encounter
2	Dragon, crystal
3	Elemental, earth kin (pech)
4	Ogre
5	Griffon
6	Hag, bheur (winter only)
7	Orglash (winter only)
8	Thomil
9	Peryton
10	Human, berserkers
11	Rashemaar witch
12	Tiger, snow
13	Ogre
14	Troll
15	Hag, annis
16	Uthraki
17	Leucrotta
18	Bird (eagle, giant)
19	Giant, hill
20	Dragon, white (winter only)

## Forests

2d10	Encounter
2	Wood man (wartime only)
3	Lycanthrope, werebear
4	Satyr
5	Uthraki
6	Hag, bheur (winter only)
7	Bear, brown
8	Troll
9	Ogre
10	Human, berserkers
11	Bear, black
12	Cat, great (mountain lion)
13	Snow Tiger
14	Rashemaar Witch
15	Ettercap
16	Hag, green
17	Orglash (winter only)
18	Cat, great (giant lynx)
19	Bird, owl (giant)
20	Giant, wood

## Rivers/Lakes

2d10	Encounter
2	Ghouls, lacedon
3	Elemental, water kin (nereid)
4	Hag, bheur (winter only)
5	Orglash (winter only)
6	Unmanned witchboat
7	Troll, skrag
8	Ogre, merrow
9	Human, merchant
10	Human, berserker
11	Human, soldier (patrol)
12	Fish, eel (giant)
13	Fish, pike (giant)
14	Human, adventurer
15	Fish, lamprey (giant)
16	Uthraki
17	Selkie
18	Hippocampus
19	Nymph
20	Dragon, amethyst

# The Whole Story: Szass Tam's Thayan Gambit

Szass Tam's plan to become the undisputed ruler of Thay began long before the current conflict. As his lifelong ambition, it is this driving force that makes him one of the most dangerous enemies of peace and freedom in Faerûn.

His current plot began when he visited the ancient lich Larloch the Shadow King, who dwells in the distant fortress of Warlock's Keep on the Sword Coast. Many Red Wizards had visited Larloch in the past, and none save Tam had ever returned. Exactly what the necromancer did in Warlock's Keep is not known, but he apparently gained Larloch's cooperation. Tam returned to Thay with a number of hooded companions and several major enchanted items, including a great artifact known as *Thaksoril's Seat* (a magical throne) and the Death Moon Orb, which can compel obedience in infernal creatures.

Tam then began preparing a base from which to carry out his scheme. Choosing Thaymount as an ideal headquarters, he had Spiros Dehkahks, the former tharchion of Thaymount, replaced with his own puppet Pyras Autorian. He then entered the Citadel, braved the Paths of the Doomed and the Devouring Portal, and established quarters at the Citadel's heart. Tam got the Seat ready for its intended occupant.

The Zulkir of Necromancy selected the Abyssal Lord Eltab for entrapment. He did so for three reasons. First, he knew Eltab's true name (making binding the *tanar'ri* easier). Then too, Eltab was already on Toril (so there was no need to summon another, perhaps unknown, *tanar'ri*). Finally, Eltab is powerful.

Eight months ago, a great earthquake rocked the city of Eltabbar. Though no one knew it then, the earthquake was a direct consequence of Eltab being freed from the great rune that held him prisoner. Tam immediately used the Death Moon Orb to order Eltab to sit on *Thaksoril's Seat*, whereupon he cast the first Rune of Chaos using the *ritual of twin burnings*. Eight months have passed and eight runes have been inscribed; with the ninth, the *tanar'ri* lord will be enslaved to Szass Tam.

Meanwhile, in the months between the casting of each rune, Tam began his drive to recruit allies from among the tharchions and zulkirs of Thay. All began meeting in the Citadel, located deep beneath Thaymount, and a subtle campaign against Tam's enemies began. Eltab—a being of no little power—has been struggling against the binding of the Seat in the meantime. His violent efforts to free himself caused the increased volcanic activity around Thaymount.

With Larloch as his ally and Eltab as his slave, and with the various minions of the tharchions and zulkirs at his disposal, Tam will be ready to make his move to seize power in Thay. Already he is squeezing his enemies out of power. One of his plots to discredit three prominent enemies is chronicled in the adventure *Throne of Deceit*, while the truth about Tam's plans is revealed in *The Runes of Chaos*.

Should Tam succeed in enslaving Eltab, he will dispose of his enemies immediately and pronounce himself Emperor of Thay.

## The Ritual of Twin Burnings

Though not precisely a spell (and not recorded in any written form save this), the ritual nevertheless has many of the same qualities. For convenience it is presented here in the form of a spell, but the DM should take care not to allow either the ritual or the Seat to fall into the hands of the PCs.

Level: 9

Range: Special

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Special

Casting Time: 24 hours per rune

Area of Effect: Special

Saving Throw: None

This complicated ritual binding is used to permanently bind a creature to *Thaksoril's Seat*. If used in conjunction with any other artifact (or on its own), nothing happens.

Each time the ritual is used, a Rune of Chaos is created, a mystical symbol that progressively binds a creature to the Seat. It is, of course, currently being used by Zulkir Szass Tam to hold the tanar'ri Abyssal Lord Eltab. In order to permanently bind an individual to the seat, nine runes must be inscribed, one on each side of the nine-sided crystalline pyramid that surrounds the Seat itself. The victim must be imprisoned upon the seat by use of other magic while the runes are crafted; in this case, Tam is using the Death Moon Orb to hold Eltab until the ritual is complete. Once the ninth rune is created the victim may physically leave the seat, but he is permanently and totally enslaved to the wizard who created the Runes of Chaos.

There are three prerequisites to a *ritual of twin burnings*. First, the ritual may only be performed once per month, during the new moon. Second, each rune requires the sacrifice of a human mage of increasing level (at least equal to that of the number of the rune to be created). Victims of the sacrifice are completely destroyed, and their very essence is consumed to create the rune (hence, the "twin burnings" of the name—body and spirit). The first rune requires the sacrifice of a 1st-level mage, the second of 2nd level, and so on. Third, the sacrifice must be performed near the Seat and requires a full night and a day to complete. If the mage is disturbed at any time, the ritual is broken and cannot be performed again until the next month.

At the time of the events in this book, Szass Tam has created eight of the nine runes and requires but one more sacrifice to completely control Eltab.

### Tam's Allies

Tharchion Pyras Autorian (LE hm 0, Thaymount); Tam's puppet

Tharchion Dimon (LN hm (former) C5 [Waukeen], Tyraturos)

Tharchioness Azhir Kren (LE hf F15, Gauros); strong supporter

Tharchion Invarri Metran (LE hm F11, Delhumide)

The Tharchioness (LE hf III13, Eltabbar); staunch ally

Zulkir Lallara Mediocros (CE hf Abj21)

Zulkir Mythrell'aa (CE hf III20); becomes an ally after events in *Throne of Deceit*, and may switch back to a more neutral stance if Tam is somehow embarrassed or dethroned

Zulkir Druxus Rhym (NE hm Alt24)

Zulkir Yaphyll (LE hf Div19)

### Tam's Enemies

Tharchioness Nymia Focar (CE hf F9, Pyarados)

Tharchion Hezess Nymar (NE hm C8 [Kossuth], Lapendrar)

Zulkir Lauzoril (NE hm Enc22)

Zulkir Nevron (NE hm Con24)

Zulkir/Tharchion Aznar Thrul (CE hm Inv23, the Priador)

### Neutrals

Tharchioness Thessaloni Canos (LE hf F17, Alaor); supports whoever gives her navy support

Tharchion Milsantos Daramos (LN hm F14, Thazalhar); tends to oppose Tam

Tharchion Homen Odesseiron (LE hm Inv7/F12, Surthay); tends to oppose Tam



# Beyond 20th Level

The following information is duplicated from the *FORGOTTEN REALMS® Adventures* hardbound book. Since nonplayer characters in the Unapproachable East are more likely to be of levels 20 and higher, the following is essential to the DM to properly assign abilities to these NPCs.

## Wizards

Mages and *specialist wizards* gain an additional level for every 375,000 experience points earned above 3,750,000. They gain an additional hit point for every level above 20. They gain additional spells as shown on the Expanded Wizard Spell Progression Table.

### Expanded Wizard Spell Progression

Mage Level	Spell Level								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
20	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	2
21	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	2
22	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3
23	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3
24	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
25	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
26	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	5
27	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	5
28	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
29	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	6	6
30	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	6

The Red Wizards of Thay are all specialist wizards (see the *Campaign Guide* in this boxed set for details); printed here for convenience are the wizard specialist requirements and opposition schools from the *Player's Handbook*.

Specialist	School	Race*	Minimum Ability Score	Opposition School(s)
Abjurer	Abjuration	H	15 Wis	Alteration & Illusion
Conjurer	Conj./Summ.	H, ½ E	15 Con	Gr. Divination & Invocation
Diviner	Gr. Divin.	H, ½ E, E	16 Wis	Conjuration/Summoning
Enchanter	Ench./Charm	H, ½ E, E	16 Cha	Invoc./Evoc. & Necromancy
Illusionist	Illusion	H, G	16 Dex	Necro., Invoc./Evoc., Abjuration
Invoker	Invoc./Evoc.	H	16 Con	Ench./Charm & Conj./Summoning
Necromancer	Necromancy	H	16 Wis	Illusion & Ench./Charm
Transmuter	Alteration	H, ½ E	15 Dex	Abjuration & Necromancy

\* All Red Wizards are human.

