

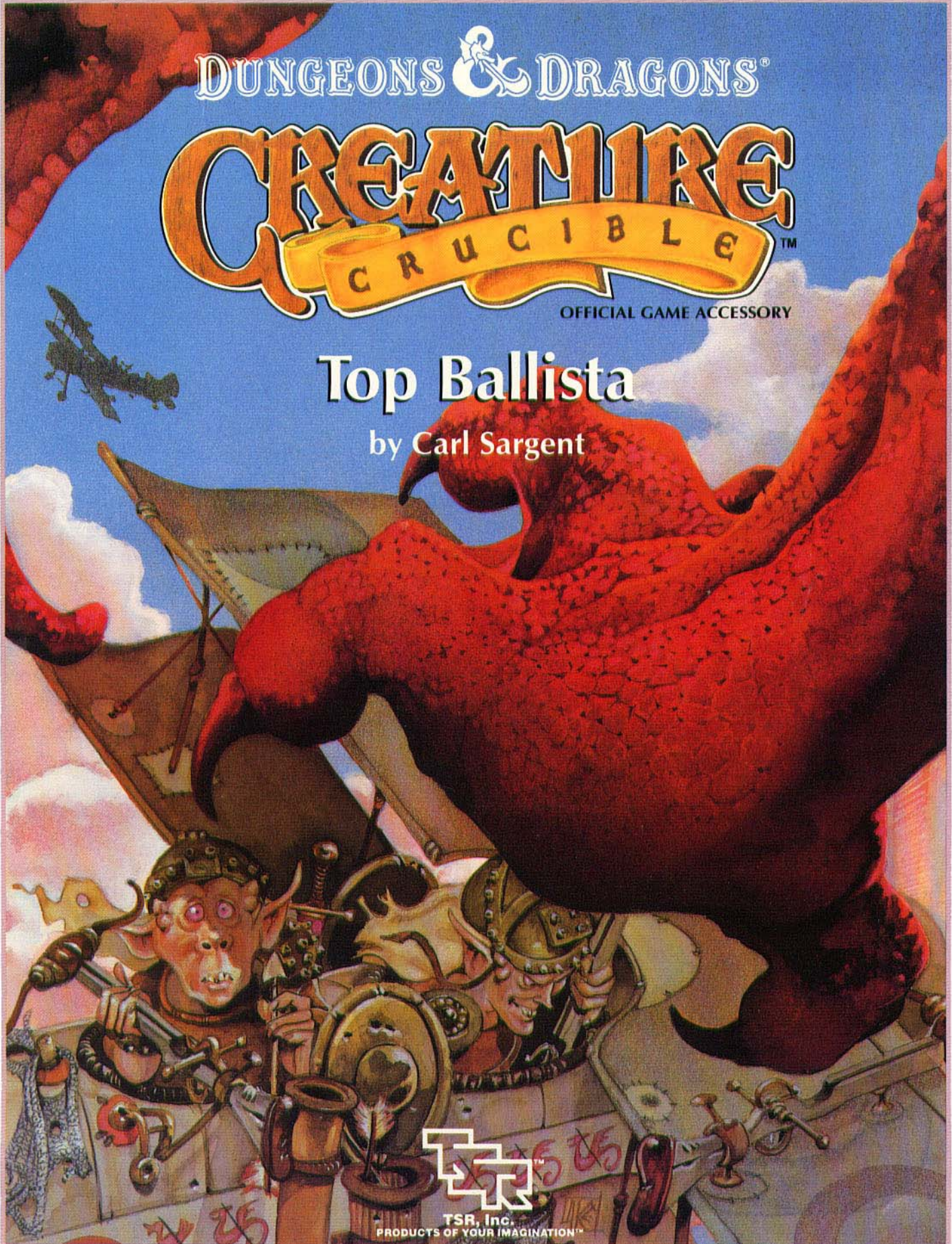
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

# CREATURE CRUCIBLE™

OFFICIAL GAME ACCESSORY

## Top Ballista

by Carl Sargent



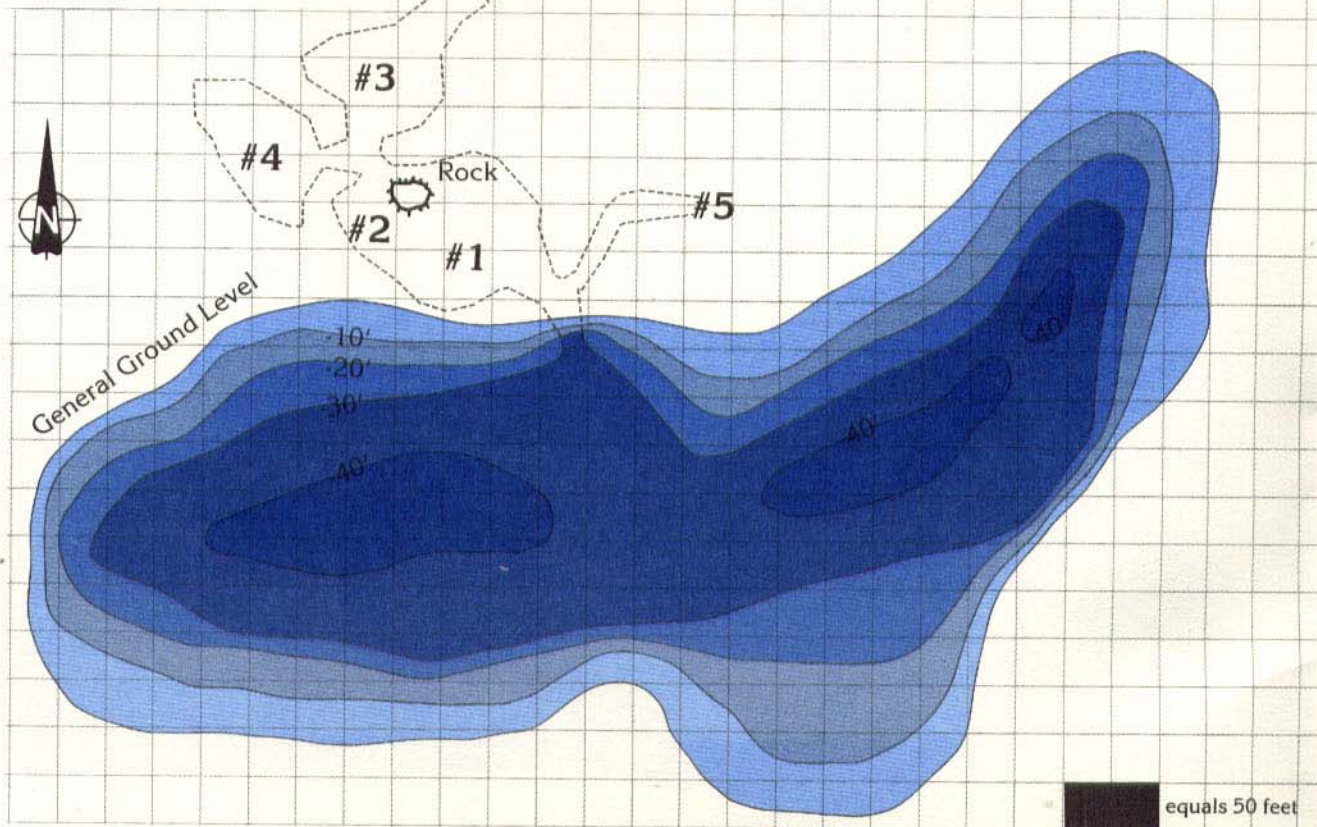
  
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# Tabi of the Dymrak Forest

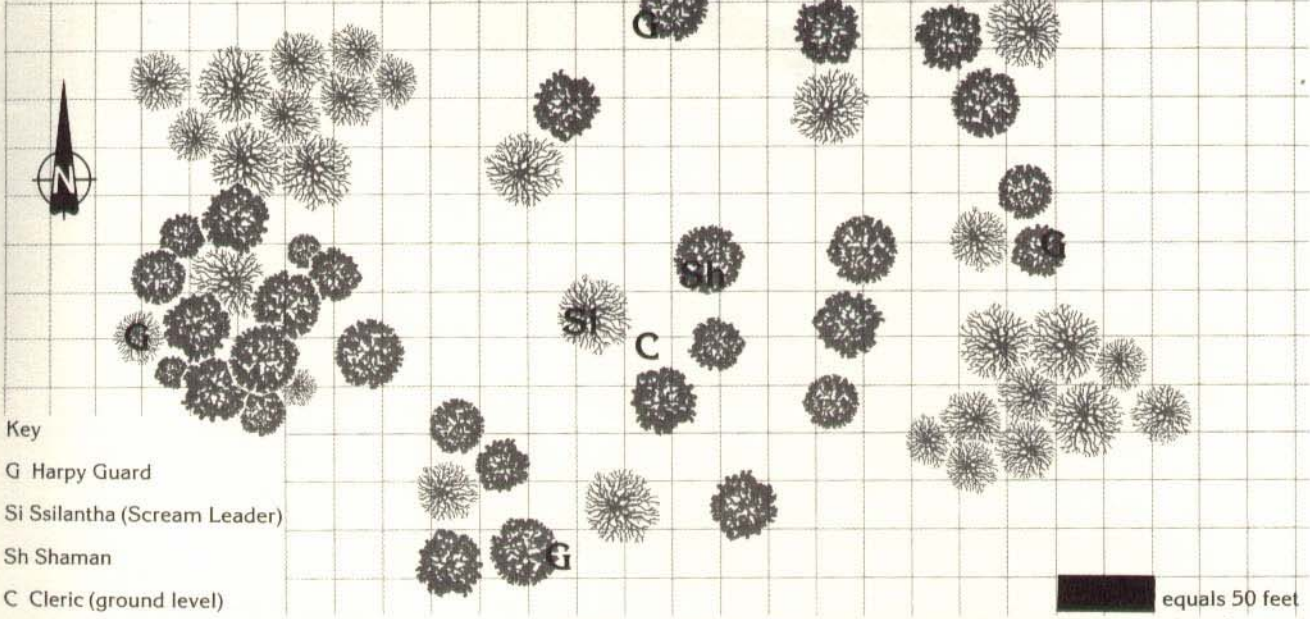
Scale: one hex equals 8 miles



# Den of the Basilisk



## Tree Den of the Harpies



## The Crashed Gnome Airplane



# CREATURE CRUCIBLE™

An Official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game Supplement

## Top Ballista

By Carl Sargent

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# A Good Place to Start

What goes up had better well stay up!  
—old skygnome proverb

*"Looking to the skies for wonders, eh? Dragons and cloud giants and wyverns and huge eagles of great age, hmmm? Their rheumy eyes brimming with the wisdom of ages long gone? And no doubt, behind all that the stars in the night and the endless planes that lie beyond?"*

*"Don't bother! I've seen them all, and they're rubbish, all of them! Terribly disappointing. If it's REAL wonders you're after, look to the Flying City, to the gleaming timbers and metals and marbles of Serraine, greatest marvel of the age. What? What's that? Well, yes, I did help to build it actually, but that doesn't prejudice my judgement at all. Hrrmph! Not in the least. Now keep those humans at the back quiet and we'll get into the cloud-clipper for a closer look."*

*Horrobin, nagpa sage and tour master*

## Melting Pot in the Sky

Like most skydwellers, Horrobin may be somewhat prejudiced in his views, but he does have a point. The ways of many great creatures of the sky are well-known to sages and scholars. Dragons (to take an extreme) are intensely studied by many folk, wise and otherwise. Yet, there are other denizens of the skies that are not so well known (and who prefer it that way!). Nevertheless, here their secrets are made clear—and more! Not only can you learn the nature of creatures such as the unpleasantly vultureish nagpas, the infuriating gremlins, and the mighty skylord Pegataurs, but you can also play them yourselves. This sourcebook provides you with the information you need to create and play the various skydwelling races.

*Top Ballista* contains the following:

- A 64-page DM's Booklet, containing information on many of the skydwelling creatures from the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game; rules for these creatures as player characters; magic use rules, new spells, skills, equipment, and special abilities; new magic items; the Flying City of Serraine (a traveling campaign setting); and role play advice for these creatures as both nonplayer characters (NPCs) and player characters (PCs).

- A 32-page Adventures Booklet containing several fully-developed adventures, including one lengthy mini-campaign adventure. These are playable by PCs of the skydwelling races, or more conventional PCs (humans, elves, dwarves and so on).

- A fold-out map, showing the details of the flying city and diagrams of the fantastic *Top Ballista* flying machines.

## How to use this Supplement

The DM's Booklet should be read first by the Dungeon Master. Players, stop reading now! Reading stuff that

you shouldn't will only spoil the surprise and fun to be had adventuring in the realms of the skydwellers. In any case, the DM will supply you with information you need from the DM's Booklet later on.

If you are the DM, read this, the DM's Booklet, in its entirety. Much of this booklet is given over to the "Creature Heroes" section. It gives backgrounds for the skydwelling races, covering their lives, cultures, beliefs, and societies. You should find enough material to create and role play them as PCs or NPCs. Unique abilities, level advancement, and the like are all dealt with in detail. Special attention is given to DMing gremlins, an especially tricky race to handle! The remaining sections detail Serraine, the Flying City, with its amazing diversity of inhabitants, strange sights and marvelous machineries, not the least of which is the *Top Ballista* Academy, home of the finest flying aces in the Known World!

You (DMs only!) may also want to look through the *Adventures Booklet* and the adventures it contains.

After reading through this material, decide how to best use this sourcebook in your campaign. Will skydweller player characters be appropriate for your gaming group, possibly as a refreshing change now and then? If you decide "Yes," then let your players read those sections in the DM's Booklet that pertain to the character races they will play.

If you decide against skydwelling PCs, use this supplement to develop a selection of individualized NPCs, adventures, campaign settings, new magic items, and spells to infest, that is, populate your world.

## Your Aerial Guides

*"You have heard my plans. If there are no objections, you can begin immediately." Santarian scuffed his hooves, betraying his rising irritation as he studied the three creatures gathered in his chambers: Windsinger Alexene Cloudmantle of the birdlike Faenare, master craftsngnome Branwys Skyratchet in his rune-marked flight jacket, and Horrobin, the distasteful nagpa sage. None was happy.*

*"Swraawk, \*ahem\*, I mean, indeed. Surely my lord Mayor, you cannot mean that I . . . I mean we, interrupt our important and immeasurably valuable duties to act as tour guides. Certainly there must be those in this city to whom the lucrative possibilities of interacting with the Skreewarak, that is, the land-bound, would be an imeasurable boon."*

*"Begging m'lord's pardon," the gnome interjected, "But I think his nagpaness means that there must be someone less ugly than him fer the job."*

*Smiling, Alexene responded with her characteristic twitter, "Of course, we will be happy to serve most noble Santorian. I feel I shall learn more of these surface dwellers than I could ever teach them about us. I, for one, cannot wait to begin."*

# Creature Heroes

*Heroes are not born, they come by mail order.*

—unknown skygnome technician

Like the other products in this series, Top Ballista sets you up with rules for creating fun player and non-player creature heroes, similar to the human and demi-human hero-adventurers that are played in a “conventional” D&D® game.

Top Ballista focuses on skydwelling creatures (though we won’t entirely overlook their earth-dwelling cousins). This chapter gives general information for creating player creatures: their abilities, prime requisites, and so on. The chapters that follow deal with each race individually.

With the exception of one new creature, the faenare, all are previously published monsters gathered from other D&D® game products. For your convenience, their sources and page numbers are noted in parentheses after their headings. The abbreviations are: B = *Basic Dungeon Master’s Rule book*; C = *Dungeon Master’s Companion*; CC = *Creature Catalogue*; and M = *Master DM’s Book*. Example, “Sphinx (M 39)” means that the sphinx’s original description can be found on page 39 of the *Master DM’s Book*.

If you are the DM, you should read these chapters through and take careful note of how they may affect your game. Do you want to allow PCs of certain races? Some are naturally rather Chaotic and some, like gremlins, may be a real handful to run. Before allowing new PC races into your game, you might wish to run one or two of the adventures in the *Adventures Booklet* with “normal” D&D game PCs to get people used to the rather oddball nature of the settings used, and to introduce them to the flying city itself.

If you do allow PCs of certain skydweller races, let the players refer to the relevant parts of this book. If you don’t allow skydweller PCs, use these guidelines to generate a vast variety of creature NPCs to surprise and challenge your players.

## Normal Monsters

Throughout this book, reference is made to “normal monsters.” A normal monster is a creature that exists exactly as you might find it in one of the D&D game rule books or the *Creature Catalogue*. It represents a mature monster whose natural powers and abilities are fully developed. When a monster becomes a shaman, wicca, or a creature hero (player character or special NPC monster), it is no longer a normal monster.

## Ability Scores

Creature heroes, like normal characters, have six ability scores. However, most skydwellers do not have the same wide range of scores in each ability as humans or demi-humans. Table 1 summarizes the minimum and maximum possible scores for each race’s abilities.

Table 1: Creature Hero Ability Scores

Race	Minimum/Maximum Ability Scores					
	STR	INT	WIS	DEX	CON	CHR
Faenare	3/17	5/18	7/18	6/18	3/18	7/18
Gnome	3/18	3/18	3/18	8/18	6/18	3/18
Gremlin	3/13*	3/18	3/18	6/18	3/16	3/18
Harpy	3/18	3/16	3/18	3/18	3/18	3/18
Nagpa	3/16	9/18	7/18	3/16	3/17	3/16
Pegataur	9/18*	3/18	3/18	3/18	8/18	3/18
Sphinx	6/18*	6/18	8/18	3/18	8/18	3/18
Tabi	3/17*	6/18	3/16	6/18	3/18	3/18

\* This creature’s Strength attribute is relative to creatures similar to it in size and physical power and is not to be compared with normal human abilities.

To generate the ability scores of a creature hero, select a creature race and then roll 3d6 six times. For the sake of game balance, use this method, not any special “home rules” you may use with conventional characters. Arrange the scores in any order and exchange ability points as described in the D&D game rules (see *Basic Players Manual*, page 49), until each attribute score lies between the minimum and maximum specified on Table 1. If it is impossible to arrange the scores like this, roll a new set of six scores.

Note that some NPC creatures may have scores below the minimums. Such beings cannot advance beyond the level of normal monster.

With two exceptions, ability scores have the same meaning for skydwellers that they do for conventional D&D game character races.

**Charisma.** Charisma scores as given in Table 1 apply to encounters with the creature’s own race and those like it. For example, the Charisma of a skygnome will be the same whether he deals with gnomes, humans, elves, or dwarves. But for a nagpa, reactions from, say, humans will always be decidedly negative, regardless of the nagpa’s Charisma. Simply put, nagpa, look perfectly horrible and it takes time to overcome the disgust of first impressions. Apply negative Charisma modifiers when a creature encounters others who are unlikely to appreciate its good looks. The creature descriptions give guidelines for when to apply these modifiers.

**Strength.** For some creatures, the Strength attribute is measured relative to similar creatures — as in the cases of the pegataur and sphinx (large and powerful) and the tabi and gremlin (small and not so strong). Here, ability scores really mean with respect to the norm for the species and creatures like it. The scores shouldn’t be compared with those of humans and demi-humans. Standard combat bonuses apply, but you will need to modify the standard encumbrance values for these creatures (as found on page 21 of the *Expert Rule book*). Sphinxes can carry three times the rule book values for encumbrance limits.



## Creature Heroes

Pegataurs may carry twice the rule book values. However, both gremlins and tabi are restricted to but one-third of a conventional character's listed limits.

### Prime Requisites

Like conventional D&D® game character classes, skydwelling races have one or more prime requisites. If the scores in all of a character's prime requisites are 13 or higher, the character gains a bonus of 5% on all earned experience. If one or both of them is 16 or higher, the bonus is 10%.

The prime requisites for each race are as follows:

**Faenare:** Wisdom and Charisma

**Gremlin:** Dexterity

**Gnome:** Dexterity

**Harpy:** Strength

**Nagpa:** Intelligence and Wisdom

**Pegataur:** Strength and Constitution

**Sphinx:** Wisdom and Constitution

**Tabi:** Intelligence

Some of these races which are not natural spellcasters can become wicca or shaman spellcasters. If so, additional prime requisites (Intelligence for magic-use, Wisdom for clerical/druidic spells) will become important and affect XP bonuses. For details, refer to the section on Spellcasters.

### Languages

Many of the skydweller races know more languages (often obscure ones) than humans do. What follows are the basic languages suggested for skydwelling player creatures (and NPCs). Characters know at least these tongues, plus their alignment language. If their Intelligence permits, they may learn additional ones.

Use these lists as guidelines for PCs. NPCs and characters with unusual backgrounds may be different (e.g., an orphaned sphinx fostered by a dragon).

"Local language" means the *dominant* local language, usually human, depending on where the player creature is from. A gremlin from Karameikos (*GAZ 1, The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*) would know the Karameikan tongue as his "local language," while a gnome from the Shires (*GAZ 8, The Five Shires*) would have Halfling as his local tongue. For dwellers in the Flying City of Serraine, the local language is Skycommon, a tongue spoken by most all its inhabitants (*and few others!*).

**Faenare:** Cloud Giant, Elven, Fairy\*, Giant Eagle, Harpy, Giant Roc. Can also communicate with birds\*\*.

**Gnome:** Dwarf, Goblin, Halfling, Kobold, local language. Earth-dwelling gnomes can communicate with burrowing animals\*\*.

**Gremlin:** Fairy\*, Gnome, Leprechaun, local language.

**Harpy:** Giant Eagle. Has a 30% chance to speak a local language. Has a 30% chance to speak Faenare.

**Nagpa:** Local language. Nagpa know arcane languages which are detailed under Skills later.

**Pegataur:** Centaur, Giant Eagle, Pegasus, Giant Roc. Has a 50% chance to speak Fairy\*. Has a 50% chance to speak Elven.

**Sphinx:** Local language, plus 1d3 languages from neighboring countries (e.g., in Karameikos a sphinx might know Thyatian, Ierendian, Halfling, or the languages of Darokin or Minrothad).

**Tabi:** Gnome, Phanaton, local language. Can also communicate with apes\*\*.

\* The Fairy language is the common tongue for pixies, sprites and their kin.

\*\* See individual race description for details regarding this communication ability.

### Natural Armor

Most of the races presented here have a naturally superior Armor Class — that is, without wearing any additional armor these creatures have an Armor Class better than 9. The Armor Class values given in the normal monster descriptions are average figures. They include fighting skill, the usual armor worn, magical defenses and so on. These rule book values are not used when dealing with creature heroes. Instead, use the Base Armor Class shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Base Armor Classes for Creature Heroes

Creature	Armor Class	Creature	Armor Class
Faenare	AC 6*	Nagpa	AC 4*
Gremlin	AC 7	Pegataur	AC 6
Gnome	AC 9	Sphinx	AC 2*
Harpy	AC 7	Tabi	AC 7

\* These statistics are for *normal monsters* only. Creature heroes who are below normal monster level will have poorer Armor Classes. For details, see the creature's individual description in this book.

Dexterity bonuses, shields, armor, and magic can all affect the creature hero's Base Armor Class. Armor, if it is allowed (see Equipment), will benefit a creature only if it is naturally superior to the creature's Base Armor Class. Thus, leather armor (AC 7) would be of no value to a normal monster tabi, since it has a natural AC7 anyway; but it would be useful to a gnome (which has a Base AC 9).

### Initial Hit Dice

All characters start their careers at their lowest HD possible. Roll the Hit Dice specified by each race's individual level and Hit Dice advancement tables (also see Level Advancement below).

To keep 1st-level characters from being too weak, allow a special rule on the first HD roll: any roll below the average dice roll is taken as being the average.

Round fractions up. The average roll on a d8 is 5, rounded up from 4.5. For multiple Hit Die creatures, this applies *only* to the first die roll.