## Warriors

*Fighters* gain an additional level for every 250,000 experience points above 3,000,000. They gain 3 hit points for every level above 20.

*Paladins* and *rangers* gain an additional level for every 300,000 experience points above 3,600,000. They gain 3 hit points for every level above 20. *Paladins* gain no additional spells once they reach level 20. *Rangers* gain no additional spells once they reach level 16.

## Priests

*Clerics* gain an additional level for every 225,000 experience points earned above 2,700,000. They gain an additional 2 hit points for every level above 20.

*Druids* gain an additional level for every 500,000 experience points above 2,000,000. They gain an additional 2 hit points for every level above 20.

*Other specialty priests* (of the various Realms deities, described in *FORGOTTEN REALMS Adventures*) gain an additional level for every 500,000 experience points above 8,500,000. They gain an additional 2 hit points for every level above 20. They gain additional spells as shown on the Expanded Priest Spell Progression Table.

### Expanded Priest Spell Progression

Priest Level	Spell Level						
	1	2	3	4	5	6*	7**
20	9	9	9	8	7	5	2
21	9	9	9	9	8	6	2
22	9	9	9	9	9	6	3
23	9	9	9	9	9	7	3
24	9	9	9	9	9	8	3
25	9	9	9	9	9	8	4
26	9	9	9	9	9	9	4
27	9	9	9	9	9	9	5
28	9	9	9	9	9	9	6
29	9	9	9	9	9	9	7
30	9	9	9	9	9	9	8

\* Usable only by priests with 17 or greater Wisdom.

\*\* Usable only by priests with 18 or greater Wisdom.

## Rogues

Both *thieves* and *bards* gain an additional level for every 220,000 experience points gained. They gain 2 additional hit points for every level above 20. *Thieves* gain an additional 10 skill points to distribute among their thieving skills for every level above 20. *Bards* receive 5 points to distribute among their thieving skills for every level above 20.

# The Tanar'ri of Spellbound

**Eltab, Abyssal Lord:** AC -8; MV 18/FI36; HD 37; hp 161; THAC0 1; #AT 2; Dmg 4d8(x2); SA terror, impalement, *death gaze*; SD +3 or better weapons to hit; MR 80%; SZ L; ML 18; Int supra; AL CE; XP 39,000.

Each Abyssal lord is unique, a creature unlike any other. Eltab is an ancient and powerful Abyssal lord who has ravaged regions of Faerûn on many occasions.

He is a formidable opponent. His very presence carries the effects of a fear spell, and he can use a *death gaze* once per turn. Victims who meet Eltab's *death gaze* must save vs. death magic or instantly perish. When unarmed, he fights with his two heavily clawed hands, each inflicting 4d8 points of damage. If both claw attacks hit, Eltab may then impale his opponent on his horns, inflicting an additional 3d10 points of damage.

Eltab is hard to injure. His natural 80% magic resistance is coupled with an immunity to all magical weapons of less than +3 enchantment.

**Babau:** AC -3; MV 15; HD 8+14; hp 65; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/2d4 or by weapon +7 (Strength bonus); SA corrosion, gaze, backstab; SD +1 or better weapons to hit, thief abilities; MR 50%, SZ M; ML 15; Int high; AL CE; XP 17,500.

Babaus are greater tanar'ri that act as the recruitment officers for the Blood War. They appear to be tall skeletons clad in dark, form-fitting armor. A great horn protrudes from the back of their skulls and they have long wicked claws. They can use any weapon they find, and discovered magical weapons 20% of the time. Babau attack with two claws (1d4+1 damage each).

Any creature who meets a babau's glowing red gaze must save vs. Spell or be affected as by a ray of enfeeblement; range is 20 feet. The gaze affects one opponent per round, in addition to normal attacks.

They also generate a slick, dark red substance that covers their bodies. The slippery jelly halves damage from all slashing and piercing weapons and has a corrosive quality. It has a 20% chance per hit of corroding a metal weapon. Normal weapons must save vs. acid with each hit or become useless. Magical metal weapons loose one "plus." If the liquid comes in contact with exposed flesh, it burns for 1d6 points of acid damage.

In addition babaus have the following magical abilities: *dispel magic*, *fear*, *fly*, *heat metal*, *levitate*, and *polymorph self*. Babaus have 9th level thief abilities.

**Glabrezu:** AC -7; MV 15; HD 10; hp 65; THAC0 11; #AT 5; Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3/1d3/

2d4+1; SA grab; SD +2 or better weapons to hit; SZ H; ML 18; Int ex; AL CE; XP 12,000.

True tanar'ri, glabrezu are the ones who typically respond to summons from other planes.

They are huge, broad, and well-muscled. They have four arms, two that end in clawed hands and two with powerful pincers.

Glabrezu try to avoid combat with mortals, preferring guile, trickery, and evil bargains. But they think nothing of slaying mortals, if that becomes necessary.

They can attack with two claws (1d3 damage each), two pincers (2d6 damage each), and a bite (1d4+ 1 damage). With a successful claw attack it can attempt to grab and pick up an opponent of 150 pounds or less. (Dexterity check avoid). A grabbed opponent can still attack a -4 penalty or break free with a successful Strength check. They also have the following magical abilities at 10th level of spell use: *burning hands*, *charm person*, *confusion*, *detect magic* (always active), *dispel magic*, *enlarge*, *mirror image*, *power word stun* (7 times a day), *reverse gravity*, and *true seeing* (always active). Once a day a glabrezu can *gate* in one greater tanar'ri with a 50% chance of success.

**Hezrou:** AC -6; MV 12; HD 9; hp 60; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d8; SA bear hug, stench; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, half damage from other nonmagical weapons, never surprised; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 17; Int avg; AL CE; XP 14,000 each.

In the Abyss, hezrou oversee the formation of armies. They are among the least powerful of the tanar'ri but are still formidable.

Hezrou are impossible to surprise. They are immune to attacks from nonmagical weapons and take half damage from all nonmagical attack forms (acid, fire, poison etc.). They have infravision to 120 feet and have double human normal auditory and olfactory senses.

Their claw attacks inflict 1d6 damage, and their blunt, crushing teeth inflict 4d4 points per bite.

These foul, froglike creatures secrete a fetid liquid that coats their skins. Anyone within 10 feet of a hezrou must save vs. paralyzation or be overcome by the stench, gagging, vomiting, and helpless. Those who make their saving throws still suffer a -2 penalty on attack and initiative rolls.

In addition, hezrou have the following magical abilities at the 9th level of spell use: *animate object*, *blink*, *duo-dimension* (3 times per day), *produce flame*, *protection from normal missiles*, *summon insects*, *unholy word* (opposite of *holy word*), and *wall of fire*.

# The Tanar'ri of Spellbound

**Marilith:** AC -9; MV 1.5; HD 12; hp 80; THAC0 9 (+ bonuses for magical weapons); #AT 7; Dmg 4d6/1d8 (broad sword)/1d8 (long sword)/1d8+2 (*broad sword* +2)/ 1d4+2 (*dagger* +2)/ 1d6+3 (*trident* +2)/ 1d6+1 (*spear* +1); SA carries magical weapons, constriction; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, never surprised, spell immunity; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 18; Int genius; AL CE; XP 23,000.

Bold and cunning, the mariliths are the generals of the Blood War and specialize in brains and tactics.

Mariliths are never surprised, and they are immune to weapons of +1 or less magical enchantment, illusions, and mind-affecting spells.

A marilith can constrict with its tail for 4d6 of crushing damage. Once constricted, the victim automatically takes 4d6 damage each round.

In addition, mariliths have the following magical abilities: *animate dead*, *cause serious wounds*, *cloud kill*, *comprehend languages*, *curse* (reverse of *bless*), *detect evil*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *polymorph self* (7 times a day), *project image*, *pyrotechnics*, and *telekinesis*.

**Molydeus:** AC -5; MV 15; HD 12; hp 80; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 2d6/1d6/2d10+5 (battle axe); SA *vorpals* and *dancing battle axe*, poison; SD affected only by cold-iron weapons, never surprised; MR 90%; SZ H; ML 20; Int high; AL CE; XP 21,500.

Molydeus are the only guardian tanar'ri, and they enforce the war effort as a sort of political officers.

A molydeus is never surprised. It inflicts 2d10 damage per hit with its *axe* +5. It has two heads and attacks with both. The dog head inflicts 2d6 damage; the snake head inflicts 1d6 damage and injects a powerful venom (save vs. Poison or turn into a manes [a peculiar and almost mindless tanar'ri] in 1d6 turns). A *neutralize poison* spell followed by a *remove curse* eliminates the poison. Once transformed, however, the victim is beyond restoration short of divine intervention or a very carefully worded *wish*.

In addition, a molydeus has the following magical abilities: *affect normal fires*, *animate object*, *blindness*, *charm person of mammal*, *command*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *fear*, *improved invisibility*, *know alignment*, *lightningbolt* (7 times a day), *polymorph other*, *sleep*, *suggestion*, *true seeing* (always active), and *vampiric touch*.

Molydeus are also immune to most normal or magical weapons. Only cold-wrought iron weapons and magical spells affect these creatures.

**Nabassu (mature):** AC -5; MV 12/Fl 15; HD 7+20; hp 64; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d4+7; SA *death gaze*, *backstab*, *paralyzation*; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 16; Int high; AL CE; XP 16,000.

Nabassu are creatures spawned in the Abyss but nurtured on other planes, where they grow and gain power by slaying and devouring humans.

Nabassu attack with two claws inflicting 2d4 damage and a bite that inflicts 3d4 points of damage.

In addition, nabassu have the following magical abilities: *energy drain* (by touch), *regenerate* (1 hp per hour), *silence*, 15' *radius*, and *vampiric touch*. Nabassu can become ethereal at will, twice per day.

Any living creature that comes within 10 feet of a nabassu must successfully save vs. paralyzation or be paralyzed for 1d10 rounds (once per encounter).

**Vrock:** AC -5; MV 12/Fl 18; HD 8; hp 60; THAC0 13; #AT 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d8/1d6+7 (Strength bonus); SA spores, screech, first attack SD +2 or better weapons to hit, never surprised; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 18; Int High; AL CE; XP 19,000.

The vrock are the elite fighting troops in the Blood War. They look like a cross between humans and vultures.

Vrock are never surprised and always attack first in melee. These creatures' Strength is 19 (+7 damage adjustment) and they possess infravision to 120 feet. Vrocks are immune to attacks from nonmagical weapons.

Vrocks can attack five times in a melee round. Their hand claw attacks inflict 1d8 damage and their beaks inflict 1d6 for each successful hit. They can attack once every three rounds with a spore attack. A spray of spores automatically inflicts 1d8 damage on all opponents with 5 feet. The spores inflict 1d2 points of damage per each subsequent round as they grow. The spores can be killed a *bless*, *neutralize poison*, or similar spell or by being sprinkled with holy water. *Slow poison* stops the growth.

Once per battle, a vrock can emit a loud, piercing screech. The screech deafens everyone within 30 feet, stunning them for one round (Constitution check to avoid stun).

In addition, vrock have the following magical abilities at the 10th level of ability: *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *mass charm*, *mirror image*, and *telekinesis*.

*My Dear Lauzoril:*

*It is with great pleasure that I report the success of our mutual endeavor. Using the antiquated documents which you sent me last fall, I have finally duplicated the formulae by which the so-called "god-kings" of Mulhorand created their invincible gemstone golems.*

*These creatures, crafted of solid gemstone material, are as mindlessly loyal and efficient as our more familiar golems but appear highly resistant to magic, particularly that used by the hateful Rashemaar witches, and to the strong place-magic of Rashemen itself. It is my opinion that these two forces are most to blame for our lack of success during past invasions of Rashemen, and if they are even partially neutralized our warriors can easily crush the ill-disciplined berserkers and their savage chieftains.*

*To this end, I am sending you 100 gemstone golems now, and more over the coming weeks. By the 15th of Nightal, all should be in readiness for our invasion. As this is near the beginning of winter, our attack will have the added advantage of taking the enemy entirely by surprise, for our attacks have rarely come in these months.*

*With a quick victory over the Rashemaar in the Gorge of Gauros, the entire land should be under our control in a matter of weeks. With this overwhelming victory to our credit, Szass Tam will suffer a major setback in his shameless attempts to seize absolute power in Thay. Hopefully, several major tharchs and at least one zulkir will be won over to our cause, enough to tip the balance in our favor, and against Tam.*

*I warn you, however, that a few minor problems still exist with the gemstone golems. The most pressing is the fact that they require a circle of wizards to maintain control and direction. Without such a circle, led by a wizard of the greatest skill and magical might, they will wander aimlessly about and be unable to press the attack. Please keep this in mind during your invasion.*

*In closing, I salute you and your efforts to stop the mad schemes of Szass Tam. If there is any further assistance I can offer you, please do not hesitate to tell me.*

*Sincerely, Zulkir of Invocation/Evocation and Tharchion of the Priador, Aznar Thrul*

My Queen:

Here follows my best report on the state of affairs in Thay, and the role played by the Zulkir Aynar Thrul.

As you know, the land of Thay has, since its creation, been wracked by many civil conflicts, and has been unable to hold significant amounts of territory beyond its own borders, primarily due to the chaotic nature of its rulership—divided, as it is, between eight squabbling and often openly hostile zulkirs, one for each of the major schools of magic, with the daily running of the various provinces, or tharchs, left up to political appointees known as tharchions and tharchionesses. Fully twenty times have Thayan legions pressed into Rashemen through the Gorge of Guaros, and twenty times have they been thrown back in full retreat. A dozen more times have they moved against our own nation, and yet another dozen times were they defeated, although at a considerable cost to our nation.

Now, it seems that the most powerful zulkir is Szass Tam, a lich who has served as the Zulkir of Necromancy for nearly two and a half centuries. He is finally putting into action his plan to unite Thay under his iron rule. Although his plans are not certain, he seems extremely confident, and has won at least three of the remaining seven zulkirs and numerous tharchs over to his cause. Should Thay ever be united under a single strong ruler, the results would be disastrous for Rashemen, Aglarond, and indeed for all of Faerûn, for the Thayan thirst for conquest is unquenchable. Even if they are defeated—which is anything but certain—the Thayans' ambitions would cost countless innocent lives and destroy entire nations.

Among Tam's most powerful opponents is one Aynar Thrul, the only Red Wizard to serve as both tharchion (of the Priador) and zulkir (of Invocation). A thoroughly evil man with his own ambitions to absolute power, Thrul is too canny to openly oppose Tam, leaving his allies, the Zulkirs Nevron and Langoril, to take the brunt of Szass Tam's attention. All the same, he quietly works against Tam from behind the scenes, and has apparently rediscovered a means of creating a new and near-invincible automaton, which might aid the Thayans in their drive for conquest.

Although Thrul is a terribly dangerous individual, he is nowhere near as powerful or capable as Tam, and is in every sense of the word the lesser of two evils. Although it is abhorrent to your majesty's cause, and that of our allies, the Harpers, to openly support Thrul in his opposition to Szass Tam, it is probably in our best interest that the conflict between the two zulkirs continues. In such a case, the unification of Thay might be delayed, or avoided altogether, with resulting greater security for Thay's neighbors.

In sincerity and loyalty,  
Your servant

*My friends,*

*It is with a heavy heart and great regret that I am forced to send you this information by messenger. Despite my most dedicated efforts to contact the Rashemaar witches, the magical interference in Thay continues to block any sort of magical communication.*

*My agents in Thay have discovered a number of deeply disturbing facts, which in combination shed an entirely new light on your mission to Rashemen.*

*First, the lich Szass Tam, most powerful of the Thayan zulkirs, has apparently set in motion a plan to seize total power in Thay, replacing the bickering wizards who now govern the land with his own iron rule. To this end, he is currently attempting to discredit those tharchions and zulkirs who oppose him, most prominently the zulkirs Aznar Thrul, Neuron, and Lauzoril.*

*Second, the current invasion of Rashemen was carried out by forces loyal to Thrul, Neuron, and Lauzoril, the latter two who have staked a great deal of their personal influence on its success.*

*Third, the Thayans were defeated as a result of the information you obtained in Aglarond, the three zulkirs have been extremely embarrassed as a result of their debacle, and several neutral parties in Thay have declared their support for Tam. This information came into your hands in what I feel is a highly suspect manner, almost as if you were intended to find it.*

*Fourth, Tam recently returned to Thay with a large number of powerful enchanted items and has been spending a great deal of time on Thaymount in the ancient complex known as the Citadel. There he seems to be involved in some sort of complex magical procedure, which may both aid him in his bid for absolute power in Thay, and in future attacks upon Rashemen, Thesk, Mulhorand, and my own nation.*

*I can only come to the distressing conclusion that we have all been manipulated and used by Szass Tam and his agents. You were meant to obtain Aznar Thrul's letter, the Rashemaar were meant to learn of the invasion, and were expected to defeat it, thereby humiliating Thrul, Lauzoril, and Neuron. You yourself witnessed Neuron's defeat, Lauzoril was known to be associated with the invasion, and no doubt his reputation will suffer. Thrul is more canny, and apparently his connection to these events was kept unobtrusive enough that he may escape this debacle with his reputation unscathed.*

*Already, Tam's agents are abroad in my land, preventing me from visiting you in person. I beg that you return to Aglarond for consultation. I pray that we might yet be able to thwart Szass Tam's evil plans, but it may already be too late. Meet me at the old Macoley Estate near the Halendos. Do this as soon as possible. Regardless of your arrival time, I will be there within the hour. Please hurry. The fate of all Faerûn may be at stake.*

*The Simbul*

Should you still wish to enter the Citadel despite my warnings, note that it is well protected and has many dead ends, labyrinths, and endless corridors. Follow the instructions I give here to the letter, lest your soul be in peril.

First, the Citadel itself is accessible only through a pair of great iron doors, which cannot be opened by any means known to man, save with the following incantation: Hovas Nar. Kandra Mil. Volas Nar. Hilasha Mil. Dhrovik!

These words cause the doors to open. As soon as the travelers enter the Citadel, care must be taken to say the following word: Nyphar! If this word is not pronounced upon entry into the Citadel, magic mouths throughout its halls immediately begin screaming horribly.