*Example: A beginning sphinx has two (d8) Hit Dice. The first d8 roll is a 2. Since this is below the d8 average of 5, 5 is taken as a result. A 7 is rolled for the second Hit Die. So, the sphinx has  $5 + 7 = 12$  hit points. Even if the second dice roll had been below 5, it still would have been taken as rolled and not adjusted upwards to 5. Constitution bonuses apply to these rolls as with normal characters. Thus a sphinx with 16 Constitution, and the above dice rolls, would have  $(5 + 2) + (7 + 2) = 16$  hit points.*

### Level Advancement

Skydwelling creature heroes can advance in levels, just like conventional characters! However . . . unlike their conventional counterparts, PC creatures do not begin their careers at 1st level. Creature heroes start as inexperienced creatures. To maintain some semblance of game balance, they may even need to work their way *UP* to normal monster status. A normal monster nagpa has 9 Hit Dice, and player creatures do not start with this kind of advantage! Only by earning much experience can they progress to normal monster level and gain their mature strength and power.

Each race description includes a table for levels and Hit Dice, including any levels below 1st. Creatures that normally possess multiple Hit Dice (such as the sphinx or nagpa) begin their careers with *negative* Experience Point (XP) totals. As characters earn experience, their XP is used to reduce that negative total. As the XP total grows less negative, more Hit Dice and special abilities are gained. When the XP total reaches zero, the creature has the full HD and abilities of the normal monster.

Like conventional characters, Constitution bonuses and penalties are applied to Hit Dice gained during this development. Also like conventional characters, player creatures cease to gain Hit Dice after 8th level (exceptions: the sphinx and nagpa obtain their maximum HD at lower levels), and instead gain a set number of hit points with each level increase as specified for each race. After 8th level, Constitution bonuses/penalties are no longer applied!

*Example: Thimbelle, a young PC faenare with a Constitution of 14 and a Dexterity of 13, starts with 1 HD (1d8; plus 1 hp for Con) and -4,000 XP. When Thimbelle earns 2,000 XPs, she becomes a "teen" faenare, but gains no additional Hit Dice. Her XP total is now -2,000. When she earns yet another 2,000 XP, so her total is zero or higher, Thimbelle becomes a "normal monster." She gains a second Hit Die (1d8 + 1 as before) and her natural spell-casting abilities take hold and develop.*

Not all player creatures gain another Hit Dice each time they advance a level of experience. Sometimes

only a hit point may be gained (example: the Grem-lin). In such cases do not apply the Constitution bonus. Refer to the individual creature tables for details.

### Special Abilities

Normal monsters often have a range of special abilities. These abilities will be gained in stages throughout a creature's development up to (and beyond) normal monster status. Some tinkering has been done with the normal monsters' range of special abilities, usually to clarify rule book entries.

However, in some cases (notably the sphinx), DMs may want to put limits on extensive special abilities for player creatures. Having a player creature sphinx with complete immunity to spells of levels one through three may be too much to handle ("What another fireball? I ignore it and eat him!"). To accommodate this, options for play-balanced special abilities are provided (free of additional charge). **Purist warning:** the mature normal monster form will not be the same as that in the rule books. The astute DM may wish to suggest that the rule books document a rare and very powerful subspecies of monster which supposedly died out a while back (though some may still exist as *monsters*). If that fails, explain the secret mysteries of game balance and what will happen to the other adventurers if the deadliness of encounters must be escalated to accommodate a too-powerful player character. If you can't convince the stubborn player, maybe the other players can!

### Combat & Saving Throws

Until they reach 8th level, all creature heroes fight and make saving throws as monsters of their Hit Dice (not level), using the monster attack charts. Upon reaching 8th level, creature heroes may use either their Hit Dice (as a monster) or their level (as a conventional hero) for attack rolls and saving throws, whichever is better for the character! This is an important point to note! As with normal monsters, they make saving throws as if they were a conventional character of a specific class.

*Example: A 1st-level nagpa player creature has 10 HD. Such a creature fights as a 10 HD monster (THAC0 10). Upon reaching 7th level, he reaches his maximum Hit Dice of 13d8 and a THAC0 of 8. Since the nagpa advances as if he were a magic-user, his attack does not improve again until he obtains 31st level!*

What this means is that low-level player creatures will usually be much more powerful in combat than low-level fighters, clerics, and conventional character classes. Also, player creatures of the same level will have widely differing abilities. The Adventure Booklet contains a player creature equivalence table to give you a rough comparison of the creature races.





# Faenare

*A faenare in the hand is tastier than two in the . . .*  
—last words of the cloud giant Cumulo Nimbits

The petite, elf-like bird-woman surveyed the passengers of the cloud-clipper, wondering once again if they were prepared for the surprises that lay ahead. Of course not, she reflected, they never are. With a sigh and a half smile, Alexene took the speaking horn from Horrobin, who was now entirely and entirely engrossed in a molding old scroll he had purchased groundside.

"I speak of my own people. Few have seen us, and fewer still know us, so I shall dispel your ignorance.

"We are a very old race. Some believe that we no longer exist. We believe ourselves kin to the elves, and to the far-distant dwellers on the Shining Isles, the Faedorne. Our windsongs speak of an elven Immortal from the Sphere of Thought who created us where the stars sink into the horizon. She held our souls in her hand, and blew them forth into the world, collecting form from the air as they rode on the winds, over mountains and deserts and to the secret places where we now live. When all the world's master windsingers spin their music together, we believe, the true name of our Mother will be revealed to us and she will come to take us to the Shining Isles to rest there forever. But, perhaps, this is only a tale after all, though it saddens my heart to think this is so.

"My people are swift and silent, keepers of secrets and singers of songs. We fly faster than even the great dragons, for our souls are made of the stuff of Air, and we can bear loads in flight and not be slowed. We keep away from humans and their kin, and almost all creatures save those of the skies. We speak with the great eagles, and even the mighty roc, but we have few other dealings. Though we hold them as kin, we shun even elves. Our songs speak of treachery among the elves; of shadowelves in Alfheim who betrayed us long ago; of mastersingers slain in the night by cowards with poisons. We do not forget such things.

"We faenare live in small clans, occupying great communal nests hidden far inside secluded cave complexes in remote mountains which surface dwellers cannot reach. We are all shamans, priests of our nameless Immortal mother. We gather much of our food — plants, berries and seeds, where we find it. We do have some secret places, cultivated valleys, where we grow such foods. Our clans are closeknit and tightly bonded. Clanfolk come to the aid of brothers or sisters without a second thought. It is nearly unthinkable for a faenare to live apart from the clan.

"Yet there are exceptions. Some few of our young are wind-haunted, as you would say it in your tongue. The young one hears songs within his mind, especially at night, giving him neither rest nor peace. He yearns to hear the song in its fullness. He is driven to find its source. We recognize this haunting, and our adults drive the haunted one from the nest, to seek his enchantment and fulfillment in the world. This is the

path of the windsinger, who seeks part of our creator's eternal music in the great world beyond. The song in his mind often produces an unfaenarelike curiosity about all things in the world. Perhaps this, too, speaks something of our creator's purpose. It is one of the few ways in which our insular people gain any new learning of what lies in the wider world.

"The windsinger's path is lonely and dangerous. Many do not return. But others find the music within their heads, and know an indescribable joy of recognizing at last the harmony within themselves and their creator. Only a few return to us. They become our master windsingers, or simply mastersingers. Mastersingers are the great teachers. Their songs renew our sense of history and reveal the meaning of our lives.

"If I have painted a picture of the solemn faenare, it is not so. To see our young at play in the wind currents, teasing their elders and riding the great eagles or to drink our stoneberry wine, all bubbles and light sweetness and good feeling is to know we are a people of all variety, like yours! We too sing of joys and follies, pranks and jests, misunderstandings and confusions. We have our wits, scallywags and even malcontents just as do you.

"We are a people of song and air, little burdened by material things. The great smithing and mining of stolid dwarves, their honeycombed homes, we cannot equal. We have nothing to compare with the crystals, carvings, arts and beauties crafted by elves. We do not even create things such as the gems and jewels of the gnomish folk. Our life is in song, a breath of life handed down from one generation to the next. With this, we are more than happy."

<b>Faenare</b>	
<b>Armor Class:</b>	6
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	2d8***
<b>Move:</b>	120' (40')
<b>Flying:</b>	360' (120')
<b>Attacks:</b>	2 claws or by weapon/spell
<b>Damage:</b>	1-4/1-4 or by weapon/spell
<b>No. Appearing:</b>	1-4 (5-30)
<b>Save As:</b>	Elf: 3
<b>Morale:</b>	9/11/12
<b>Treasure Type:</b>	0
<b>Alignment:</b>	Neutral
<b>XP Value:</b>	55

Faenare are a secretive race of birdfolk inhabiting wild and desolate mountainous regions, scattered across the Known World. The Broken Lands are home to the highest number, but even there they are very rare. Faenare are tall (most are 6 feet to 6 feet 6 inches tall) humanoids, with winged arms and crests of feathers on their heads, backs, abdomens, and calves. Their eyes are large and bird-

like, set in a facial structure otherwise like that of elves. Pointed ears nestle below head feathers. They have tawny feathers streaked with amber or gold, although older birdfolk have many streaks of white and grey in their plumage.

A faenare's hands, a part of their winglike arms, cannot be used in flight other than to grip small, light items (i.e., no weapon use in flight). In compensation, their strong, highly flexible legs and clawlike feet can fight, use weapons, and even fire bows while in flight. Other than simple harnesses for carrying tools or other belongings, faenare have no need of clothing, and do not wear it.

Faenare are seclusive, and hard to surprise (surprised only on 1 in 12). They are immune to the charm effect of harpy song. Birds will not attack faenare under any circumstances (even if magically controlled, brought into being by a *create natural animals* spell, etc.). Faenare can also converse with the birds as per a *speak with animals* spell at will. Faenare are permanently protected from lightning (as the 4th-level Druidic spell) and save at +4 against all air-based spells and attacks (e.g., the whirlwind created by an air elemental). Once per day, a group of five or more faenare can cast a *bless* spell upon themselves by one round of harmonic singing; this spell has the normal duration, but is cancelled if any member of the group moves more than 100 feet from any other. Faenare morale is 9 if alone, 11 if with the clan, 12 in the nest.

Most faenare do not advance beyond normal monster level. A faenare must have a Wisdom score of 13 or more to advance further. Unless a faenare is a windsinger (see below), he or she cannot advance beyond 12th level.

All faenare are shamans, Clerical/Druidic spell-

casters of levels 1-12. A few, very rare, specimens are windsingers, spellcasters with wider spell selections and additional special abilities. (These are detailed below, under the treatments for player creatures and spellcasters.)

Faenare save as elves.

### PLAYER CREATURE FAENARE

Most player creature faenare will be of Neutral alignment, and this will always be true of windsingers.

Player creature faenare are unusual in that they are setting forth into the outside world. Such PCs will be motivated by intense curiosity (as with windsingers), the desire for revenge (one from a decimated clan), or some similar powerful urge. Other reasons might be a mission as a courier, a need to locate some rare herbs or plants or an icon, etc.

### WEAPONS, ARMOR, AND COMBAT

Faenare are restricted in their weapon use, with a few exceptions. They are skilled in the use of slings (+1 to all hit rolls with this weapon), and they also use shortbows. In melee combat, they are known to use the shortsword and longsword (this being a light normal sword), and can also use the dagger and knife. The bola is also usable by faenare. Other weapons are rarely used, due to their clumsiness. Faenare are non-violent by nature, so whenever possible, they prefer flight and magic to combat! PC faenare who wish to use other weapons may do so, but in any event, huge and clumsy weapons (e.g., pike, lance) will always be avoided, as will vulgar, coarse weapons such as the battle axe or warhammer.

While they can fly with fairly heavy loads, the faenare find armor irksome and binding and will not

Table 3. Faenare Level Advancement, Hit Dice, Special Abilities, and Spell Ability

Level	Points	Experience Dice	Hit AC	Special Abilities	Spells by Level					
					1	2	3	4	5	6
Young	-4,000	1d8	7	I to VI	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teen	-2,000	-	7	VII	1	-	-	-	-	-
NM*	0	2d8	6	VIII	2	-	-	-	-	-
1	4,000	-	6	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
2	12,000	3d826	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
3	28,000	4d8	5	-	2	2	1	-	-	-
4	60,000	-	5	-	3	2	2	-	-	-
5	125,000	5d8	5	-	3	3	2	1	-	-
6	250,000	6d8	5	-	3	3	2	2	-	-
7	500,000	-	5	IX	4	4	3	2	1	-
8	800,000	7d8	5	-	4	4	3	3	2	-
9**	1,100,000	+2hp	5	-	4	4	4	3	2	1

NM = Normal Monster

\* Maximum level for faenare of 12 Wisdom or less.

\*\* +300,000 XPs per level thereafter.

+2 hit points per level thereafter.

Constitution bonus no longer applies.

wear any kind of armor. If a PC absolutely insists on wearing armor, severely penalize movement rate (by 50%! ) and further penalize the character's Dexterity, since the armor interferes with the character's natural Dexterity and litheness (-2 for leather or chain, and -4 for any other armor type, is suggested). However, faenare will readily use shields and magical protections (such as *rings of protection*, but not magical cloaks or robes).

The AC of faenare is AC6 for normal monsters, AC7 below that, and AC5 at 3d level and above.

Finally, faenare save as elves.

### Special Abilities

The abilities listed below correspond with the Roman numerals in Table 3.

I- faenare can fly! Flying statistics (for use with *Dawn of the Emperors* flight rules). Air-Speed (ft/round): 120'; MF & Takeoff: 3 (b); Carry: (HDx1,000) + 100 cn.

II- in flight, faenare can carry an extra 100 cn above normal encumbrance limits before movement is slowed.

III- all faenare are born naturally immune to the charm effect of harpy songs.

IV- no natural avian creature will attack faenare. This means giant rocs and eagles (usually friendly to faenare) as well as any natural bird. It does not include flying monsters such as chimerae or dragons.

V- faenare can converse with birds as per a *speak with animals* spell at will. Conversation is in birdsong, and wholly unintelligible to anyone of another race! Bear in mind that the average bird is not over-endowed with brains and can only give information on simple matters, or perform very simple services.

VI- normal monster faenare become shaman spellcasters. Those with 15 + Wisdom can become windsingers.

VII- gain the effects of a permanent protection from lightning (as per the 4th-level Druidic spell).

VIII- mature normal monster faenare can cast a bless spell in a group, as detailed in the box above.

IX- exceptional faenare of this level can summon eagles once per day if there are eagles within 1 mile of them, by 1 round of song. From 2-8 ordinary eagles, or 1-4 giant eagles, will be summoned. These eagles will help the faenare, in combat if needs be, although they will not act suicidally. The eagles will expect some reward from the birdfolk. Food is often sufficient.

### FAENARE Spellcasters

Faenare are natural born spellcasters. As they mature, all faenare become shamans. Through normal level advancement, they may work upwards to 12th level of spellcasting ability (if their prime requisite allows it). No XP cost is necessary for entering the shamanic career, and the young faenare shaman begins a career as a 1st level (1 HD) faenare/ 1st level shaman (no spells usable at this stage). Table 3 shows the spell

progression for faenare spellcasters.

Higher level shamans are highly respected and appreciated by faenare society and have important roles in these communities. They frequently up the task of learning the old songs and music, memorizing them, and teaching them in turn to the young. This is not the sort of stuff of which brave adventurers are made, and unless a party is all faenare, powerful shamans are not likely to leave their community.

The player who seeks a PC faenare may wish to play a windsinger, a druidic shaman who also gains additional powers — specifically the ability to learn and sing powerful songs of magic and enchantment. Windsinger songs can only be learned and sung by characters with Wisdom of 15 + who take a double skill slot in Singing (if the skills system is being used). These songs are detailed below.

Songs are equivalent to spells and are treated as such for the purposes of gaining new songs and memorizing them for later use. Songs of 6th level and below are learned automatically by a windsinger when the appropriate spellcaster level is gained, since minions of the guiding Immortals help the windsinger reveal what is in his own mind (where all these songs are buried, awaiting their re-learning from ancient racial memory). Songs of 7th and higher level can only be learned from sacred sources and locations, which are detailed below.

Windsinger songs are detailed by level because each one is memorized and sung in the same way as a spell, and a memorized song is considered equal to a spell of the same level (thus, if a 12th-level windsinger memorizes a 6th-level song, this takes the place of the single 6th-level spell the windsinger could normally memorize). Songs are not forgotten when sung. Instead, the magical energies which leave when the windsinger sings a song produces the same loss of energy and force which spellcasting at the same level does. That song cannot be sung again until re-memorized (really, *re-energized*). The process is similar to, but not the same as, forgetting spells when they are cast.

The most commonly-known windsongs follow. Each takes two rounds to sing, regardless of level. If the windsinger is disturbed while singing and prevented from completing the song (e.g., by a *silence 15 foot radius* spell or an injury) then the song's effects are lost. Song effects commence when the song is complete.

#### Song of the Wake (1st level)

This song affects all undead creatures with six or fewer hit dice, within 30 feet of the windsinger. Affected undead must make a saving throw vs. Spells. If this fails, they will hang back from the singer (and his party) for 1d4 + 1 rounds. After this time they may attack as normal.

#### Harmonic Song (2d level)

This has the same effects and duration as the 2d-level magic user spell mirror image, save that 2-5 (d4 + 1) images are created, and the blurring of the windsinger is such that all attacks upon him are made at -2.

**Song of Will and Iron (3d level)**

Upon completion, all creatures in a 20-foot radius of the windsinger (and the windsinger himself) are affected as follows. The windsinger's allies gain bonuses of +1 to morale, hit and damage rolls. The windsinger's enemies suffer -1 penalties to morale, to hit and damage rolls. Saves against mental attacks (*fear, feeblemind, magic jar, etc.*) are made with a +2 bonus by those friendly to the windsinger. The effects have a duration of one round per level of the windsinger. This is a prized battle song!

**Song of Dispelling (4th level)**

This song has the effects of a *dispel magic* spell in a 20 feet radius around the windsinger, but with certain advantages over the usual form of this spell. Potions and like items are not affected by the spell. The windsinger is wholly unaffected, and those friendly to the windsinger receive saving throws against spell cancellation in the case of spell effects which are advantageous to them (such as *bleed, haste, song of will and iron, striking, etc.*). This song has much greater value in a massed melee than a simple spell.

**Song of the Snowstorm (4th/5th level)**

This powerful and versatile song has two versions, a lower-register (4th level) and soprano/tenor (5th level) version. The 4th-level version duplicates exactly the effects of an *ice storm* spell (*Expert Rulebook*, p. 13). The 5th-level version creates a cone of freezing snowflakes which radiate out from the fingertips of the windsinger. The cone is 5 feet wide at the base, and 20 feet wide at the far end, which is 60 feet distant. Damage caused to all creatures within the cone is 1d6 hit points/level of the windsinger. A saving throw vs. Spells halves the damage.

**Song of the Whirlwind (5th level)**

This song summons a 16 HD air elemental, and is equivalent to the 7th level druid spell *summon elemental* (rather than the 5th-level magic-user spell *conjure elemental*). The elemental obeys the windsinger's commands completely, and if it sees the windsinger being attacked when it arrives it does not need to be told to attack the windsinger's enemies! The elemental will never attack the windsinger who summoned it, and the windsinger does not need to maintain concentration to control it. The elemental appears at any spot within 360 feet of the singer and materializes in the form of a whirlwind, inflicting 3d8 points of damage on everything within 10 feet of it. The elemental departs whenever the singer wishes it gone, or if successfully dispelled.

**Song of the Rainbow (6th level)**

This song calls into being a beautiful, shimmering rainbow. The windsinger and up to six other creatures can step on to the rainbow and walk along it, traveling at a rate of up to two miles per round up to a maximum distance of five miles per level of the

windsinger. The windsinger and his party can step off the rainbow and on to solid ground at any point up to the maximum range of the rainbow (assuming solid ground is present!).

There is no danger of falling off the rainbow (unless someone actually wants to). Enemies of the windsinger, or creatures NOT accompanying the windsinger, simply cannot see the created rainbow, nor can they step on to it. The rainbow persists for one turn per level of the windsinger, although the windsinger can wish it out of existence when he has traveled as far as he wants. The rainbow disappears if all the colors are plucked from it (see below).

Bands of color may be plucked from the rainbow by the windsinger. These bands can either affect the windsinger (if he so wishes), or someone to whom he hands the band. When plucked, the color band completely disappears from the rainbow, reducing by one the maximum number of people who can be travel along it. The effects are:

Red- as potion of fire resistance

Orange- cure light wounds

Yellow- as a haste spell (on only one creature)

Green- neutralize poison

Blue- resist cold

Indigo- removes paralysis

Violet- raises Wisdom by +1 (up to 18 Max) until the next sunrise

**Song of Life (6th level)**

This very potent song is a great bane to undead. Upon completion, the windsinger affects all undead within 30 feet. Undead of 4 or fewer hit dice are simply destroyed, turned to dust. Undead of 4+ to 7 hit dice suffer 6d6 points of damage, half this damage if they save, and they must make a further saving throw vs. Spells at -4 or flee in utter terror of the windsinger for 1d6 Turns. Undead of 8-12 hit dice suffer the same damage and must make the same saving throw, but without the penalty modifier. Undead of 13+ hit dice make two saving throws, the first to negate damage altogether and the second to avoid being forced to flee (though they only flee for 1d6 rounds).

The windsinger may need to make a saving throw vs. Death Ray to negate any Energy Drains he suffers in the next Turn, and his blows (but not spells!) cause double damage to any undead creature during this time.

**Song of Triumph (7th level)**

This powerful but draining song rallies the singer's friends and confers great fighting ability on them.

After the song has been sung for two rounds, all faenare within 100 feet of the singer gain the following benefits: +2 to morale, Hit and damage rolls; +2 to all saving throws; +1 additional full Hit Dice. For each additional round that the windsinger continues to sing, the following effects cumulate:

(i) Faenare within the area of effect can regain one spell level per round of singing, so that cast spells become available once more and can be re-used.

(ii) Faenare become enveloped in shimmering auras which confer an AC bonus of -1, per round, up to a maximum of -4.

These further effects only apply to faenare. However, the windsinger must make an Ability Check each round against Constitution, at first with a -2 bonus applied to the dice roll; then with a -1 bonus; then a straight roll; then with a +1 penalty; and so on until an Ability Check is finally failed. Each Turn of use reduces ALL a character's Attributes by 1d4 points. If any Attribute is reduced to zero or less, the character slumps into unconsciousness. After six hours of rest, the character regains 50% of the points (rounded up) in each of his Attributes. The remainder are regained at the rate of 1 point (in all Attributes) per day thereafter.

#### Learning 7th Level Songs

The *Song of Triumph* is a 7th-level song, and as such can only be learned by a 17th-level windsinger, one who has progressed beyond normal experience limits. The interest and favor of the Immortals allows windsinger faenare to progress beyond the 12th level.

Upon reaching the 12th level, the windsinger undertakes special rituals. An avatar (earthly form) of the Immortal visits the windsinger (perhaps in dreams) and awakens the windsinger's mind to songs and music which embody his basic being and intense racial memories of the faenare. This has two effects.

First, the windsinger will only fail rituals undertaken to progress beyond 12th level on a Wisdom Ability Check of a natural 20 on d20. However, failure here is final; no further progress is possible.

Second, the windsinger is now awakened to the sound of the music within himself, causing him to become, at times, melancholic and introverted. He desperately seeks the external source which enhances the fragments of melody and harmony he hears within himself.

This craving to find greater and truer musics is a source of quests for player windsingers. Such songs can be magical, such as the *Song of Triumph* above. They might be transcendent forms, the equivalent of artifacts to the windsinger. Finding such music is the first footstep on the path to Immortality. These songs can never be learned from other windsingers — their truths are different for each singer.

A windsinger who gains the 17th level of spellcasting ability gains the permanent favor of his patron Immortal and no further Wisdom Checks will be required to gain further levels of experience. Such a character is now a *master windsinger*, or *mastersinger*, and now has a Charisma of 18 to other faenare. At each stage after the 12th level, the windsinger gains additional spell use, using the rulebook Clerical tables. Upon reaching 17th level, these 7th level spells are available: *holy word*, *survival*, *travel*.



# GNOMES AND SKYGNOMES (B 30)

" 'Complexity is the bother of invention' . . . or is it 'Obesity is the brother of inspection?' "

—Branwys Skyratchet

Without warning the cloud-clipper fills with steam and smoke, as a throbbing thrum-pumping sound drowns all but the most piercing of the passengers' screams. The swirling vapors part to reveal a short, grim visage in a shabby leather jacket. Pulsing tubular tentacles trail from an unpleasant-looking artifact in his hand. With a smug smirk, he removes his reflective spectacles and raises the device to his mouth.