Travelers then find themselves in a great, twelve-sided room. Each wall is marked with a different rune, and forms the doorway to a different part of the Citadel. I am familiar only with the wall which leads to the Paths of the Doomed. To use this wall, stand in front of the wall with the rune of the labyrinth, trace its outline and loudly say: Thola Vos! The wall vanishes, and the way to the Paths of Doomed opens.

The Paths of the Doomed are labyrinthine and confusing, their exact layout uncertain to me, as I was always blindfolded, and sometimes magically incapacitated, while we traveled there, and I can only pass on a few of the things which I experienced.

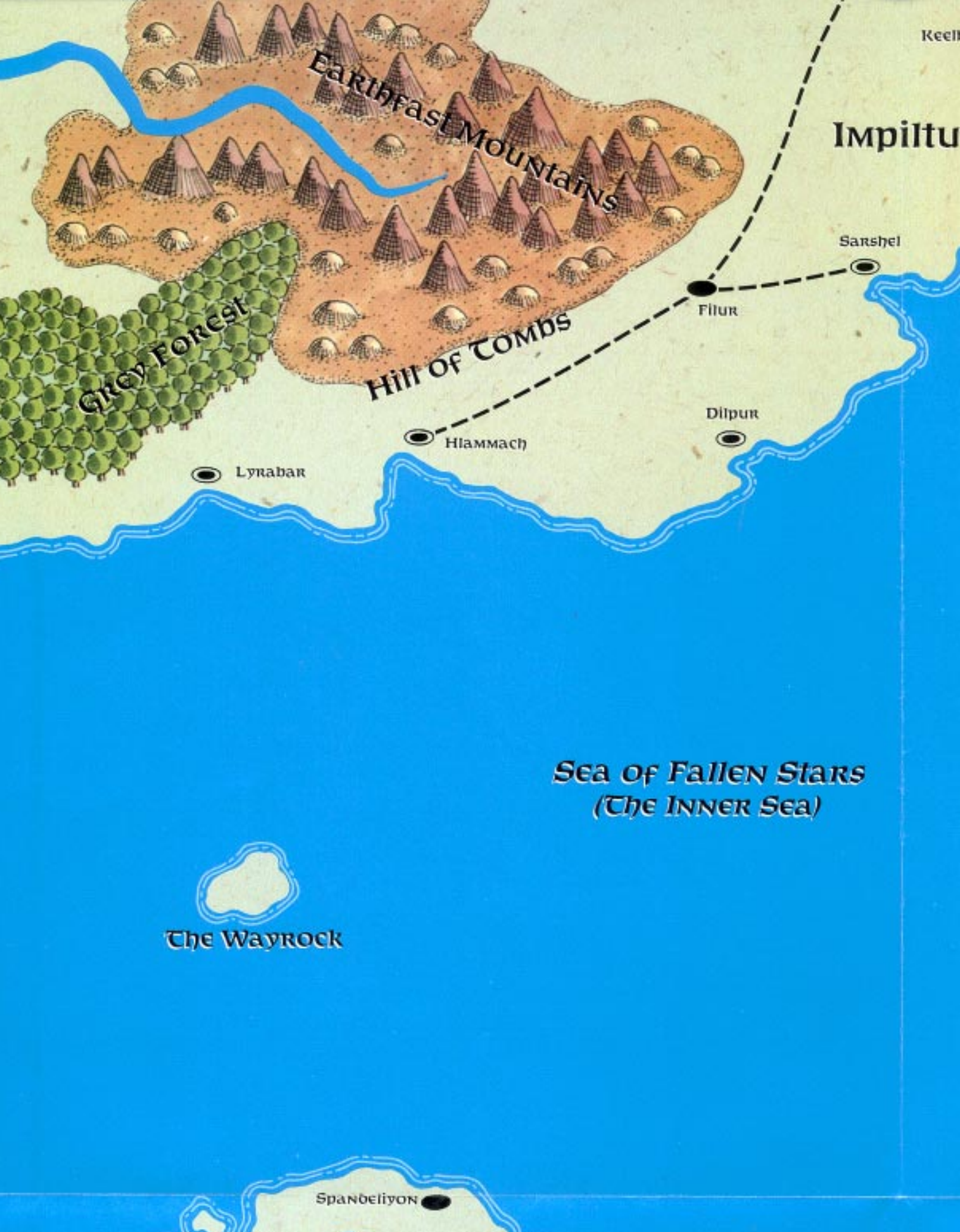
Throughout the maze, strange voices jabbered and alien words were given tongue. In many places, I heard the words, barely recognizable, "In whose name do you come here?" or "By what gods do you swear?" In most cases, the answer was "By fire (or water, or earth, depending upon the location in the labyrinth) we come, in the name of Szass Tam!" The gods worshiped include the usual selection of wicked Thayan deities such as Cyric, Umberlee, and Loviatar.

In a chamber filled with the sound of rushing water, I heard the word "thralliq," then the word "ekkala." Later, in a room that was so hot and stifling as to be barely habitable, I heard one of my guides shout, "khalos!" on one occasion, and "olash!" soon after. In a room that seemed to be composed of fire I heard "Hala vill thora!" and the flames ceased to caress my skin. Other phrases and counter phrases were shouted around me, but these are lost now, swept away by the memory of the horror which lurks beyond the Devouring Portal, and the monstrous acts to which I was compelled.

This is all I can remember. Again I warn against visiting this cursed place, but perhaps my description will provide some assistance. Already I feel the hand of Thay about my heart, and doubt that I will survive much longer.

—from the report of Nathor, Thayan refugee  
two hours before his disappearance





Keel

Impiltu

Earthfast Mountains

Sanshel

Grey Forest

Hill of Tombs

Filur

Lyrabar

Hlammach

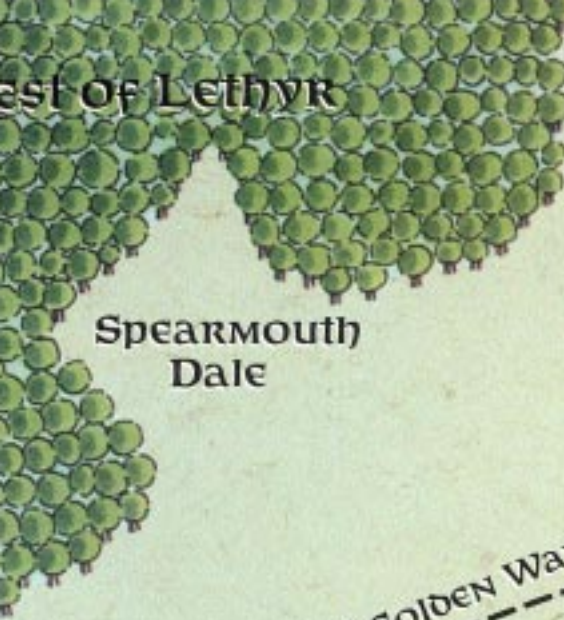
Dilpur

Sea of Fallen Stars  
(The Inner Sea)

The Wayrock

Spanbeliyon





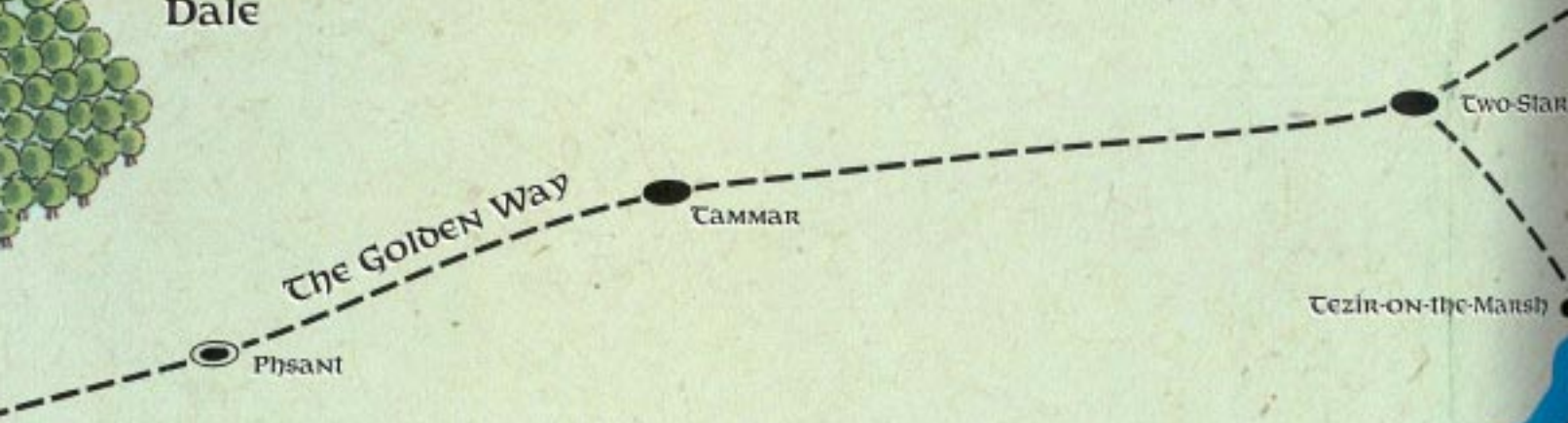
Forest of Lethyr

Spearmouth Dale



Thesk Mountains

Thesk



The Golden Way

Phasant

Cammar

Two Stars

Tezir-on-the-Marsh



River Sur

River UMBER

Nethentir



Chaymoun

The Citadel

Sec Escar





River Mulsantir

Mulsantir

Ferry Route

Two-Stars

e-Marsh

Lake Mulsantir

Surthay

The LONG PORTAGE

SURMARSH

GORGE OF GAUROS

River Mulsantir

River Gauros

River Thay

SECOND ESCARPMENT

Ruins of Delhumbe

The Citadel

MOUNT

River Eitar

Lake Thaylambar

Gold Mines

Ellabbar

Rise Mountains

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1121XXX0701



Spanbellyon

Aitumbel

Ingdal's ARM

Urst

Urve

Delthuntle

Ne

Airspur

Reth

Aranaspeaks

Scale: 1 inch = 30 miles

Cimbar



**Aglarond**

The Halendos

Yuirwood

The Sunblade

Cannath

Bay of Chessenta

Watcher's Cape

Mt. Thur

Corth

Velprintalar

Orithar Furthinghome

Dusk

Singing Sands

Mesring

Halendos Village

Glarondar

Nethra

Teth

Laothkund

Tilbrand

Lasbur

Taskaunt

Shyvar

The



Lake U

River UMBER

NNath

UMBERGOOTH

SHYVAR PASS

THE WATCHWALL

**The UMBER MARSHES**

Nethjet

Eastern Way

Amruthar

River LAPENDRAR

(River of Sorrows)