"It be me proud duty," the gnome's nasal voice booms, "to tell ye of the achievements and nature of the great gnomish people, a task made easier by the using today of me own patent, the steam megaphone. Can ye hear me at the back? I said, **CAN YE HEAR ME AT THE BACK??** Watcher language mate. Still got yer ears, ain't ye? Hummph.

"It be generally known, of course, that gnomes and dwarves are closely related. Indeed, some say that Kagyar, the Immortal who put the first dwarves upon this world, put a hand in creatin' us gnomes too. The truth, of course, be that Kagyar made a few minor suggestions to that truly great Immortal, Garal Glitterlode. Glitterlode substantially improved on them before includin' them in his creation of my people. Though he made us earth-dwellers like our rock-brothers, he also gave us a sense of humor, combined with a curiosity about the world outside our beloved burrows and gem mines. Indeed, the stargazin' which must have led to the first skygnomes to build their original star rockets was born of such curiosity. They . . . um . . . didn't quite work as planned, but Serraine would never have existed without them.

"Gnomes be clannish folk, livin' and workin' in complex burrows chock-full o' densely packed chambers connected by wiggly-worm passageways. We're not much given to shouting, so we made extensive systems of ceiling-wires and message-holding cups to send our communications. Our burrows be expertly defended by ingenious mechanical traps and of course with our own skills and weapons.

"I do confess that we gnomes possess a bit of a sense of humor. There's nothing what pleases a gnome so much as to invite one of ye in fer a drink, and get him roaring drunk. Just thinkin' of that poor soul tryin' to come to terms with his boots bein' full o' custard, gives me a warm spot right here.

"Now, where was I? Ah yes, our real joy in life. Well, that's creating various contraptions and machineries to make all aspects of everyday living easier. When you think about it, and we gnomes live for hundreds of years so we've got plenty of time to do just that, think how much time is spent doing really dull things?

"This then, be our goal: to reduce folk's tedious laborin' and free 'em up fer important work. Not everything works, but then it be crucial to mix applied experiments with theoretical work and we

clearly need more of . . . er . . . both, I think. Sorry, I seem to be losin' me train of thought here. Well, anyway, we be gettin' closer to Serraine now, and at least I can present this unequalled construction to ye as an example of gnomish work at its finest. The Flying City beckons, friends. Look to the skies anew!"

## GNOME Characters

Most gnomes do indeed live underground. Not a few live with dwarves and work with them, so that Rockhome contains a significant number of gnomes. Karameikos also has several communities of gnomes living in its more distant, hillier regions.

The rules given below enable PC gnomes to be played in such environments, but they also cover a rarer clan — the skygnomes, of whom Branwys Skyratchet is a member. The skygnomes made the major contribution to the building of Serraine, the flying city, and now form the backbone of the Top Ballista Academy even today. This clan lives on the Flying City and has become wholly devoted to life in the clouds. Their special abilities are different from those of land-bound gnomes. More detail on the skygnomes can be found in later sections of this book, notably the sections on the Flying City and its personalities, but the essence of these very rare gnomes is given here.

Simply put, the skygnomes are mechanical maniacs, filled with a consuming desire to invent newer, bigger, ever more bizarre and complicated contraptions for the weirdest, most impractical purposes. Skygnomes think nothing of hanging by their knees several miles in the air, wrench clenched firmly in the teeth, attempting some complex trickery with an ornery part of the city's infrastructure.

Gnomes are a versatile people. Between the two folk, gnomes cover a wide range of special abilities and talents. Rules in the Skills section detail their technological meddlings. Gnomes can be spellcasters, either shamans or wiccans, as detailed later in this chapter. Being a curious and jolly folk, who enjoy visiting exotic places, meeting exotic people, and playing exotic practical jokes on them, gnomes are not short of reasons for going adventuring.

Table 4. Gnome Level Advancement Gnotes

Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice	Special	Abilities
			Skygnome	Others
NM	0	1d8	I, II, III IX, XII	I, VII, VIII, IX, X
1	2,000	2d8	-	-
2	4,000	3d8	IV	XI
3	8,000	4d8	-	-
4	16,000	5d8	-	-
5	32,000	6d8	V	XII
6	60,000	-	-	-
7	120,000	7d8	-	-
8	250,000	8d8	VI	XIII
9*	510,000	+2	XIV	XIV

\* +300,000 XPs per level thereafter.

+2 hit points per level thereafter.

Constitution bonus no longer applies.

### GNOME Spellcasters

Gnomes may be either shamans or wiccans, of up to 12th level, but not both. Gnomes with Intelligence 13 or better can become wiccans; gnomes with wisdom 14 or better can become shamans. In either case, the relevant ability becomes a Prime Requisite for the gnome spellcaster, and the usual rules will apply for multiple Prime Requisites. They may choose to become spellcasters at any time during their career (see the "Creature Spellcasters" chapter for more details).

Gnome wiccans are often eccentric mad-inventor types, fusing their love of magic with their love of machines and contraptions. As respected master inventors, they usually have a fair number of apprentices and helpers. Gnome shamans are also regarded with respect and affection by gnomes. Gnomish shamans can always expect hospitality and a warm welcome from other gnomes!

### Weapons, Armor, and Combat

Gnomes will readily use a wide range of weapons and armor. Gnomes prefer to use hand axes, or hammers, as hand-held weapons. They cannot use normal swords, two-handed swords. Any weapon larger than a shortsword is just too large for them (optionally, allow the gnome to use a normal sword two-handed, but it does just the usual base damage of 1d8 points). Gnomes also use crossbows, and on occasion, shortbows.

Gnomes prefer leather armor, since it is flexible and does not hamper their movement. Chain mail is useable by them, but anything bulkier is too encumbering for this small folk's comfort. Bulkier armor can be worn (if the gnome can find a suit to fit!) but the character's Dexterity is penalized by -2. Gnomes will employ shields, cloaks, robes, *rings of protection*, and similar protective items whenever they can find them. They are especially fond of magical items which confer the power of invisibility (*elven cloaks*, rings or potions, etc.) since this is not only protective but greatly aids practical joking.

Gnomes save as dwarves of the same level.

### Special Abilities

I- gnomes have excellent infravision to a 90 foot range.

II- skygnomes have a 50% chance to know any of the following when aboard a flying machine, mount or structure: the approximate height above ground, approximate speed, safety of maneuvers, and whether weather patterns are natural or in any way affected by magic (unless this is obvious anyway). The DM determines the skygnome's success each time. For every three levels the skygnome gains, add an extra 10% to this chance, with a maximum success chance of 90%.

III- skygnomes gain +1 to saves vs. all air-based spells and attacks (lightning and electrical attacks, the whirlwind effect of an Air Elemental, etc.).

IV- if they are in their natural habitat (in the sky, so this does not apply to dungeon pits, for example) skygnomes get a saving throw vs. Death Magic if they are about to fall any distance beyond 10 feet. If the save is made, the gnome avoids the fall by hanging on to something at hand or some similar bit of dumb luck. This special save is modified by the skygnome's Dexterity (+1 for 13-15 Dex, +2 for 16-17 Dex, +3 for 18 Dex). This saving throw applies only to accidental falls. A gnome dumb enough to jump takes full damage!

V- the bonus vs. air-based attacks increases to +2.

VI- once per week, a skygnome of this exalted level can cast an *aerial servant* spell (as per the 6th-level Clerical spell) even if he is neither a shaman nor a wicca. The summoning can only be made if the skygnome is below an open sky. These summoned creatures are normally used to perform tasks requiring great strength, moving very heavy objects, and so on.

VII- land-bound gnomes gain the same detection chances as dwarves (see *Basic Players Manual*, page 45).

VIII- gnomes save against earth-based attacks with a +1 bonus; including acid (e.g., black dragon breath) and petrification (e.g., the gaze of a basilisk).

IX- gnomes gain a -1 AC bonus in combat against creatures larger than man-size.

X- gnomes can speak with natural burrowing animals at will (including badgers, moles, etc.). Keep in mind that such creatures are not masters of intellect!

XI- the bonus against earth-based attacks rises to +2.

XII- gnomes gain a -1 bonus to any Ability Check they must make when dealing with machinery.

XIII- a gnome of this level may cast a *wall of stone* spell once per week, even if not a shaman or wicca. The gnome can only do this underground, and NOT if there is any direct access to the open sky. Within their own home burrows, the walls of stone created by gnomes in self-defense may be up to twice the normal size. Ability use is as if the gnome were a 9th level spellcaster for determining volume of stone created.

XIV- Meddling. This is a *wish*-like gift that allows the gnome to overcome the limitations of his technical skills. This confers a -2 bonus to Ability Checks when using the skill *Fantasy Physics*. Useable only on inventions, the intent is such that a device or part of a device functions as the gnome desires it to, regardless of his technical limitations. It's one reason that impossible gnomish inventions work while those of more accomplished inventors fail.



# GREMLINS (C32)

Ouch! Who did that?!

—Elwys Airhammer, junior technician, 4th class

The dark-haired gnome turned away from the porthole and began to speak once again. "We are soon to be arrivin' in the Flying City. City regulation 2459, section C, paragraph 4 requires that I be warnin' ye about an irritatin' pest ye might be meetin' here. I'm afraid we do have, about the place, more'n a few gremlins. They be a problem, what with sourin' yer beer, makin' yer trousers drop, and pullin' the ears off yer dog. But they be not . . . oh, what is it now? Never heard of 'em? Well, ma'am, they be a fairly recent addition to the world, if I have the rights of it.

"Gremlins were created by an Immortal of the Sphere of Entropy. Were I to try the speaking of his name, we'd be here 'til next week. Of course, them what speaks names like that also gets themselves turned into a black pudding, well more a purple pudding really, but definitely a pudding. Now, where was I? Gremlins, right. Well, this Entropy Immortal disliked the fusion of Thought and Matter — imaginin' ideas made concrete and real, like our wonderful gnomish contraptions, gave him indigestion. But bein' a youngish Immortal of no great power and more given to sneakiness than direct confrontation, he did us gnomes a worse turn than if had he turned all our gems into sugar candy. He created gremlins to subvert, confuse and irritate the living daylight out of everyone.

"Gremlins be a solitary folk for the most part. Two, three of 'em is the most ye'll ever see, young bucks out for a wild night, as it were. They don't eat much, and prefer spoilin' ale to drinkin' it. They only wear clothing if it helps 'em play a trick — or if it's darned cold, o' course. They be class one sneaks, stealin' what they need, that is . . . um . . . borrowin' it on a permanent basis. It's hard to see 'em unless you're looking right at the little cusses, and they can hide in nooks and crannies you wouldn't think twice of. They're fast little beggars, and can jump and do tumblin' tricks like triple jointed monkeys. They're not tough, but they're hard to get a swing at. They get into everything, everywhere.

"Gremlins are whimsical sorts. A good joke or a tricky puzzle may keep 'em happy for hours, but they get bored real suddenlike, when ye be least expectin' it. They have curious little souls; not in the way of learnin', but in the matter of peddlin' their interferin' influence just about everywhere at once.

"What they like most is playin' jokes on other folk. Most times, their pranks aren't too dangerous. We've got gremlins in the Flyin' City, as I say, but they don't play jokes on us skygnomes when we're doin' dangerous work, like renovatin' the buttresses of the city. Even so, they do enjoy makin' a wrench shoot out of a toolbox and give some 'un a sharp smack on the backside, or making a cook pot overflow. It's pranks they like, not meanness nor venom. Not to say that they won't hurt them as tries to hurt gremlins though.

"Gremlins love mechanical things best. They pre-

fer meddlin' with contraptions to all else. Well, what I mean when I say that is that they love making them go wrong in the most sneaky and subtlelike ways. They make things go just ever so slightly wrong and then make it worse and worse until the whole caboodle collapses in complete disorder.

"Very rarely, gremlins will have a great meet, with scores, or even hundreds of them in one place. Such a meet is termed a discord of gremlins, and usually takes place on Nurdling Night. When's that? The first Nytdain in Yarthmont, m'dear. The shriekin' babble is unearthly, so I've been told. At these discords, they make plots against big folk for years to come, get a bit tipsy, dance their legendary Furry Dance, crawl off to sleep, and forget everything.

"All in all, life holds no great mysteries for gremlins. They're a simple folk, with small needs. All they ask is for victims so they can laugh at their discomfiture. And that's how to fool 'em. Pretend they don't annoy ye, and they get bored. Leave 'em some gremlin bait — mindless little puzzles, wooden jigsaws and the like — and they'll play with 'em for hours, leavin' you to get on with your work. Ye might notice a lot o' machines that seem to be doin' nothing much. That's because we mock up dummy machinery for them to fool with. They can't tell the real thing from an imitation. So without further delay \*frack-wyzzl\* SpUrTeR \*WILL GET\* . . . say what's wrong with this steam megaphone, it were workin' right until now . . ."

## Gremlin Statistics

Revised statistics for gremlins, in normal monster form, are given in the table on page 16. If you wish to use a 'generic normal monster' gremlin (as if there could be such a thing!), either use the NM version here, or the original from the *Dungeon Master's Companion*. Alternatively, a gremlin of levels 2-3 can be used.

## Explanation of Table Entries

**Enemy Saves:** This modifier applies to saves made by 'enemies' of gremlins against the effects of their spells or Chaotic aura, including hapless victims of jokes and pranks!

**Foe Fumbles:** This is a Hit modifier added to the attack roll made by an enemy who has failed to hit the gremlin. Such an foe must make another attack roll with himself as the target.

**Aura Radius:** Gremlins generate a chaotic aura. This is its radius.

**Hide in Crannies:** Similar to the Hide in Shadows ability of the Thief, gremlins can manage to sneak and hide in nooks and crannies and behind machinery or contraptions (including simple things such as ploughs or wagons). A DM may wish to allow gremlins to hide behind large objects like BIG treasure chests, or long and heavy drapes. Furthermore, a gremlin has half the chance of its Hide in Crannies percentage to be effectively invisible unless someone





## GREMLINS

looks in its direction (i.e., if in the field of peripheral vision) by an observer. Of course, any attack or movement by the gremlin negates this effective invisibility immediately, or at the DM's option, another Hide in Crannies roll must be made.

**Saving Throws:** The bonus modifier here is made against any spell which has the effect of controlling the gremlin's mind (e.g., a *charm person spell*, *feebleminding*, *magic jar*, etc.), or any illusion-based spell (*phantasmal force*, *massmorph*, etc.). Gremlins are very resistant to the effects of these spells.

### WEAPONS, ARMOR, AND COMBAT

Gremlins can't find armor to fit their small bodies. Even if they could, they'd rather make it fall apart (they love to pop the links off chain mail). Other protective items may be taken, but gremlins have problems with magic (as detailed fully below), since it often will not work for them.

Though it's not commonly known, gremlins can and do use weapons. They just don't use them very often, preferring to use their aura effects or to run away. Most carry sharp, tiny daggers which enable them to sever ropes, string, wires and kitty-cat whiskers. Still, they can fight with these daggers if they must, causing 1-3 points of damage. Gremlins cannot use weapons bigger than a dagger, and the only missile weapon they can use is a sling (or tiny daggers).

Gremlins make saving throws as elves.

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

I- Chaotic Aura. Murphy's Law personified. If anything can go wrong in a given situation within the range of this aura, it will. Afflicted characters must save vs. Spells to avoid being affected. Mechanical devices are affected before non-mechanical items.

II- Tumbling. Gremlins can fall up to 10 feet without sustaining injury. They have an instinct for tumbling and falling to minimize damage to themselves. The first 10 feet of any fall is ignored for a gremlin.

III- Jumping. Gremlins can, with great style and panache, leap up to 8 feet horizontally, 12 feet if they have a running start of at least 10 feet. They can also jump up to 5 feet vertically, 7 feet if they have a running start of at least 10 feet.

IV- Gremlin now ignores first 20 feet of a fall.

V- The maximum jumps become 12'/15' horizontally, and 6'/9' vertically.

VI- *Leg whip* spell is gained, useable twice per day.

VII- gain *Side-splitting* spell, useable twice per day.

VIII- the gremlin can cause *confusion* once per day, as per the 4th-level magic-user spell.

### GREMLIN MAGIC

Gremlins cannot become wiccans or shamans. However, they do have a number of innate spell-like abilities which do not require re-learning or spell books.

### Leg Whip

Range: double current Aura radius

Duration: 2d4 rounds

Effect: Immobilizes foe by tying legs together

This spell affects a single creature. The gremlin points to the legs of the creature, and a shimmering green whiplike strand of magical force whirls instantly around the creature's legs, binding them firmly together. If a save vs. Spells is made, the whip dissipates harmlessly on contact. Really big, strong creatures like trolls or giants, save at +2.

If the save fails, the victim cannot run or even walk, and can only hop at a maximum rate of one-fifth normal walking speed. If the victim was running when the *leg whip* struck, the creature must make a Dexterity Ability Check or fall flat on its face (suffering both humiliation and 1-3 points of damage).

This spell is used against targets who cannot be made to trip by causing sword belts or trousers to drop (e.g., hunting dogs, tabi, trolls).

### Side-Splitter

Range: Aura radius

Duration: special, see below

Effect: Makes a creature helpless with laughter

This spell affects a single creature, which must be able to see the gremlin. The gremlin leaps out, makes a rude or absurd gesture/grimace/pose, and sticks its tongue out as far as possible (a substantial distance). The target creature may save at -2 to avoid the spell's effects. If affected, the creature drops whatever it is holding in its hands and falls over on to its back, howling with laughter. A fresh saving throw is allowed each round to end the laughter (normal save), but even when the creature has stopped laughing, it has to spend a full round recovering its breath and getting to its feet, still cackling and sniggering. An additional round is needed to gather up any dropped items. Spellcasting is impossible for an afflicted character until he is fully recovered.

Some gremlins possess an enchanted gremlin-like teddy bear which can cause this spell effect. The bear also sticks its tongue out and makes a loud rasping sound. Possession of one of these magical *Teddy Bears of Rolsnit* (the name of its Chaotic creator) allows a gremlin to create the spell effect so vividly that the target must save at -4 rather than the usual -2 penalty. Non-gremlins can do the same, but the wimpy effect can be saved against with a +4 bonus.

### DMING GREMLINS

DMing gremlins, as either NPCs or PCs, can be a difficult task for any DM, given the wide scope for chaos and interference that these little pests offer. Consider the following points when using these creatures in your games.

### Role-Playing Gremlin NPCs

Branwys' introduction and background gives some help, but there are some further practical points.

**Lairs:** Gremlins always live in and around settled areas. They parasitize other 'civilized' creatures. They move around from place to place and rarely collect treasure as such. They will have a number of secret places (attics, paths below floorboards, the eaves of barns, even sewers) to which they can escape and hide. They are very hard to track down!

**Meddling:** This is all gremlins' ultimate goal. They want to mess up things that work, and laugh at the outcome. Remember, though they may be chaotic, they are rarely evil. Most do not intend serious harm.

**Captured Gremlins:** Captured gremlins are almost impossible to deal with. They may beg for their lives, but within a minute of release they go back to playing with your crossbow (pulling the string off or firing a bolt very close to your head). Gremlins have no communal instincts. If one is captured, his fellows show little interest in rescuing the captive.

**Distractions:** Gremlins can be distracted by almost anything new or unusual. Keeping them distracted requires some kind of intricate device or contraption. Gremlins will take 2d6 gremlin-hours (as it were) puzzling out such things (and then messing them up!).

**Gremlin Knowledge:** Despite their endless tinkering with the inanimate and mechanical, what gremlins actually learn about such matters can be engraved on the head of a pin with a chisel. They only know how to mess things up, not why things work. Interrogating a gremlin is a highly frustrating and futile business.

**Gremlin Habits:** Role-playing a gremlin NPC calls for some improvisation. Gremlins like to pick up things and squint at them and poke fingers into places they shouldn't be poked. They tend to make little exclamations of surprise and interest (practice "oohh!" noises), and express displeasure by poking out their tongues, screwing up their faces, and rasping. They squeak and chitter a lot and can be quite rude. In short, for the chaotic DM, these creatures offer real vistas of personal self-expression.

### Gremlins and Mechanical Effects

This thorny problem is dealt with using the outcome method. This is a simple procedure, and rests on a special application of *fantasy physics*. We'll take a closer look at this new branch of knowledge later, but for now the special property of fantasy physics which matters here is the principle that the bigger and more complex something is, the more spare capacity it's got, and the harder it is to make it go wrong by deliberate gremlinoid interference (if it is actually working in the first place). It's also harder to affect large objects than small ones.

Applying these principles makes life quite easy when dealing with gremlin aura effects. You simply make a ruling about how difficult it is to perform

some task or other. Thus, to turn off a water tap is easy, because the outcome event is small-scale and easy to affect. Making a clock stop is slightly trickier, because a clock is larger and rather more intricate, *but* it can still be done. Making a steam-powered polysyn-chronic skychair assembly grind to a halt is very, very hard, because the effect desired is so massive (tons of stuff stops whirling around at high speed) and the machine is very complex and big. Don't forget that gremlins don't know how things work, so they have no understanding of 'vital spots' in machines or anything like that.

Using the outcome method has another advantage. Nobody has to figure out exactly how the gremlins do their stuff, not at the time anyway. Gremlins just concentrate on projecting the power of their chaotic auras and achieving some desired outcome; the outcome is what matters, not the details of the method (which gremlins don't understand anyway).

Taking this approach allows the DM to judge a percentage chance for achieving different outcomes. As a rule of thumb, allow the following chances:

**Easy:** 95% chance (roll percentage dice). Examples: turning a tap off, rapping with a hammer on a table.

**Simple:** 75% chance. Examples: stopping a water clock, making a plank of wood rise in the air.

**Tricky:** 50% chance. Examples: making a plank of wood rise into the air and smack someone across the backside, souring a keg of beer.

**Difficult:** 30% chance. Examples: causing the legs to fall off a chair, making a couple of bars fall away from a metal cage.

**Very Difficult:** 10% chance. Examples: causing the undercarriage to fall off a Polecats aircraft, making the legs fall off a bed and then have the frame collapse too.

Attempting any task, no matter how easy or difficult, takes the gremlin one round. At the DM's option, a gang of gremlins may be able to aid each other, so that 5% can be added to the success chance for each extra gremlin up to a total of +20% (a natural roll of 01 on percentage dice always means failure, though). Different gremlins can try affecting the same thing, but a individual gremlin can only make one attempt at any particular, singular task. A gremlin can try to make the wheels fall off Captain Topcat's aircraft, but if he fails he cannot keep on trying again each round (or else he would always be certain of success, eventually). He can come back for another attempt the next day, however! He can still try to affect other aircraft, or indeed other gremlins can try to make the wheels fall off Topcat's machine.

Different rules apply when a gremlin is trying to affect some small equipment or item being worn by a character. A gremlin can make the string snap on a bow, an arrowhead fall off an arrow, purse strings snap, shoestrings tie together, and the straps connecting a suit of chain mail armor fall apart (or the rings

## GREMLINS

pop off one by one). However, the victims of such pranks are permitted a saving throw vs. Spells, with any bonus or penalty accruing from the gremlin's level as given in Table 5. In the *extremely* unlikely event that several gremlins co-operate, a penalty may be applied to this saving throw, up to -4 for four or more extra gremlins helping out.

For the sake of game balance, gremlins should not be able to create massive, large-scale mechanical effects. They also cannot affect living things very readily with their chaotic aura, other than the effects (on spellcasters, etc.) already noted. They can affect organic matter — such as souring beer or milk, or making meat spoil — and the DM should again determine chances for the gremlin's success, depending on the task's difficulty. Making the cream atop a quart of milk curdle is very easy, running amok through a brewery and spoiling *all* the beer in it is very difficult indeed.

### Gremlins and Magical Effects

Firstly, gremlins have a lot of trouble using magical items. There is a 10% chance per level of the gremlin that the item will either malfunction, or simply be useless whenever the gremlin attempts to use it (a base chance of 10% for young, normal monster and 1st level gremlins). There is always a minimum 10% chance that an item will work for the gremlin, however. Each time the gremlin gains a level, it must make another test to see if any magic item it possesses has become useless or malfunctioning due to its aura. This check is made in secret by the DM, of course. The item is not truly ruined by the gremlin's aura, it is simply deactivated or made to malfunction for 2d4 days after the gremlin abandons it. Malfunctions should be dreamed up by the DM, and they should be in gremlinish spirit — not truly dangerous or lethal, but flavored with a wicked sense of humor.

Characters or creatures casting a spell at gremlins,

if within the aura radius, must save vs. Spells (applying modifiers from the gremlin's level). If the save is made, the spells operate as intended, affecting the gremlins. If the save is failed, the spells backfire and hit the caster. In the case of a rebounding area effect (e.g., a *lightning bolt*) the spell effect will be centered on the spell caster or backfire from where he stands, as appropriate. In the case of spells the caster is casting to affect himself or his group (e.g., *bless*, *haste*, etc.), if the save is made the spell operates normally, but if the save is failed the gremlins get the benefit of the spell effect. If the spell would normally affect only the caster (e.g., a *cure* spell of some sort), the gremlin nearest the spellcaster is affected instead.

The same principle can be applied to magical items which create spell-like effects, with saves being made at the levels of their owners. The same even applies to spell effects created from artifacts, although the saving throw here is made with a +1 bonus.

The chaotic aura of gremlins does not affect the properties of permanent magical items which do not use charges to create spell effects — e.g., magical weapons, armor, rings and *cloaks of protection*, *elven cloaks* and *boots*, and so on.

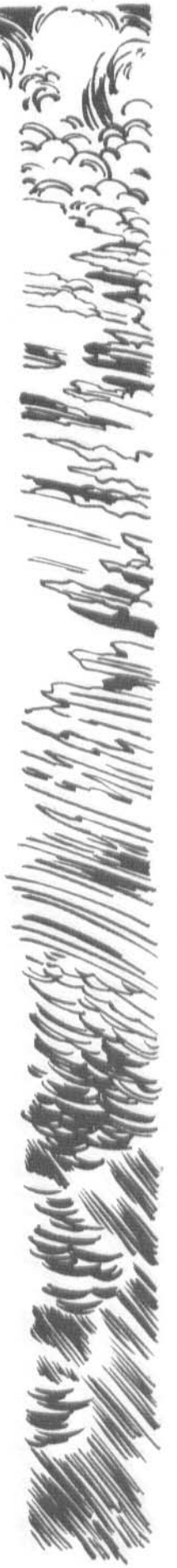
### Player Creature Gremlins

A player must agree to accept the DM's ruling on how easy or difficult various tasks are to achieve with the chaotic aura of the gremlin. Correctly played, gremlins are intensely chaotic and easily bored (two-year old children come to mind), so they are likely to be a highly disruptive influence in any party of player creatures. Players role-playing gremlins need to show restraint, at least so far as their fellow player creatures are concerned. If a player hankers after role-playing a gremlin, the DM should use a short scenario (such as one of the adventures from the *Adventures Booklet*) as a trial run, before committing himself to having a full time gremlin in his campaign!

Table 5. Gremlin Level Advancement, Hit Dice, and Special Abilities

Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice	Enemy Saves	Foe Fumbles	Aura Radius	Hide in Crannies	Saving Throws	Special Abilities
Young	-3,000	1d8	+3	-4	5'	25%	+1	I, II, III
NM	0	-	+2	-3	8'	35%	+1	-
1	3,000	1d8+1	+2	-3	10'	40%	+2	IV
2	9,000	2d8+1	+1	-2	12'	45%	+2	V
3	21,000	2d8+2	+1	-2	14'	50%	+2	VI
4	45,000	3d8+2	+1	-2	15'	55%	+3	-
5	95,000	3d8+3	0	-1	16'	60%	+3	-
6	190,000	4d8+3	0	-1	17'	65%	+3	VII
7	380,000	4d8+4	0	-1	18'	70%	+3	-
8	680,000	5d8+4	-1	-1	19'	75%	+3	-
9*	980,000	+2hp	-1	0	20'	80%	+4	VIII

\* +300,000 XPs per level thereafter. +2 hit points per level thereafter. Constitution bonus no longer applies. +5% to Hide in Crannies chance per level up to max. 95%



# Harpies (B3 I)

Harpies? Truly charming young ladies.

—Horrobin, nagpa sage and tour guide

The nagpa shuffled into the hotel's common room, bulging eyes glaring at the assembled group. "Skwraeakk, er, Welcome to our humble home here in the clouds. Today, it is my duty to introduce you to Serraine and show you a sight or two. Ah, a question from that imbecilic-looking child at the back with the ugly mother. 'What are those feathered broads with the knobby legs?' What sort of question is that for a child? Oh, you're a halfling are you? Well then, you should know what those creatures are, because they're very partial to fresh halfling. They're harpies, my little pimple on the backside of humanoid-kind.

"Want the full book answers, do you? Well, fortunately I am highly knowledgeable about harpies, so I will tell you of them while we walk about and you get your skylegs. Harpies were allegedly created by a Chaotic Immortal as a parody of the faenare, those fussy bird-people, to insult them and other goody-goodies. For those of you too short-sighted to see as far as the Onyx Tower, harpies have the lower torso and legs of a vulture and the upper body of an unattractive woman. I rather like the way they look, but then who worries much about appearances?

"Harpies are social creatures, living in tribes, sometimes called screams, of 30 or 40 individuals. They are dotted all over the Known World — nesting in distant crags, in secluded woodlands, on sea cliffs and islands in the Sea of Dread, just to mention a few places. They're carnivores; sheep and the like are a sweet treat to them. Elf and halfling are delicacies. Yet, they'll eat carrion if needs be, even vegetable matter if truly desperate.

"For the prurient amongst you, there is the intriguing matter of harpy reproduction. They are all female, it has been observed. So how do we get more harpies if there are no males, a prying mind might ask? When a scream's numbers drop — from disease, hunger, or attacks — the harpies are stimulated by some instinct to lay eggs, and these hatch into bright little harpy chicks, all female like their mothers. This is called parthenogenesis. My that's an awfully long word isn't it? Actually, harpies are rather rough on their offspring. If eggs don't hatch quickly, they push them out of the nest. If a harpy lays two eggs, as they usually do, the first fledgling pushes the other one out of the nest as soon as it gains the strength to do so. Even old harpies are chased off. No cheap sentiment with harpies.

A few screams have a paltry shaman or wicca to help out, but they're not good. Besides, harpies have subtler ways for defending themselves and dealing with prey. Now what's that, eh? Free tour of the abattoir to the first person who can tell me. Right! Charm. Harpies can charm person through song, and very dangerous it is too. A charmed soul can be taken to the nest, gently and lovingly divested of his weapons, and then ripped apart by the hungry scream.

But, if there's a shaman or wicca around or a shrewd oldster about, useful charmed creatures may be kept as guards. While any single harpy can only have one charmed person under her control at a time, a sizeable scream can have a real variety of guards in their area. Even if the harpies can't communicate directly with their guards. The charmed ones instinctively protect their beloved harpies anyway.

"The harpies have more powerful charms even than their song. They can charm by touch, or at least some of them can. Some powerful harpies can even charm all monsters! Dangerous ladies, the harpies. Best you give the Onyx Tower a fairly wide berth during your stay here.

Table 6. Harpy Level Advancement, Hit Dice, and Special Abilities

Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice	Special Abilities
Young	-6,000	1d8	I, II
Teen	-3,000	2d8	III
NM	0	3d8	IV
1	6,000	4d8	-
2	18,000	-	V
3	42,000	5d8	-
4	90,000	6d8	VI
5	180,000	7d8	VII
6	360,000	-	-
7	660,000	8d8	VIII
8	960,000	9d8	-
9*	1,260,000	+2hp	-

\* +300,000 XPs per level thereafter.

+2 hit points per level thereafter.

Constitution bonus no longer applies.

## Flight Duration & Statistics

The number of Hit Dice possessed by a harpy affects the amount of time it may fly each day. Harpies with 1 HD can only fly for a number of hours equal to one-third of their Constitution score each day (24-hour period). Harpies with 2 HD can fly for a number of hours equal to one-half their Con score in the same time. Harpies with 3 or more HD can fly each day for a number of hours equal to their Con score, to a maximum of 14 hours. Harpies need a reasonable period of rest and sleep each day.

Flying statistics: (for use with *Dawn of the Emperors* flight rules). Air-Speed (ft/round) 50'; MF & Takeoff 3 (b), Carry: 3,000 cn.

## Spellcasters

Harpies can also become shamans or wiccans. Only exceptional harpies can become spellcasters. Shamans need Wisdom 15+ and wiccans need Intelligence 15+. Harpy shamans (with clerical spells only) can reach 6th level. Harpy wiccans (with magic-user spells) can reach 4th level. Training in spell use cannot begin

before the harpy has reached 1st level, but as with other creature spellcasters, it may become a spellcaster anytime thereafter and progress as described in the "Creature Spellcasters" section.

Harpy spellcasters are few and far between, and must find their spells or a tutor as best they can. Harpy shamans are more common, but still unusual, although an older female in most screams will have shamanic ability. Harpies do not necessarily respect either shamans or wiccans from other harpy screams.

### Weapons, Armor and Combat

Harpies do not use armor. And while they can use protective magical items, they are unlikely to do so unless they have a shaman or wicca to identify the magic. Harpies usually employ their natural weaponry, claws, which do 1-2/1-2 points of damage for 1HD harpies, 1-3/1-3 for 2HD harpies, and 1-4/1-4 for mature harpies (3HD+). Or they may use a weapon held in the talons for 1-6 points of damage (usually a club of some kind). PC harpies can use a wider range of weapons, but no missile weapons — their talons are too clumsy to load crossbows or nock arrows in a longbow. Their co-ordination doesn't work this way.

Harpies can also bite at unconscious, helpless, or very weak enemies. The bite does 1-6 points of damage and has a 5% chance of causing disease (this applies only to harpies who live in the wilds; PC harpies probably don't get this 5% chance). In normal hand-to-hand combat, the bite may also be used, but not together with either a weapon or claw attacks.

Harpies save as fighters.

### Special Abilities: Charming

- I- Harpies can charm person by song at will, but there is a bonus of +2 to the saving throw at this stage.
- II- As above, but the bonus to the saving throw is +1.
- III- As above, but the saving throw unmodified.
- IV- Once per day, the harpy may charm person by touch rather than by song. This requires a hit roll in almost all cases, but the saving throw is at -2, so the effect is powerful. The hit caused by the touch of the harpy does not cause any physical damage.
- V- As above, but the power can be used three times per day.
- VI- The harpy can now charm monster by touch, once per day. A hit roll will usually need to be made, but the saving throw of the victim is made at a -2 penalty.
- VII- As above, but the harpy can now charm monster by touch up to three times per day.

The charm power of harpies is one which needs careful attention by the DM. The following guidelines reiterate what is in the D&D® rulebooks, and provide extra details covering the specific case of the harpy.

A *charm person* spell makes the victim believe that

the creator of the effect is a friend, to be trusted and protected. The victim will not attack his own friends or expose himself to severe danger, nor behave suicidally (although he might be tricked into so doing). A charmed creature is confused, finding it hard to think straight. Simple rational argument will not dispel or counter the charm. A side-effect of this confusion is that magic of any kind cannot be used by a charmed person. *Charm person* affects all humanoids, including men, elves, dwarves, halflings, gnomes, orcs, kobolds, goblins, hobgoblins, and the like.


The *charm person* spell can be broken in different ways. First, a *dispel magic* spell will get rid of a *charm person* effect (though a *charm person* cast by a high-level character may not automatically be dispelled. See the description for *dispel magic* in the *Basic Dungeon Master's Rulebook*, page 19). Second, if the creature which cast the charm is killed, its victim is no longer charmed. Third, the passage of time may dispel the charm, depending on the Intelligence of the affected creature. If Intelligence is 8 or less, a new saving throw is allowed once per month. For creatures with Intelligence 9-12, this check may be made once per week. For a creature with Intelligence 13+, the check is made daily.

The charm person caused by the touch of the harpy is more powerful. An extra week is added to each of the durations above between checks. If a *dispel magic* is used, the harpy is treated as being two levels higher than it actually is for the purposes of the dispel attempt. These 'extras' also apply to the charm monster effect the harpy can create by touch.

**Charm Effects in Game Play** Obviously, charm effects are powerful, but they need not be overpowering. Charmed victims are neither suicidal, nor stupid. If attacked by the charmer (or its allies), they automatically break free of the charm. If the charmer starts saying things like "He's a pain. We'll kill and eat him after he's kept a watch tonight" within earshot, the charm will be broken (at least allow another saving throw!). Just because a charm effect works, this does NOT allow the charmer to talk with the charmee if this would not otherwise be possible (no shared languages, etc.). Thus, a charmed black pudding makes a wonderful friend — if you can talk to it. Otherwise, it's a positive nuisance, following you everywhere ("Oh look, it loves you!").

Remember, harpies can only control one charmed victim at a time. If a harpy has charmed one member of a group, she cannot affect the others with song or touch. If the harpy chooses to charm a new victim, the old charm is at once broken.





# Nagpa (CC 73)

Course there be things uglier 'n more unpleasant than a nagpa — though none come t'mind right now.

—Branwys Skyratchet

Horrobin lumbered onward, leaning on his ornate staff, motioning his entourage to follow, and wheezing at the continued effort. "I see that the attractions of the Fun Park have taken from our midst those of you untouched by the complexities of intellect. For the select few remaining, a tour of some scholastic areas appears in order.

"I am also flattered to have received a query about my own people, and so I shall answer this as we stroll to the Great Library. I spend much time in that splendid and excellent institution. Indeed, all Nagpa are highly studious creatures, given to much careful and objective study of history. Perhaps our ignorance of our own origins has something to do with this urge towards learning. Many tales are told of the coming of nagpa to this world. The most plausible, in my learned opinion, is the claim that we came here, via some wormhole or gate, from a far advanced and very learned culture on some far distant world of our own. The trauma of the voyage was such that we forgot our origins, and can remember them only in hints and fragments, in half-glimpsed scenes in our dreams.

"We are not only a learned people, you know. We regularly retire in the afternoon to engage in kariwa. I believe that your debased term for this would be day-dreaming, but for us it offers the chance to glimpse creative insights and also hints as to our past lives. Nagpa are reincarnated, you know. After all, no Immortal would create such a splendid creature only to cheapen it with but a single lifetime, would it — not even with a long lifetime such as our own.

We love knowledge, the more arcane and obscure, the better. No knowledge is useless, and the world is lessened if some fragment of wisdom or learning is lost to it. For this reason, we nagpa collect books and manuscripts avidly. We build and maintain libraries where true scholars of the world may come and study.

"While knowledge of any subject is valuable, we do not live in ivory towers. Not unless we built them, ha ha. Nagpa like to plan, and oversee the construction of, architectural works of note. Those of you with powers of discrimination may admire the roseate towers of the west wing of the Great Library ahead of us; some of my own work. Generally, I must say, we do tend to prefer tombs and mausoleums and that sort of thing. Nagpa are not given to frippery or frivolity. We are a serious people. There is also the fact of our reincarnating. Through kariwa, we tend to recall much from our past lives in this world, and thus we have seen much of life in our sojourns here. Frankly, I have to say that much of it is very substandard and over-rated. Some of the work done by certain Immortals, I mention no names, is just plain shoddy. Just look around at the endless tracts of desert and pointless bare steppes and hills.

"As I was saying, the world is a disappointing place to the discriminating mind blessed with exceptional intelligence and wisdom. For this reason, a certain degree of healthy cynicism and world-weariness is to be found in the thought and expression of most nagpa. There are days, frankly, when it's all such a bore that the only thing to do is to stay in bed and pull the wings off flies.

"For much the same reasons, we nagpa live mostly solitary lives. Nagpa partnerships are rare, not least because the partners have the daunting prospect of spending some thirty years raising a young brat if they decide upon a family. Frankly I can't imagine any other reason for putting up with a female, can you? Ha ha, just a little joke madam, no need to take offense. Oh dear, your handbag seems to have suddenly rotted away, must be a touch of corruption about. Ha ha.

"Solitary lives, there you have it. But nagpa usually have friends and servants to deal with the chores and tiresome necessities of everyday living. For example, when my designs are complete I only have to submit them to the gnomes here and they begin work right away. At home, I have a personal manservant, a homunculus no less, which deals with the dusting and polishing and similar tiresomeness. Some of us also find uses for the bodies of the departed when they have shuffled off the tedious mortal coil. No, madam, we certainly do not eat them! What a disgusting thing to suggest. If you say such a thing again, I shall have to make your frock burst into flames, and then you'll be sorry. Now, here we are at the great gate of the library. Please have your admission coins ready for collection . . ."

## More about Nagpa

Horrobin is not being entirely frank or detailed about his race. He is aware that many other creatures find nagpa horrible to look at, and certain aspects of his race and culture might only make their horror deeper.

Nagpa dwell, in most cases, in gloomy subterranean crypts and mausoleums. They may indeed actually design them, and have them built — often by slave labor. They enjoy the atmosphere of corruption and death in such places and are very careful to keep such places very dry, because of their prized books and tomes.

Nagpa will, in fact, eat carrion, but they usually have a more sinister use for humanoid corpses — animating them as skeletons or zombies, to serve as mindless guards and for menial work. They are careful to keep this fact secret if they are in any way associated with humanoids!

While many nagpa do live solitary and isolated lives, some of them live in and work with other creatures. Because nagpa are not physically strong, and desire to spend all their time in thought and reverie, they need other creatures to work for them. They also need creatures to build the constructions they plan.

Some of this can be achieved with undead and slaves, but access to libraries and learning may require nagpa to use less coercive methods. To disguise themselves, nagpa place a very high value on magical items which obscure or alter their appearance. Nagpa of high level have the ability to *polymorph self*, enabling them to pass as humans (or elves, dwarves, etc.). Their innate *phantasmal force* power further enables them to disguise their nature and actions.

The *kariwa* of nagpa is important. Nagpa must spend at least half an hour in this reverie each afternoon. For player creature Nagpa, this means during the post-lunch adventuring day, which may certainly be inconvenient at times! If this is not done, the Nagpa must save vs. Spells at dawn the following day. Otherwise, the nagpa falls into a deep slumber for 1d4 hours and cannot be awoken. If the save is made, and no *kariwa* is had the next day either, the nagpa must save the following dawn, this time at -2, sleeping for 1d4 + 1 hours. This saving throw and extra hour of sleep penalties accumulate until either the nagpa enters the *kariwa* state or falls asleep. There is also a 5% (cumulative) chance each day without *kariwa* that the nagpa develops some form of insanity — extreme claustrophobia, fear of the dark, paranoia, etc.

Nagpa are cold, cynical creatures. Even those who are not actually evil are manipulative and have a strong sense of their own superiority. They seek to dominate those around them. Be most careful about allowing nagpa PCs in your campaign.

Table 7. Nagpa Level Advancement, Hit Dice, and Special Abilities

Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice	Base AC	Special Abilities	Saving Throws
Young	-1,100,000	2d8	AC7	I	—
—	-1,000,000	4d8	AC7	II	+1
—	-800,000	6d8	AC6	III	+1
—	-600,000	7d8	AC6	IV, V	+1
—	-300,000	8d8	AC5	VI	+1
NM	0	9d8	AC4	VII	+2
1	300,000	10d8	AC4	—	+2
2	600,000	—	AC4	VIII	+2
3	900,000	11d8	AC4	—	+3
4	1,200,000	—	AC3	IX	+3
5	1,500,000	12d8	AC3	X	+3
6	1,800,000	—	AC3	XI	+3
7	2,100,000	13d8	AC3	XII	+3
8	2,400,000	—	AC3	XIII	+3
9*	2,700,000	+2hp	AC2	XIV	+4

\* +300,000 XPs per level thereafter.  
+2 hit points per level thereafter.  
Constitution bonus no longer applies.

## WEAPONS, ARMOR AND COMBAT

Nagpa cannot use armor, since their bodies are weak and the use of armor makes it difficult for them to effectively use their special combat spell effects. They lack the coordination and sense of balance to use a shield effectively. This is offset by improving their natural Base AC, due to their magical natures. They can use protective magic items such as a *cloak of protection* and the like.

Nagpa can use any small, one-handed weapon such as the shortsword or a weapon such as the staff (which they like to use as a walking aid). They can use crossbows or slings effectively, but have a -2 penalty to all hit rolls when using a longbow or shortbow.

Nagpa will almost always attempt to avoid physical combat and use their spell-like powers. They prize magic which allows a rapid method of escape from sticky situations, such as *potions of flying*, a *flying carpet* or some magical item which permits the use of a *dimension door* or *teleport* effect. Nagpa also seek out magical items which allow them to *detect* things in the environment which they could not otherwise perceive — magic, evil, invisibility, alignment and so on.

Nagpa save as magic-users. Due to their highly magical nature, they gain a bonus to all saving throws as shown in the Saving Throws column of Table 7.

## Nagpa Spellcasters

Simply put, there are *no* nagpa spellcasters. Nagpa may *not* become wiccans or shamans.

## Special Abilities

I- The nagpa can use each of the special powers *darkness*, *paralysis*, and *create fire* once per day. These powers are described fully below.

II Use *darkness* a total of three times per day.

III- Use *paralysis* a total of three times per day.

IV- Use *create fire* a total of three times per day.

V- Use *phantasmal force* up to three times per day.

VI- The nagpa may now use its special *corruption* power three times per day. However, this special power is only useable by Chaotically aligned nagpa. This should not include player creatures!

VIII- The nagpa may now use *polymorph self*, once per day, for one hour per level. It may only polymorph into humanoid form — a human, elf, dwarf, halfling, orc, etc. The usual rules for *polymorph self* apply.

IX- The nagpa gains a 5% anti-magic protection, applying to itself only. For rules on anti-magic, see *Master DM's Book*, page 2.

X- The nagpa can *animate dead* once per day. It may animate one skeleton, or zombie, per level of experience it has. It cannot control or direct more than this number at any one time.

XI- The anti-magic protection increases to 10%.

XII- The anti-magic protection increases to 15%.

XIII- The anti-magic protection increases to 20%.





## Nagpa

XIV- The nagpa can now summon a homunculus or tabi to be its servant and companion (see below).

Special abilities gained by the nagpa up to and including the normal monster stage are detailed in the *Creature Catalogue*, but are given again here.

**Corruption:** This is directed at a single non-living object within 60 feet, and causes it to decay or rot into an unuseable state. Magical items are allowed a saving throw vs. Spells at the level of the character possessing them. To prevent overuse of this power, you may wish to rule that the object can be no larger than a cube with sides of one yard. This prevents the easy demolition of huge structures!

**Create Flames:** This causes an inflammable object within 60 feet to burst into flames for 1-3 rounds. If this object is being carried by some creature (or is underfoot, etc.), damage caused is 2d6 points per round (a saving throw vs. Spells halves this).

**Darkness:** As per the reverse of the 1st-level Clerical spell light.

**Paralysis:** This effect is directed at all creatures of Lawful alignment within 10 feet of the nagpa, which must make a saving throw vs. Spells or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. Note that nagpa have no method of knowing alignments (without magical aid)!

**Phantasmal Force:** As the 2d level magic-user spell of the same name.

### LANGUAGES AND KNOWLEDGE SKILLS —

Nagpa gain the ability to learn additional languages for each level of experience they gain above normal monster status. This is in addition to any extra languages they have learned by virtue of their high Intelligence. However, this is not always as useful as it may seem. Nagpa will always prefer to learn arcane and ancient languages if possible, since these aid them in their literary and scholastic pursuits. Also, languages of any sort are not learned overnight just because a creature gains a level. The language must be learned from careful study or by conversing with those fluent in the language. The DM may lay down whatever conditions he sees fit for this.

If you use the Skills system from the D&D® game, first introduced in *GAZ 1, The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*, you will be familiar with the idea of Knowledge Skills. These are Intelligence-based areas of expertise. For example, knowledge of the history of one particular state or people, and knowledge of the society of such a state or people, would be separate Knowledge Skills, each taking up one skill 'slot'.

Nagpa begin their careers with six skills, two more than most characters. However, at least three of these must be Knowledge Skills. Thereafter, the nagpa gains an additional Knowledge Skill each time it advances a level, starting at the beginning of its career.