Pla

Escalant

First Escarpment

The PRIADOR

Murbant

Bezantu

Chasselen

The Wizard's Reach

The LONG BEACH

t. Thulbane



Gold Mines

Eltabbar

Sunri  
Mounta

High Road

Thay  
Plateau of Thay

Surague  
Escarpment

Eastern Way

Tyratuross

Pyarados

High Road

Bezantur

River Chazarim

Thazalhar

River of the Dawn

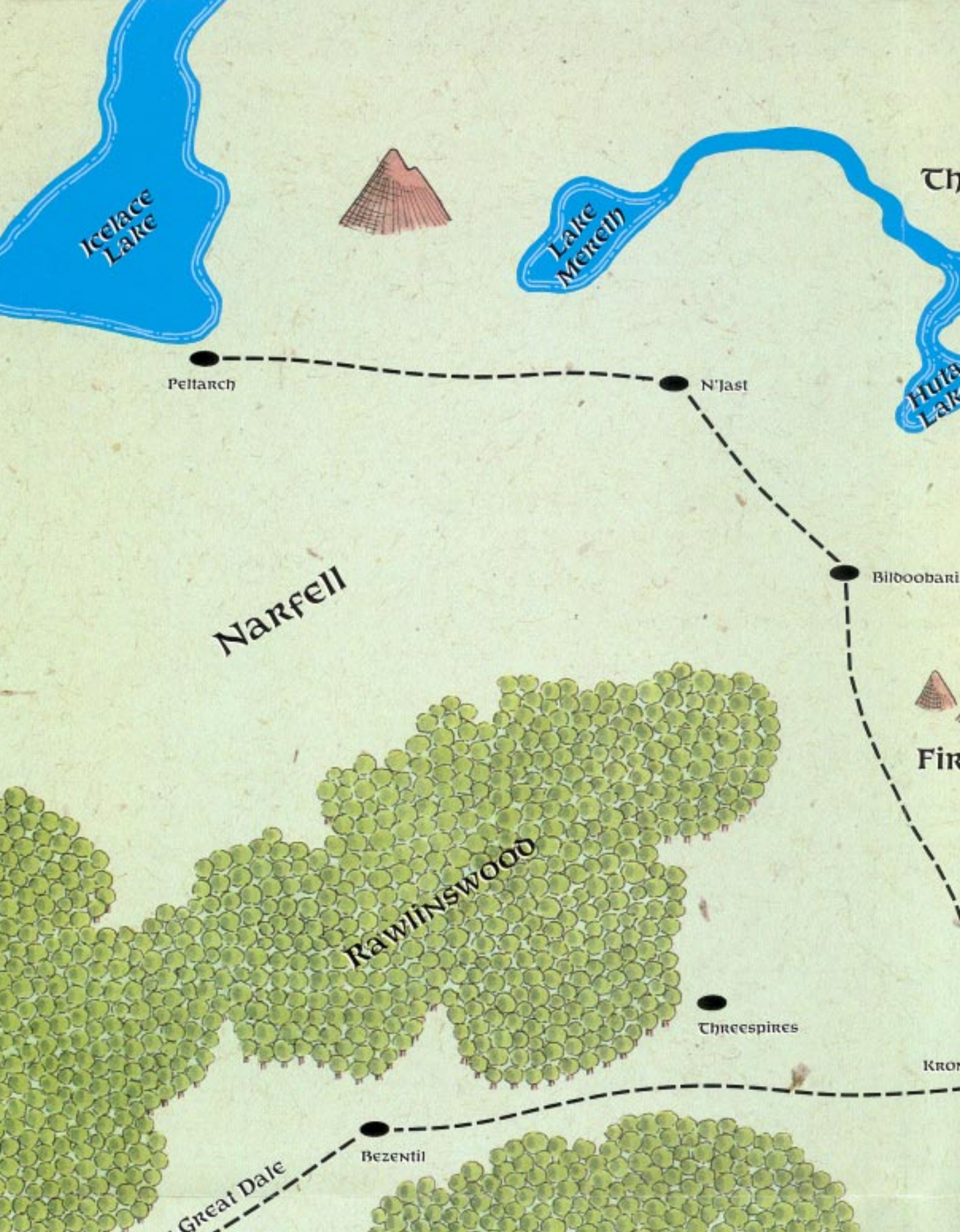
The Alamber Sea  
(Sahuagin Sea)

The Alaor

Sultim

Mulhorand





Icelace Lake

Lake Mereth

Huta Lake

Peltarch

N'last

Bilboobari

Narfell

Fire

Rawinswood

Threespires

Kron

Great Dale

Bezentiil



**The Teardrops**

**Hula Lake**  
**Lake Muirenon**  
**Lake Musker**

Falls of Erech

oobaris

**Firward Mountains**

**Erech Forest**

**The North Country**

**Ashane**  
*(The Lake of Tears)*

Immilmar

Mulptan

Kront

Immil Vale

**Ashenwood**

**The Running Rocks**

**WOOD**



ICEERIM  
MOUNTAINS

Nathoud

The  
North  
Country

Mulptan

N



Key:

	MOUNTAINS		City
	Hills		Castle/Keep
	Clear		TOWN OR IMPORTANT VILLAGE
	Forest		Light House
	Swamp		Roads
	Sea / Lake / River		Trails
	Falls Line		Ferry Route
	Cliffs		Battle
	Bridge		Gold Mines

Scale: 1 inch = 30 miles

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The Great

Forest of Lethyr

Ashanath

Spearmouth Dale

The Golden Way

TAMMAR

PHSANT

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PHENT

Thesk

Thesk Mountains

River S...



**Rashemen**

**Lake Tirulag**

**Lake Mulsantir**

**Thay**

**Gorge of Gauros**

**Sutmarsh**

**Uringwood**

**Ash**

**River Fir**

**River Ashan**

**River Rasha**

**River Tis**

**River Mulsantir**

**Mulsantir**

**Ferry Route**

**Two-Stars**

**Tezir-on-the-Marsh**

**Surthay**

**Taporan**

**Uring**

**Shevel**

**Chasunta**

**Tinnir**

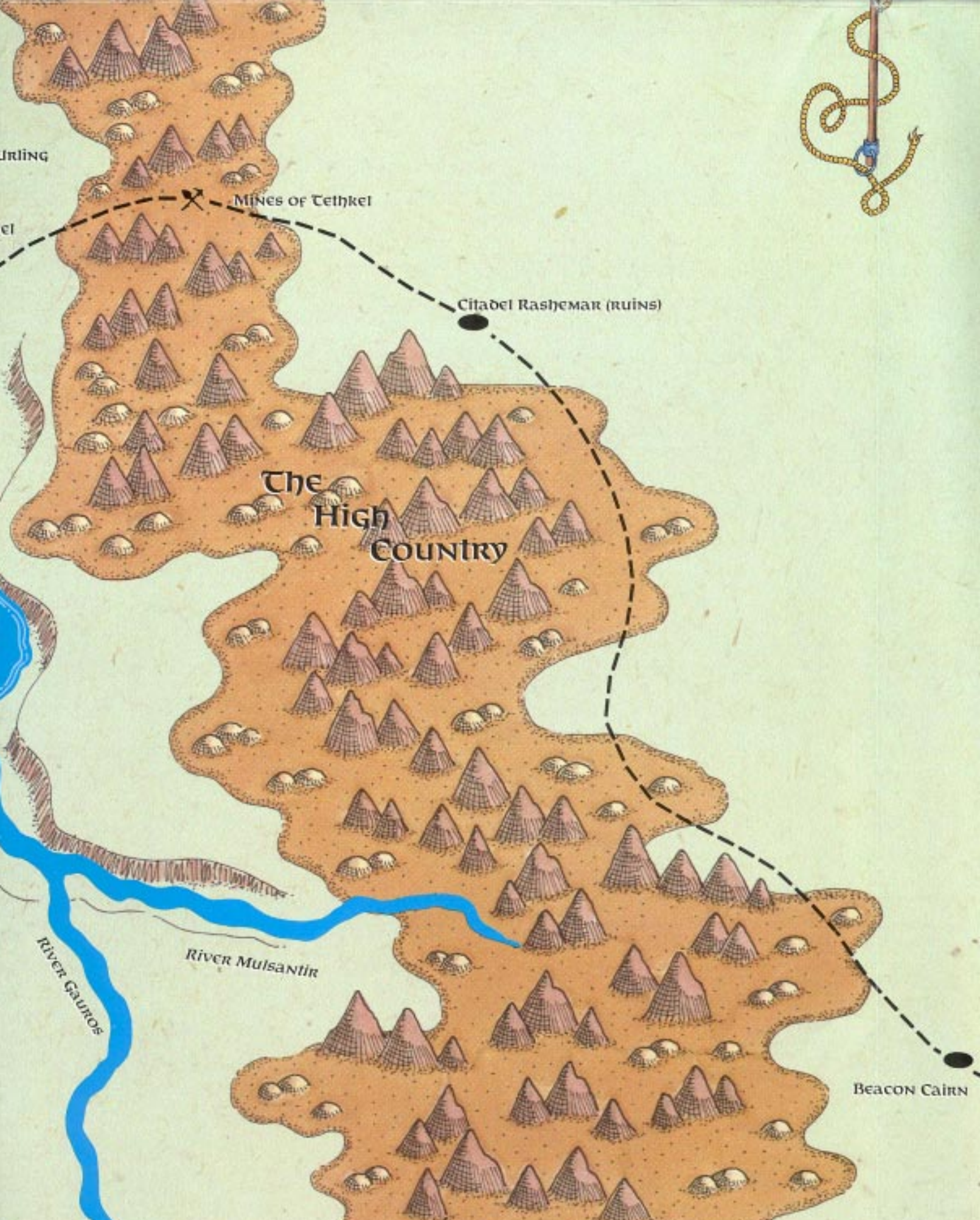
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**River Sur**