The DM may require a nagpa PC to put in some study time in order to gain the skill, or possibly provide some helpful old books during the course of the adventures to give the nagpa its new skill!

### SUMMONING A HOMUNCULUS OR Tabi

Upon attaining 9th level, the nagpa can summon a homunculus (or tabi) to do its bidding and be its servant. The creature will be of the same alignment as the nagpa, which is almost always Chaotic. Hence, the homunculus will usually be an Ulzaq (*Creature Catalogue*, page 26). Details of the tabi follow later in this book. Horrobin has a homunculus and a tabi as servants, and you can find a profile for these creatures (and for Horrobin himself) in the section on Personalities in the City.

However, the summoned creature does not turn up automatically, it takes time for it to come from its home. The secret of its summoning is jealously prized by the few who know it (usually high-level wizards). The nagpa, whether NPC or player creature, will have to find a source for the summoning ritual, along with certain magical components need for it. These will be rare, difficult to find and even more difficult to obtain. For a PC nagpa, these items might be in the treasure hoard of a pair of dragons, an Undead Beholder, or maybe in the ownership of an Arch-Mage who demands that some hideously difficult task be performed in payment.

Nagpas protect their homunculi and do not take them adventuring! If a homunculus is reduced to zero hit points, the nagpa loses 1d4 + 1 hit points permanently, and cannot find another homunculus until a different summoning ceremony is located and used. Permanent hit point loss makes most nagpa very careful to keep their homunculi from harm. Good servants are so hard to find these days!

### Player Creature Nagpas

Consider this option carefully. Nagpa are very Chaotic. They tend to be cynical, manipulative and crafty, caring little for the merits of anyone else's existence. Though not given to cruelty, deceit, and the like, they certainly aren't good guys either.

Nagpa are also quite powerful. Their special abilities more than compensate for poor combat abilities and make them versatile and dangerous. Try nagpa player creatures on an experimental basis before permitting them as regular campaign fixtures.

## Pegataurs (CC 74)

*I'm half elf, half mighty stallion, and half noble eagle and more'n the sum of me parts.*  
—overheard in the Skypit, a Serraine watering hole

Alexene Cloudmantle, the faenare, pleasantly surprised the group by appearing in place of their scheduled guide for the day. "Horrobin is a bit under the weather today," she explained. "I think he ate something wholesome and it disagreed with him.

"Now, those splendid, powerful folk you see overhead are pegataurs. They are close cousins of pegasi, and their origins lie with that race. One story holds that a mad wizard of Shraek bonded a pegasus and an elf to create the first pegataur. Personally, I don't believe this story. After all, how many times have you heard tell of something being the work of a 'mad wizard' when the storyteller doesn't know the truth of the matter?

"My own people see the hand of an Immortal in this matter. Otherwise why would all attempts to find out the truth of the origin of pegataurs fail? No mortal wizard could block all the scrying that has been attempted and no records remain of the work done to create this race. No, my friends, an Immortal was the creator of pegataurs, of this I am certain.

"Pegataurs are wondrously created. They pride themselves on their strength, stamina, and fitness. They are proud, powerful and proficient warriors. Their skyjousts are something to see; I think there's one scheduled for next Soladain.

"They are fine foragers, who survive in the most barren of terrains. However they do need quite a lot of sustenance to maintain those powerful bodies. Very resistant to cold and heat, they live in all climates, but prefer to live in lightly wooded hills.

"Pegataurs can become powerful spellcasters, and may choose either the path of the shaman or that of the wicca. There can be few creatures so strong in both melee and magic. Our city is far more secure for their presence here!

"Pegataurs have tightly-knit clans and tribes. There is a tribal chieftain whose word is law among his people, but there is also a council of elders and shamans to whom he must report. If the leader isn't up to the job, the council ousts him from leadership and replaces him with either his eldest son or the strongest of the younger pegataurs. Among fiercer tribes, this can be a bloody affair.

"Young pegataurs have hard lives. They live with stern discipline, and their initiation into adulthood involves trials of stamina, hunger, deprivation, and far travel. Few complain, but some become Chaotic renegades with an abiding hatred for their people.

"Pegataurs are friendly with both pegasi and elf folk. There is evidence that pegataurs aided elves on their migrations around the world, and certainly some of the more powerful pegataur chieftains carry swords with elven clan hilts. They will die rather than give up such a thing. There are rumored reports of pegataurs flying above Alheim, even being seen in



## Pegataur

*Alfheim city and secret elven clan sites. As both races diminish, they find comfort in mutual aid.*

*"As I say, my own folk are moderately close to the pegataurs. But no-one is really close to them, not even the elves. They lead very austere, separate lives, filled with a stern pride in their own strength and prowess. They make excellent mercenary fighters, and be decisive in combats."*

### Special Abilities

Pegataurs can fly at 360' (120'). Flying statistics (for use with *Dawn of the Emperors* flight rules). Air-Speed (ft/round) 120', MF & Takeoff 3 (b), Carry HDx1,000 cn.

### Pegataur Spellcasters

Pegataurs with Wisdom 15+ can become shamans. Those with Intelligence 15+ may become wiccans. As with other non-natural spellcasters, pegataurs may choose to become spellcasters at any time after reaching normal monster status. See the chapter on "Creature Spellcasters" for more details.

However, like elves, pegataurs also naturally progress as limited spellcasters. Those pegataurs who do not choose the wicca path, gain spells as elves of the same level.

Pegataur shamans have access to the druidic spell list, being freely able to mix clerical and druidic spells. Such pegataurs are regarded as almost a different caste by most of their sort. Shamanic pegataurs use curing abilities for those hurt in battle, and this makes their spheres of interest, and their personalities, very different from the aggressive, martial demeanour affected by most pegataurs. Shamans are not regarded as better (or inferior) by other pegataurs, just different.

### Weapons, Armor, and Combat

Pegataurs are unrestricted in the choice of weapons they may use. They favor the lance, longbow, two-handed sword and mace. If you use the weapon mas-

tery rules (*Master Player's Book*, page 15) they will always have basic weapon mastery in these when beginning their careers.

Pegataurs will use barding for their horse bodies if they can get it! This is a major reason for their consorting with other races; being able to commission the manufacture of such barding. If this barding is made by an expert armorer (which will cost an amazing amount of money), then the pegataur is fortunate indeed! Pegataurs with such high-quality barding are especially at home in their armor, and are treated as having a non-magical +2 AC bonus. The "Equipment" section lists the AC for a variety of barding types.

AC5 is the natural AC of the pegataur. Pegataurs are always treated as having this AC even if the armor is not as good as this. Field plate is a lightweight set of interlocking plates, much costlier than plate and extremely rare! Jousting plate is treated as having this AC for the purposes of jousting only. It is not suitable for use in real combat, only for the stylized combat form of jousting. It is too bulky and heavy to be worn for longer than a few hours per day.

Pegataurs save as fighters.

At 10th level, pegataurs gain an Attack Rank as elves do (*Players Companion*, page 30). For each level gained thereafter, the pegataur moves up another Attack Rank, gaining special fighter combat options and elven special defenses (see Elf XP table in the *Players Companion*, page 30). Instead of using the Elf XP values shown in that table, use pegataur experience levels, with 10th level = Attack Rank C, 11th level = Attack Rank D, and so on.

### Pegataur Jousting

Pegataurs regularly hold jousting competitions, in training and tribal tourneys. As a simple rule of thumb, when two pegataurs joust, each rolls 1d10 and adds the following numbers: Strength bonus (+1 to +3), Dexterity bonus (+1 to +3), and Hit Dice (2-15). If the pegataur has 14+ HD, treat this as 15 HD. The jousting with the highest score wins that joust.

Table 8. Pegataur Level Advancement, Hit Dice, Spell casting, and Saving Throws

Level	Experience	Hit Points	Saving Throws		MW	P/TS	BA	R/S/S
			Dice	DR/P				
—	—	20,000	2d8	12	13	13	15	15
—	—	15,000	3d8	12	13	13	15	15
—	—	10,000	4d8	12	13	13	15	15
NM		0	5d8	10	11	12	13	14
1		10,000	—	10	11	12	13	14
2		60,000	6d8	8	9	10	11	12
3		140,000	7d8	8	9	10	11	11
4		300,000	—	8	9	10	11	11
5		600,000	8d8	6	7	8	9	10
6		900,000	9d8	4	7	7	7	7
7		1,20,000	—	4	7	7	7	7
8		1,500,000	10d8	4	7	7	7	7
9*		1,800,000	+2hp	2	4	4	4	3

\* +300,000 XPs per level thereafter.

+2 hit points per level thereafter.

Constitution bonus no longer applies.



## Sphinxes (M 39)

Again with the questions!

—anonymous adventurer

"Sphinxes were created as a matched pair by Grammaton, one of the first Immortals to shape this world, to be his companions and guards. He created one male and taught it the secrets of wizardry; and a female to whom he bequeathed the secrets of shamanism. He made them to be happy alone, happy in each other's company, and at peace with him. He left his fabulous palace, on some far distant pentaplane, to their charge while he wandered the planes.

"The sphinxes, however, had begun to fret after long years in the Immortal's service. The intelligence and wisdom he had given them made them curious, and hungry to learn of the myriad secrets of the teeming worlds in the multiverse. Finally, when Grammaton left on what he said would be a long journey, the female sphinx suggested to the male that they should look through the palace for some way to escape it; for only Grammaton knew how to come and go. They didn't succeed, but what they did find was a great book of Immortal magic in a secret, hidden library. From the book they learned, between them, a spell of great power which could bind even an Immortal with chains of words and ideas until the Immortal's mind would spin and he would be rendered confused and helpless.

"When Grammaton returned the sphinxes cast their spell upon him. Grammaton was very powerful and resisted. The sphinxes and the Immortal wrestled inside the matrix of the spell for days, spinning ideas and words and puzzles so intricate that no mortal could have comprehended them. At last the Immortal sundered his own spell, and the cowering sphinxes awaited the worst. But Grammaton sealed them in a forcecage, the better to think over their punishment.

"Eventually, however, the Immortal came to his creations and spoke to them thus: 'I have not been fair to you. I brought you into the multiverse, and yet have denied you the freedom of it, even though I have given you minds which need that freedom. You have given me long and faithful service. I can find other companions and guards. So, I shall let you go. But I am still angered, and I intend to punish you.' The sphinxes sat quietly, expecting some terrible curse to be inflicted on them. 'You will always be obsessed with riddles and puzzles, as a mark of how you tried to trap me within my own spell. In this way, all the sphinxes who shall follow you will know of your origin in the world'. Grammaton smiled as he delivered his judgement, secretly admiring the ingenuity of the sphinxes in their attempt to escape. And so the father and mother of all sphinxes were set free into the world, laughing and playing and tumbling through the sky. They found the warm, dry deserts of our world most to their liking, and Ylaruam is still the best place to find them. But 'ware to the indolent or unprepared traveller who does!

"Sphinxes are rare, but have played momentous

roles in our world from time to time. The Preceptors, I know, believe that when Al-Kalim retired from the world, he spent months fasting with the Sphinx of Kaziri-al-Wadi, spinning fables and riddles and exchanging knowledge with that ancient creature. The warnings, omens given in riddles, and angry roaring of the Ylaruam sphinxes have driven off intruders into that land many times. Who can say how that land might be today if it were not for its sphinxes? Then again, the Sphinx of Halag has roared warnings to sailors too close to the hazardous coastlines there in bad weathers for many years, Lawful and true. The better sphinxes are great servants of good.

"Sphinxes are usually solitary. They mate for life, but they spend much time apart, meeting to exchange riddles or to rear young. That is a lengthy business! Each parent thinks that everything it knows has to be taught to the young sphinx, which usually wants to do what all young creatures want to — chase its own tail, fight with its brother or sister, or stun passing camels by roaring playfully at them. Disciplining a young sphinx is a hard business for its beleaguered parents!

"Almost all people know that sphinxes love riddles and puzzles, but they have other traits less well known. Many of them are ardent collectors of things — expertly crafted chessmen, perhaps, or Blackmoorabilia, or the wickerwork crafts of some obscure Ethengar craftsman. It almost seems as if they deliberately take on an enthusiasm for things so obscure that they have no hope of completing their collections, or rarities that are very hard to obtain. I knew a sphinx once which happily refused to leave its home in Ylaruam, yet it collected narwhal carvings from Minrothad craftsmen. Wouldn't touch them if they were less than five hundred years old. I think this is because the sphinx needs to know that it never can exhaust its enthusiasm by completing its collection, or collecting so much that there is no room left for more. This is often the way with creatures of extreme longevity. They do not want anything they do to have a clear end, for thinking in such terms is abhorrent to them.

"Sphinxes have no especial interest in real learning, with a few notable exceptions such as the one Al-Kalim conversed with. They're not bothered by culture or history, for the most part. Not unless they were actually part of the events themselves, which has happened more than once!

"Sphinxes are great guardians though. I have mentioned the Sphinx of Halag, and there are others which protect dangerous valleys or wadis, keeping travelers from harm. Some guard ancient tombs of rich, forgotten kings or khans, to guard jealously prized knowledge, or in memory of rulers who valued the presence of a sphinx on their lands and behaved accordingly. Sphinxes were once known to roam the greatest libraries of Thyatis, for example, allowed to indulge their love of obscurity and puzzles.

"Sphinxes are never to be treated with discourtesy or flippancy. Though they may tease travelers and ap-

pear flighty and flippant themselves, they are extremely proud creatures. Unlike dragons, treasure and flattery mean little to them, and they will usually indulge in their time-honored pursuit of making a traveler through their land answer some riddle or puzzle. Since they know so many, it is difficult to know what they may ask! The traveler who fails will not be allowed to enter the sphinx's lands, unless he can plead an excellent reason for so doing. Even then, a Neutral or Chaotic sphinx may well refuse passage. Sphinxes are often highly territorial, and will not accept intrusions from people who are too dim to answer riddles correctly!

"If you enjoy an evening of riddles, I do know a young sphinx at loose ends who would love some company."

### WEAPONS, ARMOR AND COMBAT

Sphinxes do not use armor of any kind. The DM might allow barding at his discretion, but such barding would be very expensive indeed (at least 100 times the book value for normal armour of the same kind even if a craftsman could be found to make it). Sphinxes cannot use shields in any event.

Likewise, sphinxes do not use weapons; their natural weaponry is superior. Sphinxes may even be able to strike creatures which normally can only be hit by magic weapons; for each 4HD the sphinx possesses, it can harm monsters which require an additional 'plus' of magical weapon to be hit (a sphinx of 4-7 HD can harm beings only struck by +1 or better weapons, a sphinx of 8-11 HD can also harm beings only harmed by +2 or better weapons, etc.).

Sphinxes may use magical items suitable for members of their spellcasting class (Clerical for female sphinxes, Magic-user for male sphinxes). Items which cannot be physically worn easily (e.g., rings intended for human-sized fingers!) cannot be used, of course.

A sphinx saves as if it were a Fighter with a level equal to twice the sphinx's Hit Dice.

### Sphinx Spellcasters

Sphinxes are natural spellcasters, and do not use the spellcaster rules included in this book. The Experience Point costs for their advancement as spellcasters have already been calculated into their advancement requirements. Female sphinxes automatically have access to the Clerical spell lists in full (not just as shamans). In a similar manner, male sphinxes can use all Magic-user spells. Upon reaching 1st level (and not before), sphinxes gain spellcasting ability. A first level sphinx automatically gains the abilities of a 1st level spell caster. No ritual or study is required to advance or relearn spells. The maximum limit for sphinx spellcaster ability is 12th level.

### Roar of the Sphinx

Table 9 on page 27 includes various figures which relate to the sphinx's roar, a highly dangerous part of its armory. The *roar radius* is a self-explanatory term; it is the distance from the point of origin to which the sphinx's roar is effective. This is given for three zones, Z1 (nearest), Z2, and Z3 (most distant).

- The furthest zone (Z3) is the maximum limit for the fear effect caused by the roar. Any victim within this radius must make a saving throw vs. Spells or flee in fear. Later columns in Table 10 add detail to this. The *Save mod.* column shows the modifier which is applied to the saving throw against the roar; this varies from 0 (none) for a 2HD sphinx up to -4 for when a normal monster, or larger sphinx roars. The *Duration* column for *Fear* also shows how long the fear effect operates for. This varies from *d4r* (1-4 rounds) for a sphinx with 2-4 HD up to *d8t* (1d8 turns) for a sphinx with 14 or more HD. Be careful to separate 'r' (rounds) and 't' (turns) in Table 9.

- The second zone (Z2) is the maximum limit of the second effect, the *stun* caused by the roar of the sphinx. Within this radius, all who hear the roar must make a saving throw vs. Paralysis or be *stunned*. The *Stun* column under *Duration* shows that this varies from 1r (1 round) to *d8r* (1d8 rounds), depending on the HD of the sphinx. The saving throw modifier (0 to -4) applies here as before. Creatures within this radius must also save against the *fear* effect, as above!

- The closest zone (Z1) has the *fear* and *stun* effects exactly as for Z2, and standard saving throws (vs. Spells and Paralysis) must be made as before. However, this close to the sphinx the victim is also deafened for 1d10 turns. A saving throw vs. Spells is permitted to reduce this to 1d4 turns. Don't forget that a deaf spellcaster cannot cast spells! Also, the roar is so deafening that it causes physical damage. The Roar Damage column of Table 9 shows the damage caused. There is no saving throw for half damage here!

### Special Abilities

I- A sphinx can fly at 360' (120'). Flying statistics (for use with *Dawn of the Emperors* flight rules): Air-Speed (ft/round) 120', MF & Takeoff 1 (b), Carry HDx1,000 cn.

II- The sphinx can use a *speak with animals* effect, at will, to talk with desert creatures, or those creatures which live within a three-mile radius of its home (this latter is obviously easiest to apply to NPC sphinxes). It does not ask such creatures riddles!

III- The sphinx now saves at +4 against all 1st level spells. If complete immunity is allowed, an extra 100,000 XPs are needed to gain this level.

IV- The sphinx now saves at +4 against all 2d level spells. If complete immunity is allowed, an extra 150,000 XPs are needed to gain this level.

V- The sphinx cannot be damaged by nonmagical

weapons. However, monsters of 4 + HD can harm the sphinx, as usual.

VI- The sphinx now saves at +4 against all 3d level spells. If complete immunity is allowed, an extra 200,000 XPs are needed to gain this level.

### Puzzles and Riddles and Sphinxes

There are two ways to deal with this problem in game play. The first method is very easy and simple; the DM uses Intelligence checks to determine whether a riddle is solved or not. No actual riddles have to be invented. The DM simply determines that one exists, and characters or creatures have to roll below their Intelligence score on 1d20 to answer the riddle correctly. Modifiers can readily be applied to this dice roll. For very tough riddles, +4 or even more should be added to the dice roll. If the riddle or puzzle refers to something a character has a Knowledge skill pertaining to (rare), a -2 bonus can be applied to the dice roll.

Or . . . the DM can go to the trouble of making up riddles and puzzles and inflicting them on hapless players. Such riddles can be dragged from various sources. Previously published D&D® (and ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®) adventure modules contain a few. Anthologies of puzzles, riddles, and word games can be used for source material. Many folklore anthologies have puzzles or riddles from folk tales in them. Newspapers and magazines can be used, especially popular science and mind-teasing columns which have puzzle ideas which can be used in other contexts.

Of course, the DM can always turn the tables on the players if there is a sphinx player creature in the game by asking the player to do the research and come up with some riddles of his own. His player creature can be given experience points for coming up with particularly good ones. Of course, the player may demand that the DM actually answer them!

Puzzles don't have to be the classic "what walks on four legs when young . . ." type. Spatial puzzles are a good alternative. These can even be built into the structure of a dungeon or ruin (what a great pyramid delve could be made from such puzzles!). A verbal puzzle can be presented in a complex or novel form.

### Player Creature Sphinxes

Again, these are very powerful creatures, but not as powerful as may seem at first glance. Their roar is very powerful, but it is only usable twice per day, and everyone within range is affected — the sphinx cannot choose to selectively exclude its friends from the effect! The damage caused seems very high, but consider the number of *fireballs*, *lightning bolts* and *ice storms* a magic-user of double-figure level can launch each day. Likewise, the natural attacks are fairly hefty, but a strong fighter armed with a good magical weapon can dish out a similar amount in a melee round. A sphinx's spell immunity seems a fine protection, but don't forget that it affects all spells, including those the sphinx might rather like to have cast on it, including *cure light wounds*, *bless*, *haste*, and *dispel magic*. The sphinx is not immune to its own spells, so it can cure itself (while it cannot just launch off a *fireball* centered on itself and suffer no damage).

Player creature sphinxes do, however, need a plausible motivation. Treasure and fame and many common lures count for little with sphinxes. Intriguing and rare puzzles and items do. The player and DM should work together to construct a plausible background for the sphinx player creature which gives it a good reason for adventuring. As usual, experimenting with a sphinx player character on a one-time only basis is suggested before allowing a full-time sphinx into the campaign.

Table 9. Sphinx Level Advancement, Hit Dice, Combat Damage, and Base Armor Class, & Special Abilities

Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice	Combat Damage	Base AC	Roar Radius			Roar Damage	Save Mod.	Duration		Special Abilities
					Z1	Z2	Z3			Stun	Fear	
—	-3,000,000	2d8	d2/d2/d6	AC 5	2'	10'	20'	d6	0	1r	d4r	I
—	-2,700,000	3d8	d4/d4/d8	AC 5	3'	15'	30'	2d6	-1	1r	d6r	—
—	-2,400,000	4d8	d4/d4/d8	AC 4	4'	20'	40'	2d6	-1	1r	d8r	II
—	-2,100,000	5d8	d6/d6/d8	AC 4	'	25'	50'	3d6	-1	d2r	d10r	—
—	-1,800,000	6d8	d6/d6/d8	AC 3	5'	30'	60'	3d6	-2	d2r	2d10r	III
—	-1,500,000	7d8	2d6/2d6/d8	AC 3	6'	35'	70'	3d6	-2	d3r	3d10r	—
—	-1,200,000	8d8	2d6/2d6/d8	AC 2	8'	40'	80'	4d6	-2	d3r	d3t	IV
—	-900,000	9d8	3d6/3d6/d8	AC 2	9'	45'	90'	4d6	-3	d4r	d3t	—
—	-600,000	10d8	3d6/3d6/d8	AC 1	10'	50'	100'	5d6	-3	d4r	d4t	V
—	-300,000	11d8	3d6/3d6/2d8	AC 1	11'	55'	110'	5d6	-3	d4r	d4t	—
NM	0	12d8	3d6/3d6/2d8	AC 0	12'	60'	120'	6d6	-4	d6r	d6t	VI
1	300,000	13d8	3d6/3d6/2d10	AC 0	13'	65'	130'	6d6	-4	d6r	d6t	—
2	600,000	14d8	3d6/3d6/2d10	AC -1	14'	70'	140'	7d6	-4	d6r	d6t	—
3*	900,000	+2hp	3d6/3d6/2d12	AC -1	15'	75'	150'	7d6	-4	d8r	d8t	—

\* +300,000 XPs per level thereafter.  
 +2 hit points per level thereafter.  
 Constitution bonus no longer applies.

# Tabi (CC 79)

More fun than a barrel of tabi

—unknown source

"Imagine that Cloudmantle creature presuming to show you this portion of our tour, the very thought of it. Indeed! Though I were on my death bed, which it seems I very well may have been after visiting that disgusting halfling restaurant yestereve! And imagine them not having cream of worm soup. Indeed!

"Well, here we are at the Great Library itself, and — good grief! What are you doing here, Metzelaar? Swkra-awkk? Did I really say that? You've saved me how much in overdue library book fines? Well, that's very, ah, conscientious of you. Well done. Yes, very well, I'll get some extra bananas on the way back . . . with catnip milk as well, alright. Harrumph!

"Sqawrk, er, I had better explain, ladies and gentlebeings. Metzelaar is not a "magic monkey", as that oaf in the purple robes amongst you whispered to his, ah, bimbo elf friend just now (I didn't know demi-humans could grow hair that color). Metzelaar is a tabi. Tabi are intelligent, highly magical little fellows. They have very sharp, if rather superficial, minds. As you have seen, they make excellent servants for those fortunate enough to find the correct spell of summoning.

"I'd like to be able to tell you how tabi came into the world. Unfortunately, no one appears to know. I've spent some time researching the problem myself. I remember one night, over some giant slug pate and toast I said to myself, Horrobin, you really shouldn't summon something when you don't even know where it's come from. But not even I could find out the secret of their creation. Some Immortal with a sense of humor, I dare say.

"Tabi are rare in the parts of the Known World over which the Flying City now passes, but when we head south and get to the Four Kingdoms, they are rather more common in the coastal jungles. Likewise in Arypt, when we head eastwards. They enjoy the freedom of jungle life, and they're too swift for anything to have much of a chance of catching them. That is, even if they can be seen in the first place; tabi are very good at hiding in camouflage and concealing themselves. They're not bad at skulking in shadows, either. Sneaky little fellows.

"Tabi are natural herbivores. They like sweet fruits best of all, then nuts and berries, and once they find their way into allegedly civilized realms they find much else which appeals to their sweet tooth. Crystallized fruits are a treasure to them, and they will kill for a really good dessert wine. I remember the trouble I had keeping Metzelaar away from the '66 Fishtickle Bridge Icewine I bought in from Shireton a few years back. Positively drooled, poor little chap. Too bad about halfling cuisine though.

"Tabi are very territorial in their natural setting. They live in extended family groups, up to thirty or forty of them in a group. The noise when two families meet and squabble over a good fruit tree on the bor-

ders of their territory is quite astonishing! Their skirmishes can go on for days, but they keep fighting in the form of ritual combat, retracting their claws, and no one gets seriously hurt. They mark their property with scent. They do tend to do this even when they settle into more civilized settings. It took me a while to train Metzelaar not to deposit little liquid calling cards around my home when I had just summoned him.

"A question from that stunted person from Rockhome, is there? Fthtinks? Is that it, stinks? Ah, you mean the smell of tabi! You've met one before, haven't you, you crafty little half-person? Thought so. Well, indeed, tabi can radiate a rather strong smell in a pretty big area when they wish to do so. They mark their territory with unique family variants on precisely this scent. Some people think it's rather unpleasant, and I've heard humans describe it as a rotting smell. Don't find it at all unpleasant myself. But my neighbors threatened to complain to the Gnomish Council on Public Health here, so I had to get Metzelaar to stop his scent marking. Also, it rather spoils his sneaking and concealment skills if I need him to do a little information-gathering. Not much point moving silently and suchlike when everything can smell you a hundred feet away is there?

"I don't want you to get the wrong idea about tabi. They're not some kind of pet or dumb animal. In their way, they are very smart little creatures. Tabi were the first to investigate the Crystal Pyramids of the ancient Katapec people of Arypt, across the Sea of Dawn. They recorded their observations on a coarse papyrus made from reeds and vines, using ink from a small species of marsh octopus. I have quite a number of these manuscripts in my, ahem, personal collection. They also kept the gems and jewelry they found there, classifying them and labelling them most meticulously and thoroughly. They are very inquisitive, having a genuine love of knowledge. It's almost as great as their love of sweet things to eat, and of 'pretties' — gems and jewels, which they also adore. They also have plenty of time to indulge their interests, for tabi are very long-lived. Metzelaar tells me he's seventy-five years old and just coming into his prime. He says his old granddaughter Augustus is still chasing leopards and tigers in his two hundred and sixtieth year.

"However, the mind of a tabi is a superficial one. They are smart, have excellent reflexes, and think quickly. They can also grasp the surface aspects of some problem quickly. They're good at label-



ling and classifying things by appearance. But they don't have a flair for deep or complex thinking. They come up with the best answer to a problem so far as an immediate or fast solution is concerned, but not with valuable ideas for long-lasting, permanent solutions. Their thought processes are very swift, but not profound. Intelligent but not wise!

"This is one of the reasons why Metzelaar is such a good servant to me. He adores ordering books, sorting and classifying the items I possess, and looking up things in his index of my own humble little library. If I want something, Metzelaar knows just where it is. And he loves to do a little spying and snooping from time to time. Tabi are fairly fearless little souls, and they like the excitement of the chase and the thrill of adventure. Not that I would ever allow Metzelaar to do anything dangerous, he's far too valuable to me. He's also such a cheerful little fellow, very happy-go-lucky and good tempered. There are days when that's extremely tiresome and I tell him to go away and leave me alone, but now and again I find him quite cheering.

"Ah, here it is, the great map of the city itself. Where would you like to visit first? The Top Ballista Flying School, the Museum of Culture, the . . . No, Mr. Hair-on-your-Toes, we will not go to the Fun Park."

### WEAPONS, ARMOR AND COMBAT

Tabi do not wear armor. They are swift movers through the air, and will not readily suffer the encumbrance of armor or shields. Their carrying capacity is very low in any event. Nevertheless, they can use certain magical protective items which fit them (a ring of protection or life protection, for example).

Tabi cannot use weapons. They are small creatures, little bigger than cats. In any event they use their paws too much for climbing, grasping, and clutching to feel comfortable with weapons. Their natural claw venom makes their natural attacks more powerful than weapons anyway. Like sphinxes, they can harm creatures normally hit only by magical weapons (see the Sphinx entry in this book for details).

As stated, Tabi secrete a natural, blue venom from small glands below their horny fingernails. The talons do but 1-4/1-4 points of damage, but the creature struck must make a saving throw vs. Poison. If this save is made, no effect results. Failure means that the creature struck suffers from the delusion that all around are hostile, and will attack the nearest creature or character. A deluded character can fight with weapons or bare hands, but cannot cast a spell or use a magic item such as a wand. The delusion lasts for 2d6 Turns or until a *neutralize poison* spell (or a more powerful spell such as *cure all*) is cast on the victim. A typical tabi tactic is to sneak up, moving silently, behind a victim, claw his back and then run away, hiding in shadows perhaps, and then watch with amusement as the deluded person suddenly starts lashing out at his fellows.

Tabi save as magic-users.

### TABI SPELLCASTING

Tabi are natural spellcasters who possess an individual list of spell-like powers which they develop the natural ability to use as they gain experience levels (see Table 10). They gain the ability to cast spells of levels 1-3, then spells of levels 4-6. Any spell from the range shown can be chosen, providing it is one of those shown in Table 11 below. A higher-level spell cannot be exchanged to take an extra lower-level spell instead.

Tabi need a spellbook to learn these spells initially, but do not need to consult the spellbooks again to re-memorize a spell once learned. At the DM's option, variants on the spells above (e.g., *invisibility 10' radius*) may be added to the spells listed in Table 11.

Level 1  
Charm Person  
Detect Magic  
Shield  
Ventriloquism

Level 2  
ESP  
Invisibility  
Mirror Image  
Phantasmal Force

Level 3  
Haste  
Locate Object (C)

Protection from  
Normal Missiles

(C) = Clerical spell

Level 4  
Confusion  
Dimension Door  
Growth of Plants  
Hallucinatory Terrain

Level 5  
Passwall  
Pass Plant (D)

Level 6  
Projected Image  
Transport through Plants (D)

(D) = Druidic spell

### THIEFLY SKILLS

These skill function like the corresponding thief skills. In Table 10 the skills are indicated by the following abbreviations: PP = Pick Pockets; MS = Move Silently; HS = Hide in Shadows. Hiding in Shadows can also be applied to natural settings with which the tabi is familiar such as jungles and light or heavy woodland. The tabi cannot use its hide in shadows ability in scrub, open terrain, or in indoor surroundings which are well lit, of course.

If the tabi is using its rotting smell (see below), then the value of these abilities may be significantly reduced. Creatures which smell the stench may be quite wary and very vigilant. Creatures which have smelled a tabi before will be prepared for a tabi sneaking about! The chances for hiding in shadows will be reduced by -10 to -40, as the DM sees fit. A precaution, such as a *detect invisible* spell, will show a skulking tabi trying to hide in shadows!



## Tabi

### Special Abilities

I- Tabi can fly at a movement rate of 240' (80'). Flying statistics (for use with *Dawn of the Emperors* flight rules): Air-Speed (ft/round) 80', MF & Takeoff: 3 (b), Carry: HDx1,000 cn.

II- Tabi can speak with any natural ape or monkey.

III- Tabi save against all *fear* effects, normal or magical, at +1.

IV- Tabi gain the *rotting blight* ability. All tabi can produce the 100-foot radius rotting smell at will; the smell travels at 10' per round from the tabi (and dissipates at the same rate). At this level, however, the rotting smell acts as a *blight* spell on all non-tabi within the radius. Certain creatures are immune to this effect: these are undead, nagpa, and creatures which either have no sense of smell (golems, elementals, and the like) or which are not bothered by horrible smells anyway (slimes, oozes and puddings, sewer rats and the like). The DM can decide which other creatures are stench-resistant, at his discretion.

V- Tabi save against all *fear* effects at +2.

VI- Tabi save against all *fear* effects at +3.

VII- Tabi save against all *fear* effects at +4.

VIII- Tabi may use the 7th-level Magic-user spell *lore* once per week to investigate some object or item. Tabi will not necessarily do this for the best of reasons; they may use it because something intrigues them, or looks pretty, rather than because there is a reason to consider that more needs to be known about it.

### Knowledge Skills

Tabi gain a knowledge skill at each two levels of experience above the first, additional to other skill slots gained, in much the same way nagpa do. These knowledge skills should almost always be historical rather than contemporary, although one or two *culture* skills are allowed. Tabi are wholly disinterested in politics, sociology, theology, military matters, or any similar subject!

Table 10. Tabi Level Advancement, Hit Dice, Special Abilities and Spellcasting

Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice	Thiefly Skills			Special Abilities	Spells Usable	
			PP	MS	HS		Lvl 1-3	Lvl 4-6
---	-32,000	2d8	25	15	15	I	-	-
---	-24,000	3d8	30	20	20	-	-	-
---	-16,000	4d8	35	30	30	-	-	-
NM	0	5d8	40	40	4	II	-	-
1	32,000	-	45	50	50	III	1	-
2	100,000	6d8	50	60	60	-	2	-
3	300,000	-	55	70	70	IV	3	-
4	600,000	7d8	60	75	75	V	4	-
5	900,000	-	65	80	80	VI	4	1
6	1,200,000	8d8	70	82	82	-	4	2
7	1,500,000	-	75	84	84	VII	4	3
8*	1,800,000	9d8	80	86	86	VIII	4	4
9**	2,100,000	+2hp	82	88	88	-	4	4

\* Maximum spellcasting ability.

\*\* +300,000 XPs per level thereafter. +2 hit points per level thereafter. Constitution bonus no longer applies. +2% to each thiefly skill thereafter (max 100%).



# Creature Spellcasters

*At high levels, magic becomes indistinguishable from technology.*

—Restyn Thrylwakker, founder,  
Famous Magicians School

Certain of the skyfaring races we have encountered can become spellcasters, either as shamans or wiccans. Shamans are clerical spellcasters with a limited choice of clerical spells, although they cannot turn undead as clerics can. Wiccans are magic-users, and they do need spell books from which to learn and memorize spells. Their spells are taken from a restricted list. The lists of clerical and magic-user spells available to shamans and wiccans are given in the *Master DM's Book*, pp. 21-22.

Certain races *cannot* become shamans or wiccans. These are gremlins and nagpa, because they both have special spell-like powers and the tabi, faenare and sphinx, because they are natural spellcasters who have their special rules for spellcasting. For the gnomes, harpies, and pegataurs, read on!

**Optional Saving Throw Rule:** *Shamans may choose to use the saving throws of clerics of their own level, while wiccans may choose to use the saving throws of magic-users of the same level if they are better than the ones given for their creature type. Saving throws may be selected on a category by category basis (such as taking the saving throw vs. Wands from one and the save vs. Spells from the other).*

## Initiation & Apprenticeship

When a creature chooses to follow the path of the spellcaster (regardless of what point in his career he makes this choice) he must undergo a period of training and testing before spell abilities can be gained. In terms of game mechanics this is represented by the experience requirement for 1st level spellcasting ability (see Level Advancement below). In addition, before the 1st level of spellcaster ability can be reached, a specific ritual of some form must usually be undergone. Usually this involves the tutor of the character, or minions of the Immortal in the case of a shaman, leading the character through prayer, fasting, meditation, intense study and concentration exercises, and the like. It may also be necessary for a shaman to collect some rare or special items to make a *Holy Symbol*. In the case of a harpy, for example, this might require carving the item from the thigh bone of an elf killed and eaten by the harpy herself.

To determine whether this ritual was successful, make an Ability Check (roll ability score or below on 1d20) against Intelligence (for a wicca) or Wisdom (for a shaman). A bonus of -2 can be applied to this roll if the aspirant spellcaster has the guidance of a tutor during this preparation. If the Ability Check succeeds, 1st level spellcasting ability is gained. Note that for shamans, a spell is still not gained as a 1st level shaman; the character is still on trial (Immortals are very demanding). If the Ability Check is failed, the 1,000 XP cost of the attempt is lost, although the

aspirant can try again after a suitable pause for reflection — and when an extra 1,000 XPs have been earned. However, if three attempts to begin a spellcasting career fail, then the creature cannot become a spellcaster by any means in future. Further rituals will be fruitless.

The nature of this ritual is ultimately the province of the DM. However, the DM can ask the player to come up with an idea for a ritual which revolves around something important to the race in question, without telling the player that the character must only make an Ability Check! A trial of strength and endurance would be appropriate for a pegataur, for example, while a gnome might be given some tricky mechanical task to achieve. A bonus or penalty to the Ability Check may be allowed by the DM for particularly good or exceptionally bad player ideas.

A character which comes from a race with shamanic/wicca potential (that is, it meets the minimum requirements to become a spellcaster, based on its race) can choose to undergo this preparation and initiation at any stage of his adventuring career. The choice does not have to be made when the character begins his career.

## LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Becoming a spellcaster, or gaining additional levels of spellcasting ability, requires extra Experience Point Expenditure on the part of the character. The character must earn these extra XPs before reaching the next spellcasting ability level. The XP costs are shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12. Experience Point Costs for Spellcaster Experience Levels

Spellcasting Level	Extra XPs Required
1	1,000
2	2,000
3	4,000
4	8,000
5	16,000
6	32,000
7	64,000
8	130,000
9	260,000
10*	460,000

\* +200,000 XPs per level thereafter.

To advance a level as a creature spellcaster, the character adds the Experience Points needed to gain the next creature level and the Experience Points needed to gain the next spellcaster level. The total is the number of points needed to advance (*once a creature becomes a spellcaster, he does not advance through creature and spellcaster levels separately*).

## Creature Spellcasters

**Example:** A 4th level gnome character has become a shaman. To advance in level (to 5th level gnome and 2d level shaman), the character must earn and expend 32,000 XPs (for gnome) + 2,000 XPs (for shaman) for a total of 34,000 XPs.

Keep track of both levels on the creature's character sheet, such as *Gnome 4 / Shaman 1*.

### Level Limitations

Following in Table 13 are the maximum spellcaster levels attainable by different races in the shaman/cleric and wicca/magic-user categories:

Table 13. Creature Spellcaster Level Limitations

Race	Shaman	Wicca
Faenare	12/special*	-
Gnome	12	12
Harpy	6	4
Pegataur	8	8
Sphinx	12	12

\* See "Faenare" section earlier in this book.

Normally, a character or creature is unable to progress beyond these levels. The DM may optionally allow a character to make further, exceptional, progress if the player designs some daunting and difficult ritual. If this is approved by the DM, an Ability Check must be made in the normal way, although this time a +2 penalty modifier must be applied to the dice roll.

If this Ability Check is successful, then the character can gain an additional spellcasting level. If this Ability Check fails, then the character loses experience points. The XP loss is equal to the number of experience points needed to gain the additional level. For example, a harpy attempting to become a 7th-level shaman and failing would lose 32,000 XPs, since an additional 32,000 are needed to progress from the sixth to the seventh level of shamanic spellcasting ability. The XP loss may possibly result in a lost level (*with corresponding loss of hit dice, special abilities, etc.*). Thus, attempting to overstretch one's abilities is a dangerous business — as it should be!

As with an original initiation, attempts to gain extra levels above normal limits can be attempted repeatedly if the candidate earns enough XPs to try again and again. If a character fails three times in attempting to gain a particular level, however, no further progress will ever be possible.

A character may at any point in his career decide to

stop improving his spellcasting skills. This is an important decision, because it is final and irrevocable; the character will never be able to resume his advancement in his spellcasting career (*nor begin another — e.g., a shaman cannot train as a wicca after ceasing shamanic progression*). The old level of spellcasting ability is not lost, of course.

### Additional Spell Choice

The standard shamanic and wicca spell lists are fairly restricted (although pegataurs and faenare wind-singers have access to druidic spells also). For this reason, the DM may allow access to additional spells, through research (wiccans) and additional rituals (shamans). These may be spells which are commonly known (i.e., standard D&D® spells from the rulebooks) or even ones devised by the player (the DM must rule on their suitability).

Common (rulebook) spells require a ritual or memorizing study lasting 1 day, and expenditure of 1,000 gp worth of treasure (consumed in the ritual or research) per level of the spell being studied or sought. The percentage chance of learning the spell correctly is determined by a fairly simple equation:

$$([\text{Wisdom} + \text{Experience level}] \times 2) - (3 \times \text{spell level})$$

The experience level referred to is the experience level in the relevant spellcaster class. Thus, a 9th-level shaman with 17 Wisdom seeking to learn a new 3d-level spell would be  $([17 + 9] \times 2) - (3 \times 3) = 52 - 9 = 43\%$ . The player rolls d100 and if this roll is below 43, the spell has been successfully learned during the 2 days (2d level spell) of rituals. At the DM's option, this chance can be increased by +5% or more by extra money being spent on research, the sacrifice of a magic item to an Immortal (for shamans), and the like. Do not just allow players to increase the odds by spending money, however. Make them come up with some interesting details of what they will do with it to try to improve their character's chances!

New spells (non-rulebook spells) require twice the time and expenditure, and in the equation the spell level is multiplied by 5, not by 3! Thus, in the example above, if the 9th-level shaman had been researching a 3d-level spell of his own devising his chance for success would have been  $(52) - (15)$ , 37%.

After a spell has been successfully discovered by a spellcaster, the character adds it to the list of spells that he is able to memorize and learn.

*If you'll be wantin' to make yer mark in the world, it's best ye know how to hold yer crayons first.*

—Branwys Skyratchet

Skills are an optional addition to the rules for character generation. They reflect general areas of competence not directly relevant to combat, thievery, or magic use that characters may want to develop. They round out characters and give them extra individuality and interest.

The D&D® *Gazetteers* contain additional information on skills, including almost all those mentioned here (new skills are defined here). An introductory list of skills is given in *GAZ 1, Grand Duchy of Karameikos*. Where a more detailed explanation of a skill exists, a reference is given — such as *GAZ 7, The Northern Reaches* or *GAZ 9, The Republic of Darokin*. The applicable Ability follows each skill, using the Ability's initial (e.g., W = Wisdom, Ch = Charisma, and so on).

See "Personalities of Sky City" for examples of characters with skills.

## BEGINNING SKILLS

Player creatures begin their careers with four skills (*exception*: nagpa have six). To this basic number, the character can add one for an Intelligence 13-15, a second bonus skill if it has Intelligence 16-17, and a third bonus skill for Intelligence 18.

Use the following are recommendations for player creatures. Some of them are compulsory — these are listed in **boldface**. If the number suggested is less than four, the remainder are as player and DM wish, although implausible choices should not be allowed. These are only suggestions, though! The player should be allowed reasonable choice, and the DM has the final say in all instances.

**Faenare**: Direction sense (W), Singing (Ch), and Survival (I) (hills/mountains) are plausible initial skills. Singing may well be taken as Singing +1.

**Gnome**: Gnomes must have two of the following (and possibly more): **Fantasy Physics** (W), **Machine Building** (I), a **Science** (I) skill, and any other Knowledge (I) skill.

**Gremlin**: It is very unclear as to what skills could possibly benefit a gremlin. Perhaps **Machine Destruction** (I), a reversed form of **Machine Building** (see gnome), is a possibility. Others are really up to player and DM ingenuity!

**Harpy**: Animal empathy, Direction sense (W), Evade (D) (see *GAZ 7*), and **Tracking** (I) (prey!) are all possibilities. Harpies do not need the Sing skill; they have innate singing skills.

**Nagpa**: Nagpa *must* take (at least) **three Knowledge skills**, and other possibilities include **Appraisal** (I) (see *GAZ 9*), **Teaching** (W), and even **Storytelling** (Ch).

An important point about nagpa, which applies to beginning and acquired skills, is that old and arcane languages can be taken as Knowledge skills if desired.

**Pegataur**: **Fighting Instinct** (D) (see *GAZ 7*), **Stamina** (C) (see *GAZ 7*), and **Survival** (I) (native terrain — usually hilly/mountainous) are very likely for beginning player creatures.

**Sphinx**: **Knowledge** (I) skills, **Storytelling** (Ch), and **Water Divining** (W) are likely initial skills.

**Tabi**: **Direction Sense** (W), **Evade** (D) (see *GAZ 7*), **Gambling** (D) (if the tabi has begun its life in 'civilized' realms), and **Knowledge** (I) skills (subject to restrictions noted in the section on tabi) are the most likely initial skills.

## New Skills

### Direction Sense (Wisdom skill)

Direction sense is the ability to know which way is up (so to speak) in totally unfamiliar surroundings or in very limited visibility (fogs, thick jungle, and the like). It differs from Navigation. Navigation requires clear external cues (where the moss is on trees, where the stars are in the sky), whereas Direction sense is pure *gut feeling* and intuition. Which way is up and down, east and west, north and south, can be detected on a successful Wisdom Ability Check.

### Fantasy Physics (Wisdom skill)

This is a unique skill to gnomes and a very few nagpa. It is the ability to design a device for carrying out some relatively complex function based on a pseudo-technological theory. Fantasy Physics is the principle that if something looks as if it ought to work. Even though its workings may not actually be entirely possible, the odds are that it will work.

### Machine Building (Intelligence skill)

This is unique to gnomes, and cannot be readily taught to other. It is the practical complement to Fantasy Physics — while that skill is the theory and principles, this is the practice. It is the ability to take a Fantastic-Physics construct and make it in accordance with the principles of Fantasy Physics.

### Water Divining (Wisdom skill)

This is the ability to sense underground deposits of water in areas which appear barren or devoid of it (in the specialized form this skill takes here). It is a skill greatly prized among desert dwellers and those who live in arid land, steppes or savannah. The creature using the skill must work at ground level. The user can only sense water directly underneath it. However, a preliminary Wisdom Ability Check allows it to detect signs of terrain fruitful for subterranean water up to a mile away. It is up to the DM to decide whether there actually is any water in the locale.

### Piloting (Dexterity skill)

This is the ability to operate a flying craft, as opposed to a flying mount (for which the Riding skill is needed). A different category of Piloting skill must be taken for very different categories of flying craft



## Skills

(such as a fighter airplane or a huge air balloon). The "Top Ballista" section gives detail on Piloting and checks against this skill. PCs can only take this if they start their careers as *squirts* in the Top Ballista squadron (see "Top Ballista" section), an option open only to skygnome PCs (or normal human, elf, dwarf, or halfling PCs).

### How Skills are Used

Each skill is based on one particular Ability (as shown in the examples above), and the skill is used successfully if the character or creature makes a successful Ability Check against the relevant ability (rolls ability score or below on 1d20). The DM may apply modifiers as needed to take into account the simplicity, or difficulty, of the task.

### Improving Skills

If a player wishes, he can improve his success chance with a skill beyond the Ability on which it is based. To do this, he can apply one of his unselected skill choices (either beginning, or acquired by later experience) to this skill to make it better. Each 'applied' skill gives a +1 bonus to the skill roll (this means -1 to the 1d20 roll, since high scores on the d20 mean failure). Such a skill is recorded as Piloting +1, Persuasion +2, etc. However, a natural 20 on the 1d20 roll always fails regardless of modifiers.

### Learning More Skills

As time goes by, a creature may acquire more skills or improve existing ones. All characters get a new skill choice every four experience levels gained. Thus, they get their initial four skills at level 1, another skill at level 5, another at level 9, and so on. In addition, nagpa gain one Knowledge skill every other level (one at 3d, one at 5th, etc.), accumulating skills fairly rapidly, as befits their nature.