**River Thay**

**River S**



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Mines of Tethkel

Citadel Rashemar (ruins)

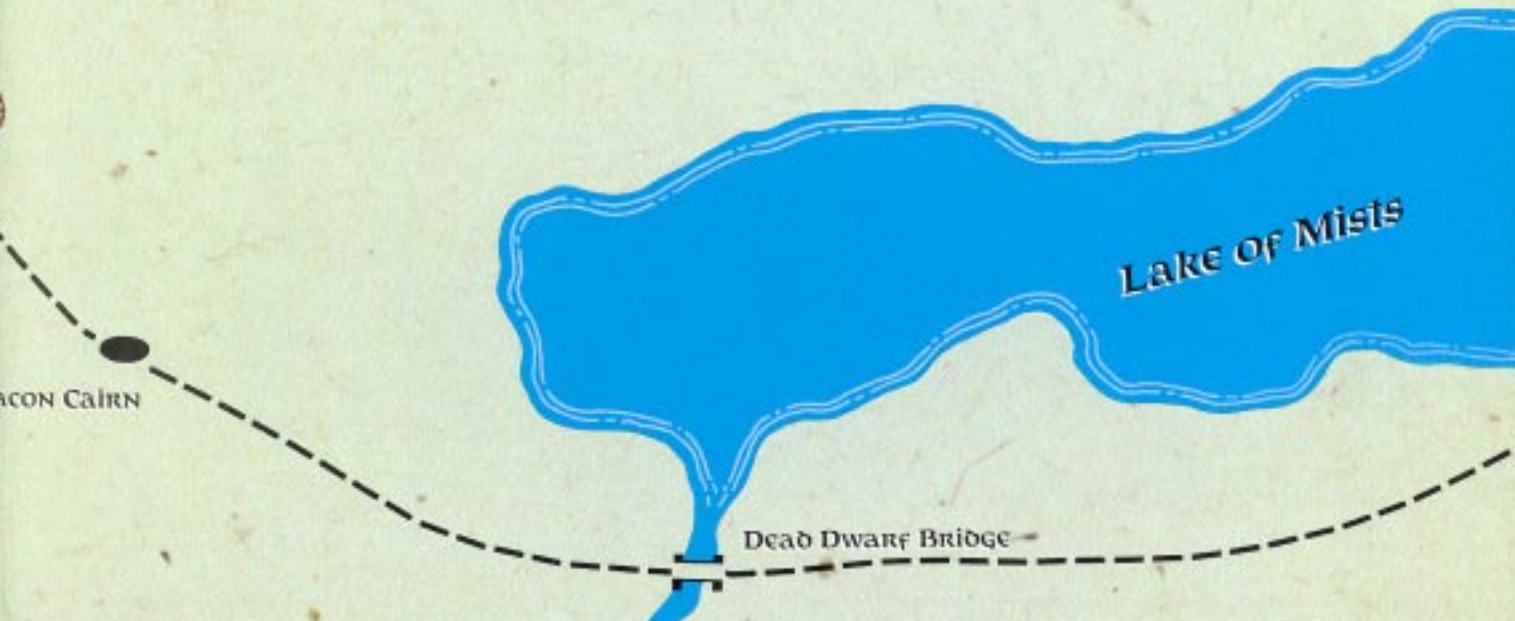
# The High Country

River Gauros

River Mulsantir

Beacon Cairn

# The Endless Waste



Lion Cairn

Dead Dwarf Bridge

Lake of Mists







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## The City of Etabbbar

Scale: 1 inch = 125 feet

Etabbbar, the capital of Chay, has seen many changes in recent years. For much of its history, the city's exact layout remained a closely guarded state secret, and possessing an accurate map of Etabbbar was a crime punishable by death. Recently however, the Chayans have grown lax in the prosecution of offenders and several accurate maps of the city now exist. Eight months ago Etabbbar was rocked by a major earthquake that shattered walls, collapsed homes, and caused widespread flooding when the canals overflowed their banks. Although much of the damage has been repaired, large piles of rubble remain, choking streets and clogging parts of the canal. Some sections of the poor quarter have never even been touched by Chayan workmen.

Etabbbar's most prominent feature is its strangely laid-out canal system, built in the shape of an enormous rune of unknown significance. The canal is used for transportation around the city and small pole barges are found all along its banks. Rates for transport along the canal range from 1 cp to 1 sp, depending upon the quality of the barge and the length of the trip.

### 1. Grand Gate (South Gate)

Unquestionably the most elaborate of Etabbbar's four gates, the Grand Gate sagged on its hinges and was in danger of complete collapse after the earthquake. It has since been repaired and its solid brass doors now gleam even more brightly than before. Cast to resemble an enormous fanged dragon's mouth, the well-patrolled gate is kept open during the day but shut fast at night; admission costs 1 gp per person. Despite the high fee, this is the most frequently used gate due to its location at the mouth of the High Road to Cynaturos.

**Gate Guards** (1m and 1p F 1 LN or LE) (6): AC 5; MV 12; hp 6; CHACO 20; #AC 1; DMG 10s (broad sword) or 10+1 (heavy crossbow); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NE; XP 15.

### 2. Fisherman's Gate (North Gate)

The North Gate was formerly used only by fishermen and nobles wish-

**7. Arrow Island**  
This island lying at the far end of the great Etabbbar rune is thick with flowers, vines, and low trees. It has no trails or benches, but is sometimes visited by nobles or Red Wizards for picnics and other pursuits.

### 8. Charchioness' Palace

The woman born Dmitra Flasz and now known only as the Charchioness lives in this elaborate mansion, overseeing the daily running of Etabbbar and consulting with Szasz Tam, her ally. The Charchioness has become much more involved in the workings of the city than she was when she first took the post. Recently married to the High Blade of Mulmaster, the Charchioness is absent at least three times a year (for at least a month each time) while she visits her beloved and sees to the activities of the newly expanded Chayan spy network in Mulmaster.

### 9. Slave Quarters

This large, five-story barrack-style building houses nearly 2,000 slaves who work on the estates and palaces in the noble quarter of the city. Gnolls stand watch to prevent escape.

**Gnolls:** AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp 14; CHACO 19; #AC 1; DMG 20+; SZ L; ML 11; Int Low; AL CE; XP 35.

### 10. Heklessar Mebiocros' Palace

This nobleman, an active figure in Etabbbar's politics, lives in this ugly but luxurious mansion. Mebiocros shares his home with a wife and nine children, all of whom he despises and who thoroughly despise him in return. Loud, violent fights with numerous thrown objects and shrieking reelinbers are a common event here, after which Mebiocros flees to the peace of a tavern or festhall in the poor quarter along with a rowdy band of companions.

### 11. Voia Ruyw's Residence

## 2. Fisherman's Gate (North Gate)

The North Gate was formerly used only by fishermen and nobles wishing to take a pleasure cruise on Lake Chaylambar. Currently this is the gate most often used by common travelers since the earthquake, as many believed that it was far safer to book passage over the water than risk overland travel and the expected aftershocks. Entrance is still free for the moment, but travelers must submit to search of their persons, wagons, and possessions by the gate guards or be immediately attacked. It is anticipated that with the increased traffic through this gate, the Charchioness will levy an entrance fee any day now.

## 3. Nobles' Gate (East Gate)

Located near the most luxurious part of the city, the East Gate is more an ornamental watchpost than a traveled gate. The Red Wizards and nobles who live in eastern Etlabbar often have their own guards and watchmen, so despite the rich pickings only the most skilled or foolhardy of thieves practice their craft here. Official patrols here are minimal (due to the plethora of private sentries), and this gate is favored by smugglers who hope to slip through without being searched or otherwise disturbed.