Since many player creatures don't actually gain levels right away, the DM should allow player creatures to gain a new skill every four 'jumps' on the advancement table. Thus, a sphinx gains an initial four skills at 2 HD (beginning); another skill at 6 HD, another skill at 10 HD, another at 14 HD (2d level sphinx), and every four levels thereafter.

Each skill choice may be used to buy a new skill or to improve one old skill in the manner described above. New skills should reflect something of the experience of the creature. The DM may require the PC to justify taking skills for which there is no earlier experience, even demanding that a player creature spend time in study, possibly needing to miss one or more adventures with his fellows. Some skills may require extensive practice and training (such as Piloting or Leatherworking). The DM may, likewise, insist on a course of training for such skills.

### Using Skill Checks

The DM decides when a skill check is needed, although players can (and should!) make suggestions on this score. Furthermore, the DM must decide what bonuses or penalties (if any) affect the outcome of the check. Finally, the DM must decide what effects a successful (or *failed*) skill check has in a given situation.

A particularly tricky case concerns Charisma-based skills such as Persuasion or Bargaining. The DM must consider carefully when to make a formal skill check, and when to rely on role-playing instead. Skill checks should never replace role-playing a crucial encounter!

The DM must also decide how long a skill takes to perform. Examining a thinly-covered woodland floor for the tracks of a large animal might take only a few rounds, whereas designing a hovercraft using Fantasy Physics may take weeks. Some skills require equipment, special facilities, and money to use — as with Knowledge skills and Practical (e.g., Science) skills.

### Skills in Campaigns

Skills should be more than just another set of numbers to play with or a couple more optional dice rolls. They give a character depth and color, speaking of his origins and experiences. While they shouldn't be over-used in a game, they do add uniqueness to any character. A good player can use them to enhance the role-playing of his character. A character with a Knowledge skill of ancient history, for example, might find parallels for an adventuring party's plight in the exploits of epic heroes of the past. Try to reward players who put this kind of effort into developing their characters with a few extra XPs.

Skills can also form the basis for adventures. If characters want to learn new skills they may have to travel far to find some source for that skill — a teacher, a set of long-lost arcane tomes, or something similar. Since players are unlikely to go to such trouble on their own initiative, try to construct a campaign setting in which some obscure skill is necessary (e.g., to translate or comprehend some very ancient book) to obtain a successful conclusion. This gives the character a reason for needing the skill, and the *travel to find your teacher* scenario can be used with greater plausibility and effect.

### Gnome Construction Skills

Skygnomes, and many of their land-bound cousins, are great designers and builders of machines and contraptions of all kinds. Taking a healthy interest in such matters is an absolute must for a PC skygnome. Follow the steps below when developing a new device.

#### Stage 1: What is the Machine For?

Decide exactly what the machine is to do. It may have more than one function, but it's best to stick to machines with relatively simple purposes.

*Example: A player decides that his gnome player creature is going to attempt to design a form of hovercraft, capable of carrying up to six normal-sized creatures. This player has always wanted a magical flying carpet, has never found one, and feels he now has the chance to make a workable substitute.*

### Stage 2: Planning the Design

The player must come up with the basic principle which is going to be used in the design of the machine. He must specify whether the essential function of the machine will be carried out by either pure technology, magic, or a mixture of the two. **Important Note:** If magic is to be a part of a design, the inventor must be a wicca! Otherwise, the machine will not work!

The basic principle is the central idea behind the machine's functioning. This need not be a detailed nuts and bolts explanation. Adding eccentric detail is acceptable, however. The point to keep in mind is that of Fantasy Physics. The functional principle needs to appear reasonable. *The details don't matter!*

The following are examples of invention power sources taken from *The Book of Wondrous Inventions*, a must-have book for the would-be gnomish inventor.

**Golem-Muscle:** A golem (or several golems) turn cranks to make this device operate. Powerful, but cumbersome, space intensive and best for slow action.

**Pedal Transmission:** One to 100 gnomes pump the pedal to make the device work. Cheap, but unreliable. Even gnomes get tired of pedaling.

**Spring-Load:** A large metal spring slowly unwinds, driving the device to which it is attached.

**Steam-Power:** This technology consists of heating water in an enclosed area in order to build up steam pressure, which drives machinery as it is released. Steam machines are heavy, hot, complicated and usually require a minimum of four engineers to operate. Steam boilers have a tendency to explode.

**Wind-cycle:** Bags or sails catch the wind, rotate machinery and power the device. Speed and power of the effects depend upon wind speed.

**Entrapped magical energy:** Magical energy (or an energy creature like a fire elemental) is entrapped in a storage device. Energy release powers the invention.

*Example: The player decides that Ibadullah Cogtweaker, his gnome PC (who is a wicca), will use a magical principle combining air and fire Elementals to provide the motive force for the hovercraft. This is a superficially plausible idea, and thus is entirely consistent with Fantasy Physics. It is a Pure Magic design principle. The details do NOT matter.*

### Stage 3: Determining Whether it Works

The DM needs to decide whether or not he will allow the device to function as designed. This is basically a

common sense interpretation of the Fantasy Physics skill. If, given a healthy dose of imagination, it seems like a device might work, then it will! On the other hand, this does not mean that it can be built!

### Stage 4: How Difficult is this Going to Be?

Now, the DM needs to figure out how easy or difficult this design is going to be. Table 14 lists a selection of modifiers that will affect the character's chance to successfully construct his invention.

**Table 14. Design Complexity, Skill Modifier, and Time needed for Designs**

Design Complexity	Skill Modifier	Time Required
Easy	-2	1d4 days
Simple	none	1d4 + 2 days
Tricky	+2	3d6 days
Difficult	+4	5d6 days
Very Difficult	+8	30 + 7d10 days
<b>Extenuating Circumstances</b>		
No Fantasy Physics skill	+4	
Meddling Special Ability	-2	
No Meddling Box	+2	
Distractions	+1 to +4	

The DM needs to determine the invention's innate complexity and decide which (if any) extenuating circumstances will affect its successful completion. The applicable skill modifiers are totalled together.

**Design Complexity:** To determine an invention's difficulty level, the DM needs to decide not so much the difficulty of the basic concept — which should always be simple — but the difficulty of putting it into practice. Much depends on the scale of the enterprise (a hovercraft is hardly a small thing to design and build) and how radical the effects of the creation will be on his game campaign (a hovercraft is a very unusual and rather powerful machine, and would grant the gnome a very useful mode of travel). To design a really useful, sizeable machine is significantly harder than designing something small and fairly conventional.

*Example: The DM rules that Ibadullah's attempt to design a hovercraft is a Difficult design attempt. By way of comparison, the same DM rules that a second design Ibadullah has submitted — for a steam-powered combined Turkey Plucker, Gutter, and Stuffer — is Simple (because if it works it isn't going to change the world or the campaign much, and the DM likes the idea. Such subjectivity is permitted.)*

**Extenuating Circumstances:** These are the presence or lack of skills, abilities or devices that influence the construction of gnomish inventions. Fantasy Physics is covered in this chapter. The Meddling ability can be found in the "Gnomes" section of this book. The



meddling box can be found in the "Equipment and Magical Items" section. Distractions are things that keep the gnome from either continuous work on his design or that keep him from concentrating. Adventuring is an example of an interruption. Developing a design in a rowdy tavern or in a home where squalling gnomelings take a gnome's mind off the task at hand are examples of concentration distractions. The exact penalty is up to the DM.

**Time Required:** This is the time that *must* be spent by the gnome in design work. The gnome doesn't have to spend every waking hour doing this work, but he can't spend much time doing anything else (no adventuring!) and will need a quiet place in which to work.

#### Stage 5: Does it Work?

Having determined the total difficulty modifications, the DM now makes a secret Wisdom Ability Check for the gnome, applying the modifier from Table 14 to the dice roll (NB: low dice rolls are successes).

Importantly, the gnome always thinks that his design is sound. Only the DM knows, at this stage, whether it is actually is sound or not. *Sound or not, don't tell the player!*

#### Stage 6: Building the Contraption

While the Fantasy Physics skill is important to design a machine of some sort, the Machine Building (Intelligence-based) skill is most important for actually building it. While the designer need not be the chief builder (the person actually in charge of the project), it is also important that the gnome who designed a machine should be involved in its construction!

Again the DM must decide several factors regarding the project. First, consider the scale of the project. If the project involves building a sizeable machine (as is the case with the hovercraft in the examples), the DM should break this down into a series of stages, each of which requires a separate successful ability check (detailed later).

A second crucial qualifier is that if the design uses magic, the *chief builder* must be a wicca of 9th level or better. It is best if he is also personally able to cast the spells that go into its construction.

*Example: The DM decides that a hovercraft is no simple project and decides on three stages:*

- (i) building a chassis;
- (ii) building the superstructure;
- (iii) bolting in the magical stuff (*Elementals*, etc.).

If the machine appears to be complex (intricate, has many functions, etc.) the DM can add further stages. Since each one means another ability check, this simulates the increasing difficulty of building a complex or multifunctional device.

At each stage of the building, make an ability check against the chief builder's Intelligence to deter-

mine success. Apply these modifiers, as appropriate, to each ability check:

- +6 if the chief builder doesn't have the Machine Building skill;
- -1 for each level of the chief builder's Machine Building skill above the basic (-1 for Machine Building +1, -2 for Machine Building +2, etc.);
- +2 if the chief builder didn't actually design the machine;
- -1 if the designer can actually build the machine on his own with no *required* assistance;
- +4 if the builders do not have a set of skyhooks (see Equipment) to work with;
- Half the dice modifier for design complexity from Table 14 above (-1 if easy, 0 if simple, etc.);
- +2 (or worse) if no skygnome labor is available to build the machine;
- +4 if the machine uses magic and no wicca is to hand.
- +4 if a wicca other than the chief builder casts any necessary spells into the device;
- +3 if this is a Rush Job being completed faster than it reasonably should be.

This looks a long, tiresome list but only a small number of the modifiers will apply in any given case.

#### Stage 7: How Long Does This All Take?

The time required is also important. Each stage in the construction takes 11-30 *gnome days* as a base figure. One gnome working for one day is a gnome day. Ten gnomes working for one day is 10 gnome days. The DM can add to this if rare components are needed, or the work is intricate, etc. A rush job can halve this time, but adds a +3 penalty modifier to the dice roll at each stage of construction.

#### Stage 8: How Much is this Gonna Cost?

The matter of cost is also important. Building at each stage requires wages for the skygnome builders, the cost of employing a wicca (if relevant), cost for raw materials, cost of use of the design studio, and lots of little extras which just add up. Some designs will use much more expensive components than others, of course. For instance, a mean DM could rule that Ibadullah's design needs insulation achievable only with red dragon hide, available at only 1,000 gp per square foot, and that (say) 100 square feet should do the job. The DM should come up with a figure which will hurt the gnome's pocket without bankrupting him.

In the case of magic, the DM will need to decide what level of magic use is involved. A wicca capable of using magic of this level must be available or else the design cannot be created!

At each stage of building, the DM determines success or failure with an Intelligence ability check for the chief builder. If the result is successful, work can proceed on the next stage. *If not . . .*



**Stage 9: Why Didn't it work?**

If the result is failure, this will usually be apparent. The reasons for the failure will be known if the designer makes a Wisdom Ability Check, and the chief builder makes an Intelligence Ability Check (at a +4 penalty if he doesn't have the Machine Building skill). If this happens, another stab can be made at building correctly. Success with both these Ability Checks can reveal that the entire design is flawed (i.e., the DM determined way back in Stage 5 that the thing wouldn't work). First time around, something obviously wasn't quite right with the way the design was translated into a construction. If this second attempt fails, it is realized that the design has not worked out in practice — even though it may be sound in theory. A new design will have to be made. Back to the drawing board (Stage 2)!

Finally, if all the ability checks are made, the machine can be wheeled (or dragged) out for the adulation of one's fellow gnomes!

*Example: Ibadullah oversees the production of his own design (the DM rules that he cannot possibly build a hovercraft on his own). He has Intelligence 15, and a Machine Building skill, a team of 5 gnomes to do the work for him, and a 9th-level wicca on hand for the magical stuff.*

*The first stage is building the chassis. This will take 15 gnome-days, the DM decides, and so the gnomes can do it in 3 days. Ibadullah is his own chief builder and makes an Intelligence check with a +2 modifier. The penalty is applied because the design was a Difficult one — this is carried over from the design stage. The DM rolls 7, which is adjusted to 9. No problem; the chassis is built soundly.*

*The next part of the construction is the superstructure. This is going to include the controls needed for modulating the magically-driven part of the craft, so magic is involved. Conjuring elementals requires the use of a 5th-level spell, and fortunately the foresighted Ibadullah has a 9th-level wicca on hand to do his stuff. Again, the die roll is modified by +2 because of the difficulty of the design and +2 because Ibadullah is not casting the spells himself. However, the DM does an extra bit of creative reasoning from the list of modifiers. The 9th-level wicca has to act as joint chief builder, the DM reckons, so half the usual modifier for the chief builder not being the designer is applied: an extra +1 penalty. Total: +5 penalty.*

*This turns out to be critical. The d20 roll is 11, modified up to 16. Ibadullah has blown it; after 20 gnome-days work, it's clear the design is not sound. Ibadullah and his wicca try to reason out what's gone wrong here. Ibadullah has to make a Wisdom Check and rolls 2; the wicca has to make an Intelligence Check at or below his score of 17. The DM applies half the usual +6 penalty to the wicca's check (he does not have the Machine Building skill!) since he is joint chief builder. The die roll for him is 14, adjusted upward to 17 — just made it! The DM*

*makes Ibadullah's player sweat by telling him how the wicca needs a couple of extra days to try to figure out what the problem is, he can almost see the reason but not quite — the workers want more money, one or two are bored and starting to drink too much, and Ibadullah is getting very anxious. But the wicca comes up with the goods.*

*Given this, another stab can be made at slightly re-vamping the second-stage design and building, and this time — with a d20 roll of 4 for Ibadullah — it works! The physical assembly of the machine is ready for the final stage.*

*Unfortunately this is not going to be easy. The 9th-level wicca is now the effective chief builder, since only he can handle elemental-conjuring magic. The modifiers which apply to this final stage are: +6 (the wicca has no Machine Building skill); +2 (the wicca didn't actually design the machine); +2 (the design was Difficult anyway). On the other hand, as the chief builder, he is no longer penalized when he casts his spells.*

*That's a total of +10, a hefty negative modifier. The DM allows the player to make the final d20 roll, having told him he needs to roll 7 or below (the wicca's Intelligence score being 17). The player rolls — a 3! The machine finally works!*

*As should be clear, it isn't going to be easy to devise and build machines, but then no DM is likely to want lots of magical-technological, powerful machines like hovercraft dominating his campaign anyway. The rules provided here make it easy for gnomes to come up with intriguing, eccentric, oddball things, but significantly harder to make complex and powerful contraptions. Even when they work (as in the case of the hovercraft above), the DM can keep them from dominating the campaign in many ways. Consider the hovercraft case. The DM could fairly rule that:*

- *Flying time is limited (4 hours or less per day);*
- *Some form of magical fuel must be supplied (maybe a fireball or wall of fire spell must be used to 'charge' the elementals each day);*
- *There is a 1% chance per day that some small part falls off the machine, with a 50% chance that this halves flying time and requires maintenance (if not done, the next fallen part grounds the machine);*
- *flying over sandy terrain will ruin the machine and prevent it working, and so on.*

*The DM should not restrict things unduly, but machines shouldn't dominate the game. The DM should perhaps consider pointing out the limitations on machine function to a player at the design stage, so the player doesn't feel cheated.*

*Machines and contraptions can be great fun for players to dream up and attempt to build. They can also become adventure hooks, as an eager gnome seeks out some magical skyhooks or a renowned teacher and designer, or some dragonskin insulation for the inside of his salamander-powered steam train which tends to get rather over hot in the engine room!*

# Equipment & Magical Items

*Of course, I do have a few special items in the back that I don't show to just anyone . . .*

—Corwyn Hallonica, merchant of Darokin

## New Equipment Items

### Bumber-Chutes

The Bumber-Chute looks like a large parasol and is worn on an airman's back (or the back of a creature riding a flying mount) like a back-slung sword. If the flier is ever thrown out into the air, or has to jump from his aircraft, he need only pull the Bumber-Chute from his back and press the button on the handle. The large umbrella part will open up and magically lower its wielder to the ground; the flier need only hold on to the handle for dear life.

When nearing the ground the PC rolls 1d20. On a roll of 1, he suffers 2d6 points of damage from a bad landing. Otherwise, he is fine.

Gnomish wiccas make Bumber-Chutes at a cost of some 750 gp each. They are not sold to anyone other than the Top Ballista squadrons and to senior Serraine residents.

### Meddling Box

Meddling boxes are necessary for using the Fantasy Physics skill to best effect; without this the skill has a +2 penalty to its associated Ability Check (Wisdom). It comprises a small box of various widgets, twiddlers, doodlies, doodads and thingummies, the kind of small items which are twiddled in the thumbs, chewed at one end, and used to scratch the ears and fidget with. Most Meddling Boxes have individually customized components. The average cost is 50 gp.

### Pegataur Barding (non-magical)

As used by pegataurs, the statistics for barding are:

Armor Type	AC	Normal Armor	Superior Armor*
		Cost/Enc	Cost/Enc
Scale mail	6	150 gp/400	300 gp/200
Chain mail	5	300 gp/600	600 gp/300
Banded mail	4	800 gp/1,500	1,600 gp/750
Plate mail	3	1,000 gp/3,000	2,000 gp/1,000
Field Plate**	2	1,500 gp/2,000	3,000 gp/1,500
Jousting armor	1	1,000 gp/5,000	2,000 gp/1,000

\* Superior armor is double the price of normal armor and only half the weight due to clever design and use of more expensive materials.

\*\* The extreme expense of field plate is due to its lightweight construction, individualized design and the fact that few craftsmen can make it well. A suit will only fit the pegataur for whom it was designed, and it takes 9-12 weeks to make (during which time the pegataur must be available for frequent fittings).

### Shields, Large

Pegataurs can use large shields to protect themselves if using a one-handed weapon (usually they do not do this). Such a large shield has twice the usual cost of a shield, and covers the forequarters only.

### Skyhook Set

A set of polished, gleaming skyhooks are essential for best use of the Machine Building skill (+4 penalty to the Ability Check against Intelligence without it). Each gnome has an individually crafted skyhook set, in a locked skyhook box with a name plaque on it. The term 'skyhook' is a generic name for all hand held tools used by gnomes, although there are also specific tools called skyhooks within the set. Certain extra items may be needed for certain constructions — e.g., scaffolding for really big jobs — but an old gnome saying is "a good gnome needs naught but skyhooks." Skyhooks must be custom-made by an artisan, which takes 2-5 weeks, and costs 200 gp.

### Weapons, Small/Large

Pegataurs often use weapons which are substantially larger than ones used by humans, but which are treated as the same for purposes of cost, availability, and combat values. Smaller races (notably gremlins and tabi) may use much smaller weapons, but these can be assumed to be freely available (e.g., a knife is a fair small dagger and a carving knife makes an acceptable shortsword for a smaller creature!). Individual creature descriptions discuss the damage that these tiny weapons inflict. As a simple rule of thumb, costs may be halved for smaller weapons (e.g., assume a small knife costs half as much as a dagger).

## Magical Items

### Amulet of Charm Resistance

These small amulets of brass or bronze allow the wearer to save against all *charm* effects (*charm person* spells, the *charm* song of a harpy, the *charm* spell of a vampire, etc.) with a +4 bonus.

**Amulet of Immunity to Charm** These rare amulets appear identical to the above, but offer *total* immunity to all forms of magical charm unless this is produced by a *limited wish* or *wish*.

### Barding, Magical

Made only by dwarven (and a few gnomish) smiths of exceptional talent, magical barding (used by pegataurs among the skydwellers) is a rare treasure indeed! Two d20 rolls can be used on Table 15 below to determine the armor type and the magical plus of the armor found separately.

Table 15A.

D20 Roll	Armor Type
1-4	Scale mail
5-14	Chain mail
15	Banded Mail
16-19	Plate Mail
20	Field Plate

Table 15B.

D20 Roll	Magical Plus
1-10	armor +1
11-17	armor +2
18	armor +3
19	armor +4
20	armor +5



## Equipment & Magical Items

Magical barding is automatically of superior quality (cf. Table 15). Field Plate is not found with enchantment superior to +3, and ordinary plate mail barding is not enchanted beyond +4 protection.

### Featherchimes

These small, sealed glass tubes are decorated with feather-fine etching and engraving, and resonate with a very faint musical chiming sound when struck gently. If held gently and struck with a slender glass rod (usually found with the chime), one or more windsinger songs can be created, one per day each. Roll a d20 to determine which spells the *featherchime* will produce:

d20 Roll	Song(s)
1-3	<i>Song of the Wake</i>
4-5	<i>Harmonic Song</i>
5-8	<i>Song of the Wake and Harmonic Song</i>
9-12	<i>Song of Will and Iron</i>
13-16	<i>Harmonic Song and Song of Will and Iron</i>
17-19	<i>Song of Dispelling</i>
20	All songs of levels 1-4

Details of windsinger songs can be found in the section on Faenare. If faenare know that a creature possesses one of these Mastersinger-crafted magical items, they will go to great lengths to recover it.

### Ginzani's Bridle

These excellent sets of bridles, bits, reins and saddles can be used with a pegasus or pegataur mount. If the owner of the bridle can get the mount to accept it (usually by trickery or subterfuge!), the creature must save vs. Spells. If this fails, the mount will accept the person who placed the bridle on it as its master (and is effectively charmed) for a year and a day (after which time the creature cannot be forced to accept the bridle again). Creatures which make their saves, or which have been charmed in this way, will have a strong enmity for the owner of the bridle.

Riders in the saddle of this item gain +2 to all Ability Checks needed to remain in it while flying.

### Girdle of Freshness

This embroidered silk-covered leather girdle protects the wearer against all radiant stench effects from creatures — the smell of troglodytes, and the tabi rotting blight, for example. It gives no protection against smells created by natural processes such as marsh gas, stagnant water and the like. A final benefit is that the wearer adds +4 to all saving throws which must be made for his items against the *corruption* special ability of a gappa.

### Glitterlode's Blessed Skyhooks

These magical skyhooks are believed to have been created by servants of the Immortal Garal Glitterlode,

and placed as rewards for his followers among the gnomish peoples. The skyhooks automatically fit the hands of the gnome who finds them, and may be of +1 to +4 enchantment, each plus adding an extra +1 to the Machine Building skill and subtracting 5% from the time and cost of all machine constructions. A d20 roll determines the enchantment: 1-12 gives +1, 13-16 gives +2, 17-19 gives +3, and 20 gives +4 set.

### Gremlin Wand

This wand is often a stout shaft of mahogany or ebony some 18 inches long, tipped with a wooden claw into which is set a sphere of quartz. It has three uses.

First, the wand can detect gremlins. It does this automatically within 120 feet (if there is more than gremlin in range it detects the nearest). Within the sphere, a small blue glow indicates the direction of the gremlin, and the closer the gremlin, the stronger the glow. This does not use any charges from the wand.

Second, the wand provides protection against the Chaotic aura effects of gremlins. The wand holder gains +4 on any saving throws he must make for himself or his equipment. If none would normally be allowed he gets one anyway (but without the +4 bonus). This function uses no charges.

Third, if a charge is drawn from the wand, all gremlins in a 30-foot radius from the wand must save vs. Wands or flee in *fear* for 1d4 turns. They will not willingly approach within 300 feet of the spot from which they were forced to flee for 5-8 weeks.

Once all charges have been used from the wand it decays to dust and is useless.

### Lance of Piercing

In the hands of anyone other than a pegataur, this vicious fighting weapon will act as a mere *lance* +1. If carried by a pegataur, the lance becomes a full *lance* +5, and on a natural 'to hit' die roll of 19 (if this strikes the target) or 20, the lance causes triple normal damage (3-30, +5 for the weapon, plus any Strength or other magical bonuses as appropriate).