## 4. Wizards' Gate (West Gate)

Only Red Wizards and their companions are allowed through this gate that connects to the road to Chaymount, a region normally frequented only by the Wizards. Entrance is free, but anyone caught impersonating a Red Wizard to gain admittance is attacked by well-trained gnoll guards. Rubble chokes many of the streets leading from it, so its popularity has decreased.

**Gnolls** (5h, AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp 14; THACO 19; #AC 1; Dmg 2b4; SZ L, ML 1; Int Low; AL CE; XP 35.

## 5. Eastpark

The twin stretches of greenery that line the eastern canals are thick with lush, pleasant deciduous trees, fragrant flowers, and heavy undergrowth. Trails, statues, benches, fountains, and other works of art may be found throughout the parks, which are favorite spots for Red Wizards and Chayan nobles seeking contemplation, flirtation, or friendly diversions.

## 6. Guard Houses

Each of these two squat blockhouses contains 50 human soldiers who respond to trouble at the Grand Gate, and help keep order in the southern half of Etlabbar.

**Soldiers** (hm and hf, F1, LN or LE) (50); AC 5; MV 12; hp 6; THACO 20; #AC 1; Dmg 1b3 (broadsword) or 1b4 + 1 (heavy crossbow); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NE; XP 15.

## 11. Vola Rhyrn's Residence

Vola Rhyrn is a powerful noblewoman who never married. She maintains a tight control of her house's affairs, and often urges her nephew, Draxus Rhyrn (the Zulkir of Alteration), to pursue policies that would enhance their family's status. Her spacious palace rivals that of the Charchioness, with whom she is good friends. Rhyrn maintains a network of informers and spies in the poor quarter to keep an eye out for rebellion, escaped slaves, or foreign agents, and she has become extremely important to the Charchioness' attempts to maintain order in Etlabbar.

## 12. Tam Estate

This walled compound contains a large three-story mansion, servant's quarters, slave barracks, and wizards' workshop. The powerful Zulkir Szass Tam spends his time here when he is not pursuing plots to expand Chayan influence or to take absolute control of Chay for himself.

## 13. Crescent Islands

These islands, once pleasant parks, are now choked with rubble dredged from the canals since the earthquake.

## 14. Park Island

Flooded by the earthquake, Park Island has since been rebuilt and restored. It is a showcase of local tree and plant species, some of which are now extinct in the wilds due to extensive Chayan cultivation and construction. Several rare species of birds roost here as well, much to the delight of those Red Wizards who pursue ornithology as a hobby.

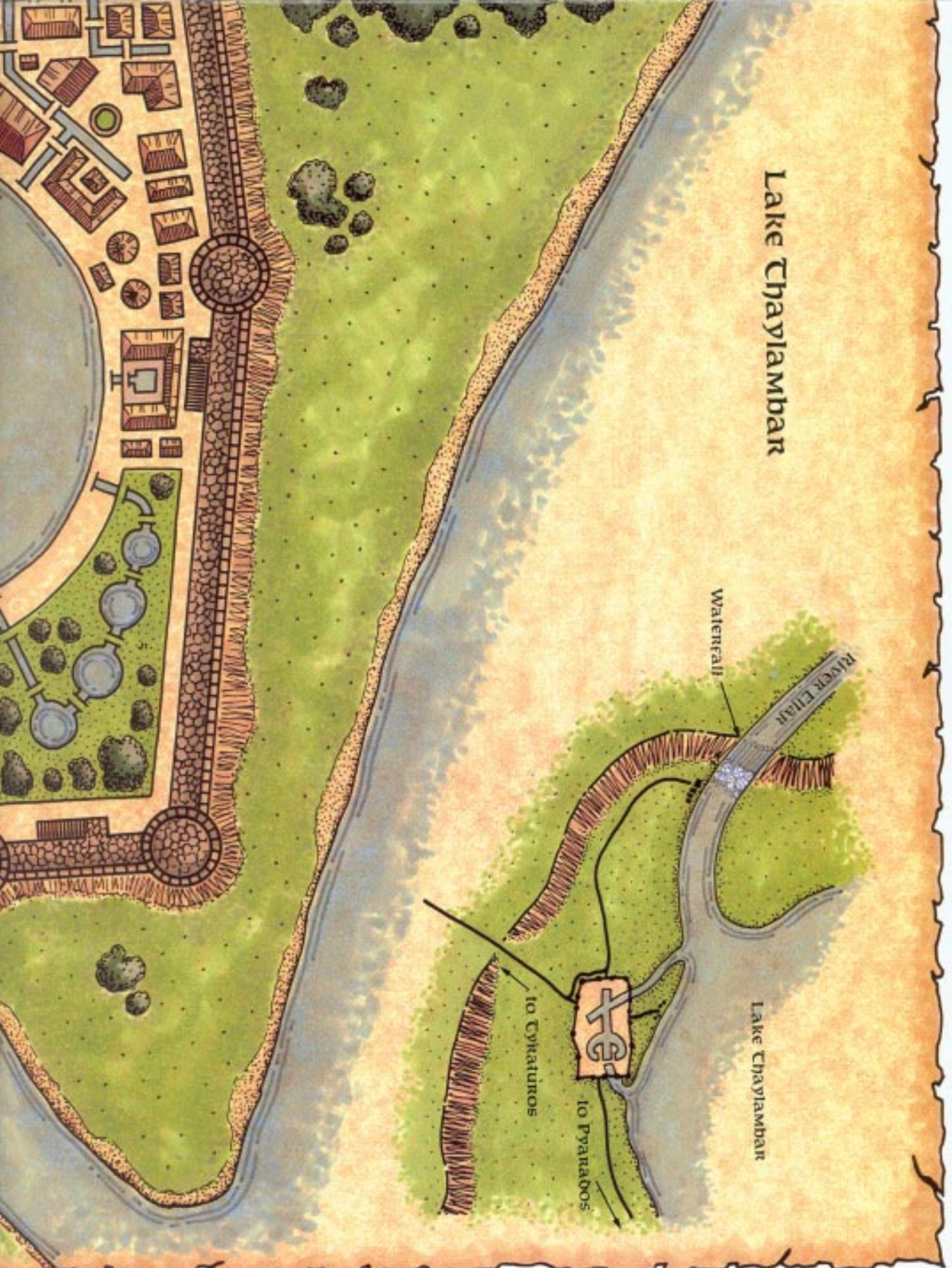
## 15. Diamond Island

Once another pleasant park island, Diamond was completely swamped during the earthquake and is now a dumping place for dredged rubble.

## 16. West Island

This oval-shaped island contains several covered enclosures for feasts, meetings, and festivals. Those who wish to use the facilities here must register one month in advance with the Charchioness' officials and pay a fee ranging from 10-100 gp.

# Lake Chaylambar



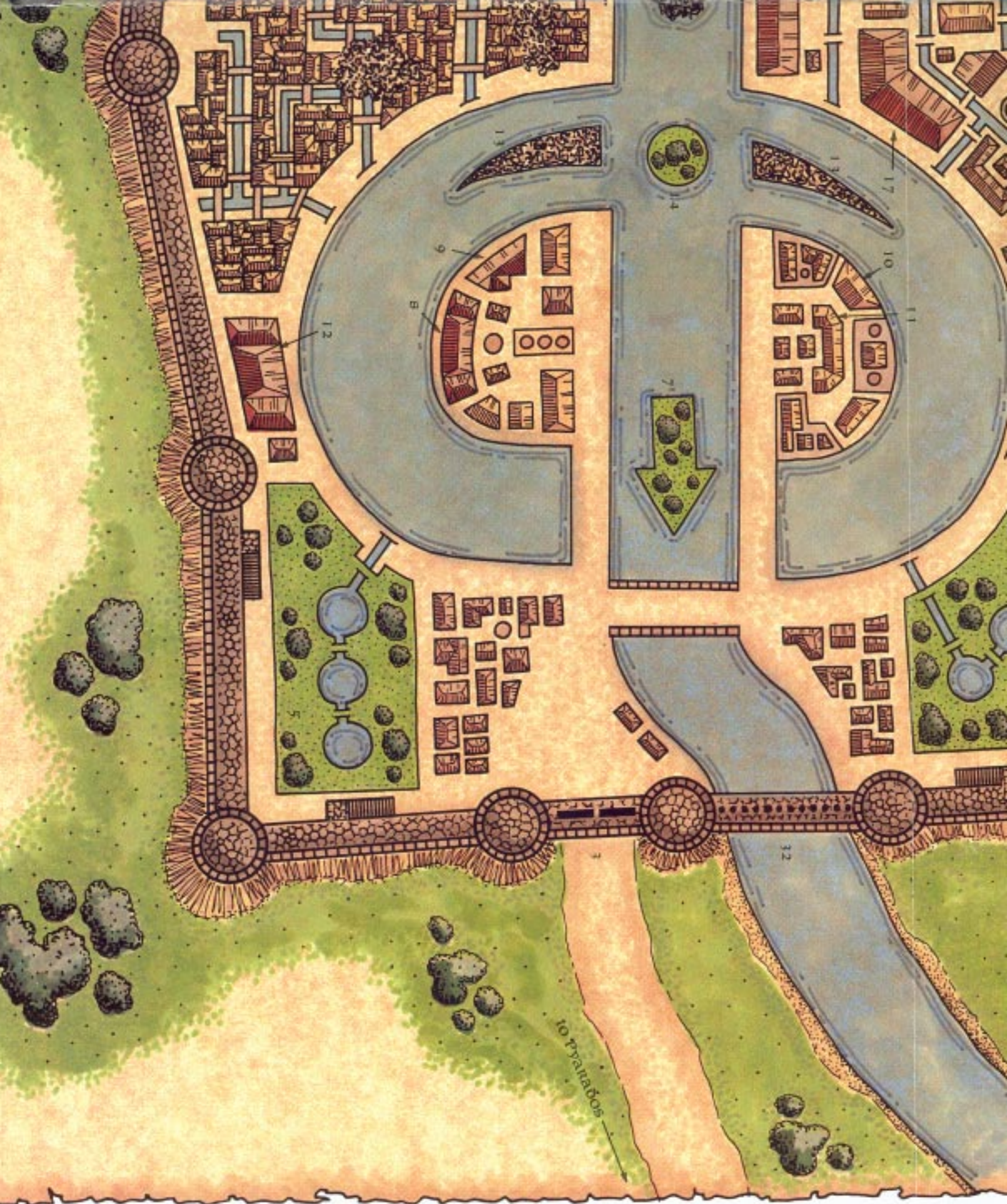
Waterfall

RIVER ELIAR

Lake Chaylambar

to Pyraoos

to Eyraturos



10 pyraðos

12

17

10

11

7

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8

12

5

7

### 17. **Rebhall**

A great, ornate building charted of white-veined red marble, this is the main government building in Ettabbar and is the closest thing to a Capitol building in Chay. Red Wizards, zulkirs, tharchions, and tharchionesses meet here, government documents are stored throughout the structure, and a small army of slaves and scribes chronicles everything that goes on. In fact, little work of any real importance is accomplished here, for most meetings invariably dissolve into bickering with the various wizards and zulkirs boiling whatever they want to do and the tharchions going along with their patrons' demands. An impressive and beautiful building, Rebhall nonetheless symbolizes all that is wrong with the Chayan government.

### 18. **House of Oversight**

As the central counting-house of Chay, this stately white building houses offices for accountants, scribes, secretaries, ministers, and all the others involved in the Chayan bureaucracy's assessment, collection, accounting, and storage of tax revenues and fees. Money from all over Chay is brought here each week, counted, recorded, and stored in vast vaults below the house prior to dispersal to the zulkirs and tharchions for expenses, supplies, salaries and, in many cases, pure graft. An unbelievable amount of wealth is stored beneath the House of Oversight—on any given day, the equivalent of 500,000-1,000,000 gp may be found here. Would-be thieves take note: Numerous multiply locked vault doors protect the valuables, incorruptible guards stand watch, magical wards set off alarms, and traps kill or maim potential intruders. Guardian beasts from the depths of the Lower Planes also eagerly await the arrival of thieves, hoping to lessen the boredom of endless guardianship.

### 19. **Temple of Cyric**

The mad god Cyric has a large temple in Ettabbar. His fane is built of black granite, surmounted with a pure white dome and carved with skulls and arcane runes. The priesthood, led by high priest Rakmann (CE hm P14), is currently in disarray, trying to reconcile the fact that their supposedly all-powerful god now writhes in the grip of madness

### 25. **Poor Quarter**

The free humans of Ettabbar live here. Human and gnomish troops patrol the area, which is still choked with rubble. Many large buildings have collapsed or are in danger of collapse, but thus far no repairs have been made. Crime is rampant here, and the Chayan guards are easily bribed. (They generally detest service here, where the takings are low and danger is high.)

### 26. **The Iron Hand**

A rather run-down festhall that is nonetheless attended by many higher-class Chayans out for a night in the slums, the Iron Hand is owned by a burly and hot-tempered innkeeper, Colibrius (N hm F6). Meals are 1 sp, ale is 1 cp, and wine is 5 sp. All are of marginal quality, but the friendliness of Colibrius' staff, particularly his barmaid, is legendary and attracts many customers each night. Fights are common and guards are frequently summoned to break things up.

### 27. **Black Island**

The southern counterpart of White Island was once a flat panel of black stone, carved with various runes. Since the earthquake, it has been used for piling dredged rubble and now is entirely covered in it.

### 28. **Vurman's Tavern**

Although it functions as a normal public house, Vurman's actually houses the Ettabbar thieves' guild. A warren of underground tunnels connects to the city sewers and various basements throughout the city, forming the highway for Ettabbar's rogues and thieves. Guildmistress Shyara (CE hf C17) is canny, intelligent, and merciless with her rivals. Preclude thieves in Ettabbar do not survive long unless they agree to hand over a quarter of their take to the guild. Woe unto any thief who holds out on the tithes, for Shyara's spies and operatives are notoriously efficient at sniffing out cheaters. Rich bribes from the guild keep the city soberly at arm's length.

skulls and arcane runes. The priesthood, led by high priest Rakmann (CE 7M P14), is currently in bisanay, trying to reconcile the fact that their supposedly all-powerful god now writhes in the grip of madness as other beings try to strip his powers from him.

#### 20. Temple of Loviatan

A popular spot on festival nights, the Temple of Loviatan is the scene of horrific rites of torture and sacrifice, all dedicated to the glory of the Maiben of Pain. All ceremonies are led by high priestess Cylithra (CE 7F P10). A staff of 30 lesser priests (CE 7M and 7F C1) works here, maintaining the grounds and running errands for Cylithra.

#### 21. White Island

A flat expanse of white stone carved with various runes, White Island is generally left alone, for no one outside of the zulkirs and high-ranking Red Wizards knows its purpose. The earthquake cracked its flawless white surface, but it has not yet been repaired.

#### 22. The Orc's Beard

One of the best known Ettabbar Inns, the Beard is run by Chyvrus (NE 7M F3), an unpleasant, rude man who nonetheless runs a clean and luxurious establishment. Rooms are 10 sp per night. Meals range from 1 sp to 1 gp and are of the finest quality, prepared by Chyvrus' cringing staff of slaves who are mercilessly punished if meals are not completely flawless.

#### 23. Barracks

This long, featureless structure houses 1,000 human and 500 gnomish warriors. The two races do not get along, and are kept separated. Lady Myriss (LE 7F F16) commands the Ettabbar garrison and is also responsible for law enforcement and overall security in the city.

**Human warriors** (7M and 7F F1 LN and LE) (1,000); AC 5; MV 12; hp 6; CHACO 20; #AC 1; DMG 10a (broad sword) or 10d4 + 1 (heavy crossbow); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NE; XP 15.

**Gnomes** (500); AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp 14; CHACO 19; #AC 1; DMG 20d4; SZ L; ML 11; Int Low; AL CE; XP 35.

#### 24. Slave Quarters

Each of these structures houses anywhere from 1,000-5,000 slaves of various races. A unit of 100 human fighters stands guard over each building, and the gnomes from the barracks can be easily summoned should any trouble prove too much for the normal guards.

**Guards** (7M and 7F F1 LN and LE) (100); AC 5; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6; CHACO 20; #AC 1; DMG 10a (broad sword) or 10d4 + 1 (heavy crossbow); SZ M; ML 12; Int Average; AL NE; XP 15.

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ly efficient at sniffling out cheaters. Rich brides from the Guulo keep the city solitary at arm's length.

#### 29. Avenue of Columns

This wide street features a line of 50-foot tall bronze columns, all inscribed with arcane symbols and runes.

#### 30. Palace of Crystals

An official government building, the palace contains a bewildering number of crystal balls and other covert observation devices, each keyed to various significant locations in Thay. The Red Wizards and their agents use this building and its facilities to spy on enemies of Thay. Monitor the progress of troops, and stay in contact with their agents. Red Wizard Croilir (LE 7M Div 10) is in charge of the palace and a ll who use it must register with him.

#### 31. The Canalside

The most exclusive establishment in Thay, the Canalside is popular with merchants, Red Wizards, nobles, and other important people. Reservations must be made at least a month in advance and diners range from 10-100 gp per person. Owner Dyrara Fliss (N 7F 0) is a ruthless perfectionist, keeping the establishment spotless, its decor of the highest, most expensive quality, and its food unquestionably the best in all of Thay. Diners have a pleasant view of the canal and lighted barges are often poled nearby at night to illuminate the entire building.

#### 32. Watergates

The River Eitar flows down from Thaymount and into Ettabbar, forming canals that divide the city into sections. The two watergates on the northwest and east walls of Ettabbar permit the river to flow through the city and empty out into Lake Thaylambar, but are usually closed to all other passage. Both are equipped with exceptionally heavy portcullises that prevent boats and creatures from Lake Thaylambar from entering the city's canal system. On rare occasions, arrogant nobles or tharchions demand to be allowed to bring their ships through the eastern watergate (rather than docking and using the North Gate like the common folk). If approved by the Tharchioness, this service can cost the noble as much as 100 gp to cover the costs of pulling slaves away from other valuable duties to haul open the gate, taking soldiers from guard duty to protect the eastern wall while the watergate stands open, and the general nuisance of the demand in the first place.



Advanced  
**Dungeons & Dragons**



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by Anthony Pryor

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