### Troppenribb's Goggles

These priceless flying goggles enable the wearer to see up to 2,400 feet away regardless of hindrances such as clouds, mist, a hail of frogs, a spell such as *obscurement*, or any other similar obstacle (but not through solid objects). Beyond that point, normal vision takes over. The wearer of these goggles gains a +1 bonus to Charisma in any encounters with members of the Top Ballista flying school.

### Starting Resources

Like other characters, skydwelling creatures should begin with the equivalent of 30-180 (3d6x10) gp value. This need not all be in the form of coins, and could easily be in the form of jewels or art objects.



# The Flying City

*This place is safe, right? It sure looks like a long way down to the ground.*

—first time visitor to Serraine

*Suspended high above the surface of the floating city, green-faced visitors clutch the arm rests of wildly swinging chairs as they whip past the city's landmarks. In the foremost chair, an excited gnome stands in his seat, barely holding on.*

*"Whoaaaaaa! Fun in a fast skychair ride isn't it? Oh my, did you really eat that much for dinner? Very unwise. Still, 'tis a great way to be seein' our city. Past the Tumblin' Fields, our excellent boating lake — fishing licenses on application — and wheee! — over the Hangin' Gardens. Look at those tabi playing in the Wurzeltrees. We'll be shortly arrivin' at the Singin' Winds hostelry for those who be stayin' there. Ye may also be wantin' to have a look at the old rocket silos. All gnomish work, I'm pleased to say. Don't this be the most glorious place in the entire world! Waaaahoooo!*

*"Oh! If ye wish to visit the faenare Wind Towers, please be keepin' away from the frontal jet ducts, ladies and gents. No, you can't actually fall in, but it can get a might warm there! How do they work? Well, there be a question. I'll do me best to answer it. Air be drawn in and superheated by fire plasms which be suspended in a polygonal multiplane metafracture. With me so far? The superheated air be drawn down through a dimensional nexus and, along the way, heat's conducted through adamantite pipin' to provide the hot water ye'll be enjoyin' in yer baths tonight. The superhot air finally whirls through one of the localized tumblin'-field vortices, and thus both keeps the city in the air and provides backward thrust. It's a system with a lot of inertia in it, but it keeps us movin' forward — and from crashin'! Any more questions?*

*"Serraine, the flyin' city, is indeed a fabulous and bizarre place, and as a tourist ye'll be gettin' a full guided tour of it, startin' with its history."*

## History of the Flying City

Around 2900 BC, the Immortal Garal Glitterlode created the gnomes. Garal created only a few of this new race, fearing that other Immortals might become concerned if another populous race should appear in a young world. Still, the gnomes began to spread slowly throughout Rockhome and the Northern Kingdoms, with some of the most intrepid heading through what is now Darokin into Alnheim and northern Karameikos.

Garal gave his creations a more quirky sense of humor than the dwarves possessed and an impractical curiosity. These traits reached a zenith, of sorts, in the legendary gnomish artisan Glimreen Gemeye. In 251 BC, Glimreen stumbled upon a relic of Blackmoor technology, scattered by the cataclysm of 3000 BC. His clan soon began meddling and experimenting. The relic was a technological-magical device which

Glimreen understood as a jet-drive unit. It combined a thrust-driving principle with artificially reversed gravity (these are not Glimreen's terms, though).

Glimreen and his people at once had a vision of what they might achieve. With the dwarves claiming Rockhome as their own, Alnheim's elves jealous of their land, and the beginnings of conflict between the Traldar and the Hutaaka brewing to the south; the gnomes saw a wonderful chance for escape. Craftsmen began planning, designing, and building tiny models.

Around a century later, the immense scaffolds and instruments needed to begin work on a flying city had been assembled in a valley well-hidden by illusions and traps. Not too long after, the gnomes were found and approached by a human sage. The sage offered information about Blackmoor, magical skills which could aid the gnomes, and a source of dextrous and intelligent help. The gnomes reacted favorably, so Retchfoot the nagpa dropped his *polymorphed* disguise (Retchfoot wanted to be judged by what he had to offer, not his appearance). Though uncertain, the gnomes allowed the nagpa a trial period. His help proved most useful and soon a small group of refugee nagpa and tabi arrived to help out.

The next visitors, around 91 BC, were a pair of sphinxes from the lands around Tel Al Kebir. As collectors of Blackmoorabilia, they had traced the gnomes' relics by magical scrying. The nagpa were also important. With their scholarly outlook and resources, they were able to intrigue and befriend the sphinxes. The sphinxes offered magical skills as assistance, and from their own knowledge of Blackmoor assisted the gnomes in the proper use of the relics. This reduced the crash rate for prototypes by 72% inside a decade.

The shell of the city, around half its present size, was completed in 14 BC. The jets were installed, but delicate levitation tests showed serious gaps between theory and application. A series of twiddles and tweaks did nothing to solve the difficulties. Finally, in AC 9, a formal approach was made to a clan of refugee faenare who sought sanctuary from a powerful enemy. Protection was offered in return for the help of a windsinger who used his skills to summon air elementals, which had previously been too unpredictable and dangerous. The faenare took years to decide, but finally agreed. Soon, a smooth passage of air into and through the ducts was achieved.

The superstructure quickly developed as *levitation* tests were carried out successfully. The Great Library was started at this time (AC 16) — a work which was to take over 75 years to complete.

The defense of the flying city now became an urgent matter. The gnomes and their co-workers realized that many creatures might desire their city, and a stern defense would be necessary. First, pegataur mercenaries were hired, the ancestors of the pegataurs who now dwell in the city. An ingenious Arch-mage was hired to build special weapon batteries on the leading edge of the city. His genius was stilled forever by a secretive group of nagpa who feared that he would speak of what

he had seen. Even today, the guns bear the mage's name — *Ack-Ack*. Since gnomes deemed flying mounts unreliable, work was begun on flying machines to drive enemies away at a distance — giving birth to the Top Ballista Flying Academy.

An interrupted chase brought a pair of astronomer mages and a scream of harpies to bolster city's defenses. The mages became aerial spellcasters and the harpies used their *charm* touch to keep monsters away at a distance. Protected by gnome-wicca *invisibility* and such spells as *bless*, *haste* and the *like*, they became a formidable defense unit.

At last, a small step for a gnome but a massive leap for gnomekind . . . the flying city rose from the ground on 1 Ambyrmon, AC 39, on a test *levitation* lasting 10 minutes and a short flight of a few hundred yards. The following day, Serraine rose majestically into the heavens, a bearing of south-south-east was determined in the Air Control Tower, and some 1100 highly excited, semi-delirious gnomes took off with their motley collection of fellow travelers.

In the intervening years, the flying city has traveled all over the Known World. At first, it was necessary to land at fairly frequent intervals to take on food and water, but after a time the cloud clippers were built to deal with such problems and the city remained permanently airborne. Extensions were built in flight and the population grew slightly. Somewhere along the way gremlins and other pests snuck on board, including the occasional stowaway in a cloud clipper.

### Locations in the Flying City

This section is a guide to the districts and major buildings and areas in the city. A discussion of the society and politics of the place — and the utter chaos of government — follows later.

It is almost impossible to do justice to this weird place in words (which is why there is a large fold-up map and figures showing it). The styles of construction are a varied hodgepodge. Most buildings are made of tough wood magically protected against fire and electrical attacks. Exceptions are noted. The superstructure is made of metal (there are zillions of riveted and bolted girders everywhere) which is covered with woods and even earth, gravels, or water in various places (see details for individual areas).

Special features of the city are the skychairs and the *Ack-Ack* guns, which are plentifully distributed around the city. Details of these follow a description of individual areas.

**1. Landing Strip:** All incoming and outgoing flights by cloud clippers and other air craft leave from or arrive here. This strip is made of an asphalt-like substance covering metal. The strip is supported from the mainframe by immensely tough adamantite bolting and major support pillars. Craft leaving/arriving here are waved on or off by gnomes clad in official powder-blue uniforms with huge signalling flags.

**2. Immigration Control:** This large wooden hut houses one or two elderly and irritable gnomes and an enormous sprawl of filing cabinets, tables, rosters, ledgers and the like. Each arrival is asked to state identity and is touched on the forehead by a gnome to establish if the person is lying (the magical wand turns red and shrieks "*FIBBER!*" if a lie is being told). The gnome looks up the name in a Book of Undesirable Persons (one for each race). Unwanted immigrants are put on the next cloud clipper to the ground immediately.

Customs checks are made and taxes are levied on gems, jewels, magical items (a *wand of magic detection* is used), spellbooks, rare furs and spices, etc. If the cloud clipper has brought in a merchant with many goods for sale, extra gnomes will be on hand to help with this. Otherwise, it takes 1d4 hours for a group of 10 people (usual cloud clipper capacity) to get through here!

**3. Inquiries Office:** This functional but comfortable office holds 2-4 gnomes from the Bureau of Public Works, who help with question that visitors may have about taxes, immigration, hostelries, sights of the city, local laws, and such topics. They are an excellent plot device for the DM to give information about events and places in the city he'd like player characters (or creatures) to see (or avoid). They do not discuss any 'restricted' information (e.g., the Top Ballista school) since they don't know any.

**4. Air Traffic Control Tower:** Populated by a dozen gnomes staring into *crystal balls*, this four-storey building is used to keep track of incoming air craft and anything else in the vicinity. Using *crystal balls*, Task Group A monitors the air from 1,200 feet up to one mile away, Task Group B monitors the air within a 1,200-foot radius of the city. In case any *crystal ball* malfunctions there is a permanent cluster of *wizard eyes* atop the tower, a bizarre sight for anyone *detecting invisible*. The gnomes here are famous for smoking heavily, drinking gallons of coffee and not wearing their uniforms (black and gold) at all times, and suffering lots and lots of stress.

**5-8. Top Ballista Flying School:** These buildings are dealt with in a later section.

**9. Tavern, The Skypilot:** This is where the off-duty regular pilots (and, less often, an officer) from the 1st or 2nd Squadrons will drink. It is full of gruff gnomes (and other creatures; see the "Top Ballista" section) in leather jackets, their goggles nonchalantly hanging around their necks, smoking cigarillos and drinking hard liquor. There will also be a few human and other pilots here. The place is heavy with the smell of liquor, smoke, leather jackets and the apparent total lack of deodorants. There will also be a number of *wannabees*, young gnomes wide-eyed at tales of aerial prowess and combat who want to become cadets, and likewise females commonly known as '*airheads*' — their heads are full of thoughts of airmen. The DM will be able to expand on this location after reading the "Top Ballista" section.

**10. Cloud Clipper Hangar:** Cloud clippers are here when not flying, and 1-4 gnome mechanics (and possibly a gremlin or two) will be here during working hours.

**11. Gnome Quarter:** While gnomes are found all over the city, this area of large/average 1-3 storey homes is almost exclusively occupied by well-to-do gnomes and some of the most prosperous "scroll-shuffling" gnomes.

**12. Artisans Quarter:** The 1-4 storey buildings here are the residences and workshops of gnome artisans and a smattering of others — a few faenare, elves and humans can be found here. Leatherworking (on finished, tanned leather), crystalworking, sculpting, luxury vellum making, cloth spinning from Serraine silkworms, and similar 'upscale' crafts are carried on here. It is an excellent place to buy goods for later trading.

**13. Stompri's Tower:** This very tall (110 feet) tower is the home of a Cloud Giant, Stompri Mistclad, as the 22-foot-high door might suggest. Stompri was initially *charmed* by a harpy, and after this wore off decided that he liked the little people in the city and wished to stay. It also gave him the chance to escape a variety of social difficulties he was having. He is valuable to the city for his ability to carry very heavy weights and objects around and to lob rocks on to anything hostile trying to approach from underneath to evade the *Ack-Ack guns*. He is shy and retiring, and unusually gentle for a giant.

**14. Imperial Hostelry:** This superb 10-storey building has 120 guest rooms, 40 single guest rooms and 80 double occupancy rooms. Its level of service is superb, and the guest here will want for nothing. The prices are equally fabulous. Charges per person for a room for one night (including breakfast) are: single, 12 gp and double, 9 gp. This place is worth it!

The proprietor, *Leni Narayan*, is a beautiful and charming human lady, much admired in the upper crust Serraine society (even by nagpa). Dashing air pilots regularly write aerial love notes to her with their exhausts. Leni is much less innocent and gracious than her appearance suggests. More information about her can be found in The "Personalities" section.

**15. Skychair Depot:** This is where skychairs are housed when not in use. It has maintenance and building facilities. Oily gnome mechanics (with 1-4 kobolds and a gremlin or two) are here at most times.

**16. Upper-class Residential Quarter:** Serraine has something of a class structure, and the upper crust live in the fine 1-2 storey houses and villas here. Unlike most areas, there are small trees and shrubs in abundance here, and even the occasional pet cat. These are usually kept by the cat-like tabi as companions and are thus known as '*tabi cats*'. The quality of the gravelled paths, the guttering and drainage, and similar amenities is very good here. The villas may have elements of marble, onyx, obsidian and similar luxury materials in their construction. The home of the famed master sage Horrobin has for its roof the mother-of-pearl decorated shell of a small dragon

turtle! These homes are occupied by gnomes in exalted positions of public service, many nagpa scholars and teachers, the most esteemed master craftsmen, and one or two mages and wiccans who do not live in the Onyx Tower. Tourists are not usually welcome here, and servants of the nagpa (tabi and homunculi) may hiss at them and throw over-ripened fruit. A surprising sight for the unprepared is the existence of undead (usually humanoid skeletons) shopping, gardening or doing villa upkeep work, at the command of their masters, the nagpa.

**17. Science Park:** This complex (partly indoors, but mostly outside) displays small working models (or small functional units) of gnome contraptions. It is designed to allow the young and visitors (gnomes treat them much alike) to play with simple devices to learn what fun gnome machines are. Among the exhibits are the steam megaphone, the electric barbering chair, Marrak Grommethandler's instant shoeshining machine (with discreet leg-shaving attachment for ladies, although it often doesn't detect gender correctly), and similar doubtful devices. More agreeably, there are air slides for children, tiny individual tumbling columns (see location 29 for details of this on a much larger scale), and a good outdoor cafe where tiny machines will cut your teatime cake into bite-size pieces (and, if you are unlucky, shove them down your throat too). There are always gnomes in attendance here in case of '*malfunxions*', as they put it. Admission is 8 sp, 4 sp for children, including a ride round the park in the fire salamander steam train.

**18. Plaza of Triumph:** This military parade ground is used by the city watch for marching, and pegataurs give displays of synchronized fly-bys here. Pegataur jousts take place over the plaza, and when these occur gnome traders with deckchairs and carts bearing fizzy cold drinks, hot meat pies, and the like offer them at inflated prices to tourists and gullible residents.

**19. Pegataur Eyries:** The pegataurs of the city make their homes here. They are the descendants of the original mercenaries hired to protect the city. They still receive a stipend, but are now assimilated into the society of the city. They are territorial creatures and do not care for intrusions without appointments being made beforehand!

**20. Shops Row:** This row of small shops sells all manner of knick-knacks and minor items, but dotted amongst them are one or two armorers, weapon-smiths, good furniture makers, and similar skilled craftsmen. The majority, however, sell goods which are either rubbish or fraudulent (such as a guaranteed used-by-Captain-Topcat leather flying jacket). A few thieves, and the odd adventurous tabi, lurk around here. Harpies may settle in the area looking for careless visitors who might be picked off, charmed, and eaten as a snack later.

**21. Labor Quarter:** Labor itself is regarded as noble by gnomes, but the occupants of this area aren't. The denizens of these poor homes, either low-rise hovels

or 8-10 storey grimy and neglected cloudscrapers, are either poor but decent gnomes or lowlife. Thieves, hungry harpies, lurking chaotic tabi, vile gremlins, and even a few orcs and kobolds on the run, can all be found here. Dull-eyed gnomes laze about smoking dubious substances in water pipes while drunken denizens listlessly turn cards over in fixed games.

The city watch rarely patrols here, but keeps a permanent presence along the western edge of this quarter, where a ruffraff-proof moat surrounds the Onyx Tower and its attached Halls of Acolytes. Labor Quarter, sadly, is a good place for thieves and little else.

**22. Gemeye Market:** A few shops here sell rubbishy goods, hoping to con visitors, but the majority of the stalls and small plazas here with their wagon-bearing small merchants sell spices, woods, grains and fruits and similar foodstuffs, small contraptions (of the sort found in the Science Park, and smaller), carved and worked items, and similar items. Prices will be 150% to 200% of those given in the various D&D® rulebooks, since much is either imported from groundside or crafted to a high degree of quality. Many city denizens come shopping here, meet in the street cafes which sell hot, sweet, dark coffees and herbal teas and very good sweet honeyed cakes. Oddly enough, a few nagpa have developed a real flair for catering, although they leave the task of serving to their tabi. This is a very cosmopolitan area of the city, where all sorts of creatures meet in amicable surroundings to talk and gossip.

**23. The Glorious Second:** The name of this tavern/hostel commemorates, of course, the date when the city finally rose into the skies. It is a boisterous, friendly place run by a married gnome couple, Melfrin and Gudrun Bjorgroksen, immigrants from Soderfjord some 45 years in the past. Their young daughter Griselda helps with cooking and looking after the six double guest rooms, which are usually occupied by merchants (but PC visitors might get lucky). Prices are reasonable for the sky city: 8 gp for a single, 5 gp for a double occupancy room.

The clientele here is quite mixed — like the markets from which they come.

**24. Council Offices and The Watch:** The council chambers here house the Mayor, city officials, and some of the city records. Details of the Mayor, and government, are given later in this section. The city watch have their watch house here, where there will be 11-20 constables at any time. These will be gnomes with 1-4 hit dice, plus a leader with 6 hit dice, all armed with shortwords, nets, and clubs, and dressed in leather or chain armor. The leader has magical +2 *chainmail* and +2 *shortsword*, and a gnome wicca of level 5-10 (4 + d6) will be here with a faenare shaman of level 5-8 (4 + d4) at any time.

There are jail cells here for troublesome offenders, though most folk here are well-behaved!

**25. The Great Library:** The triumph and glory of the city, the Great Library soars 280 feet into the air with its 14 floors, and 50 feet down into the sub-levels and basements (the west and east wings rise

only 120 feet but have 50 foot deep basements). It is a repository of knowledge probably unparalleled in the Known World, because it has been all over it. Collected here are evidence and records first hand: books, scrolls, papyruses, magical talking cylinders, flexible rubbery opaque spheres which telepathically implant knowledge into the reader's brain (and, for the fiendish DM, who knows what else . . . ), *crystal balls* with implanted *programmed illusions* which give the equivalent of modern video lessons, and many other strange and wonderful forms.

It goes without saying that the librarians here have developed an index so complete that it requires an entire level (the ground level) to itself. The librarians are mostly venerable gnomes. It takes 70 years of training to qualify. The head librarian, Matazumi, is a druj, a strange and disturbing undead entity, detailed in the "Personalities of the City" section.

The library is protected by powerful magics against all forms of fire or rotting or any similar attack on its precious records. It also has an automated miniskychair system which allows rapid access to any floor or vault of records. The staff guarantee to get anything requested which is not of restricted access within 10 minutes. A variety of contraptions have been tested here to provide assistance, none entirely satisfactory! Matazumi wisely requires that any gnomish invention be tested in isolation for at least 10 years before he allows it into the library proper. There will be no repeats of the *Skylofter's Marvelous Tome Sorter* disaster (even after 400 years, custodians are still finding the occasional shredded bits of the thousand or so books that disappeared into the sorter's cavernous maw).

There are tremendous precautions against theft here, including the magical pearly-opalescent panels lining the huge revolving mahogany-and-glass doors at the only (main) entrance, which magically count any library items that the person entering or leaving has (and communicate this to the senior desk librarian). If a record item is lost, magical scrying of the highest level will be used to find and recover it.

Work desks are provided on all floors. Silence is compulsory in reading rooms and away from talking items (many librarians are shamans with multiple *silence 15' radius* spells), and the nicest place is the Old Tearoom on the 7th floor, where the chef creates a wondrous toasted cloudberry muffin at teatime.

The DM can use this location as a source of information needed by PCs to gain rare skills, especially those relating to lost languages or knowledge, very obscure subjects, and the like. Getting a library ticket from Matazumi may not be entirely simple (or pleasant), however!

**26. Museum of Gnomish Crafts:** This is open from 10-2 each day, except for Lunadains, and is rather a poor collection of indifferent items and exhibits. Suffering from the appeal of the more vibrant Science Park, the curators have grown old and tired. It does hold some very fine gemcutting and jewelry exhibits,

though, and is a good challenge to thieves since it has several magical alarm systems and the like.

**27. Museum of Culture:** This oddly-named museum is actually a repository for the history of the city, which is illustrated with tapestries, paintings, sculptures, scale models, mobiles, explanatory texts, and a helpful and chatty museum staff. It is an excellent location for the DM to give a potted history of Serraine to the PCs while dressing this up in dramatized forms.

**28. The Glittersteps:** These represent an amazing achievement — of sorts. The steps ascend 80 feet, but the walker upon them does not actually have to climb. He simply has to will himself to ascend or descend, and then is whisked along on a gentle current of air, rising or descending. As he proceeds, gentle sparks and nim-buses of multicolored light play below his feet.

**29. The Tumbling Fields:** These are areas of artificial zero gravity which can be accessed only via the gates shown on the fold-out map. The area around the fields is protected by a force field, and there is an effective ceiling of 200 feet above city level. In the fields (admission 1 sp) a creature can will itself to rise or fall, using gravity null spots and field modulations to push himself around. Tumbling and falling, creatures will impact on each other, the force field, or the city ground level with the delicacy of a feather. Tabi and young gnomes in particular adore playing here, shrieking with delight as they tumble, fall and whirl about. Real experts can execute the most amazing swallow dives, corkscrew moves, multiple flips and somersaults. Walking across the ground to return to a gate can be accomplished normally, though at only  $\frac{1}{4}$  normal move rate.

**30. The Hanging Gardens:** These spectacular gardens have samples of all plants which can live at heights (but no plant monsters). Some of the plants are magically suspended in mid-air, fed by air sacs which absorb nutrients. They are attended by gnomes and pegataur druid-shamans. Tabi adore playing here and a number of them actually live here. It is also a sort of “lovers land” for the faenare.

**31. Lake Glitterlode:** The waterfall here descends with real violence until it reaches one foot from the lake, where it magically becomes a placid shower. Water is driven up from massive tanks below the city to fuel the waterfall (and keep the city's water supply from becoming stagnant at the same time). Boating here is a real pleasure. Fishing licenses can be had from the Council Offices (5 sp per week or 8 gp per year) to fish for the trout and carp here. Rowing boats can be rented from a boat yard for 5 sp per hour.

**32. Picnic Fields:** A pleasing and gently scented flowery meadow, while this area is not a favorite with most residents and is greatly used by visitors. A variety of unsavory food stalls ply their wares here.

**33. Emergency Service:** Cloud clippers with vertical levitation ability (VL for short, usually referred to as “Veels”) are stationed here and rush to the rescue of anyone who falls off the city — providing the alert is raised quickly!

**34. Thestell's Hangars:** The large, shabby hangars here appear closed for business. Banging and workings can be heard from time to time, but no one knows what causes it, because when anybody thinks to check — they're empty. Some suggest they are haunted.

**35. The Singing Winds:** This is a fine hostelry, with bars, a restaurant with a superb faenare chef (the best sorbets in the Known World!), and 40 rooms: 15 single and 25 double. It is quiet and gracious, and guests here are usually human, elven, faenare, or some similar race. Gnomes do not often stay here. They prefer other places. The charges are (per person per night, with breakfast): 10 gp single, 7 gp for a double. The proprietors are two Darokin exiles who fell a foul of that land's intrigues: Saruman Eldenton and his wife Beatrice. They have three sons in their late teens who help with chores. Saruman is a good NPC source for a human perspective on the city.

**36. Water Tanks:** Above these are very odd structures: huge flapping riggings of amazingly thin spider web material that are enchanted to condense water from the atmosphere. The water runs along channels cut into the crossbeams of the rigging and down tubes inside the central pillars, and finally into the tanks. The tanks themselves are sunk 40 feet below city ground level and have very large storage capacity. Cool water from them is also heated from the jet ducts (44) to provide piped hot water for the city (and the workshops of the gnomes, etc.). The waterfall at the lake keeps the tank water aerated and fresh.

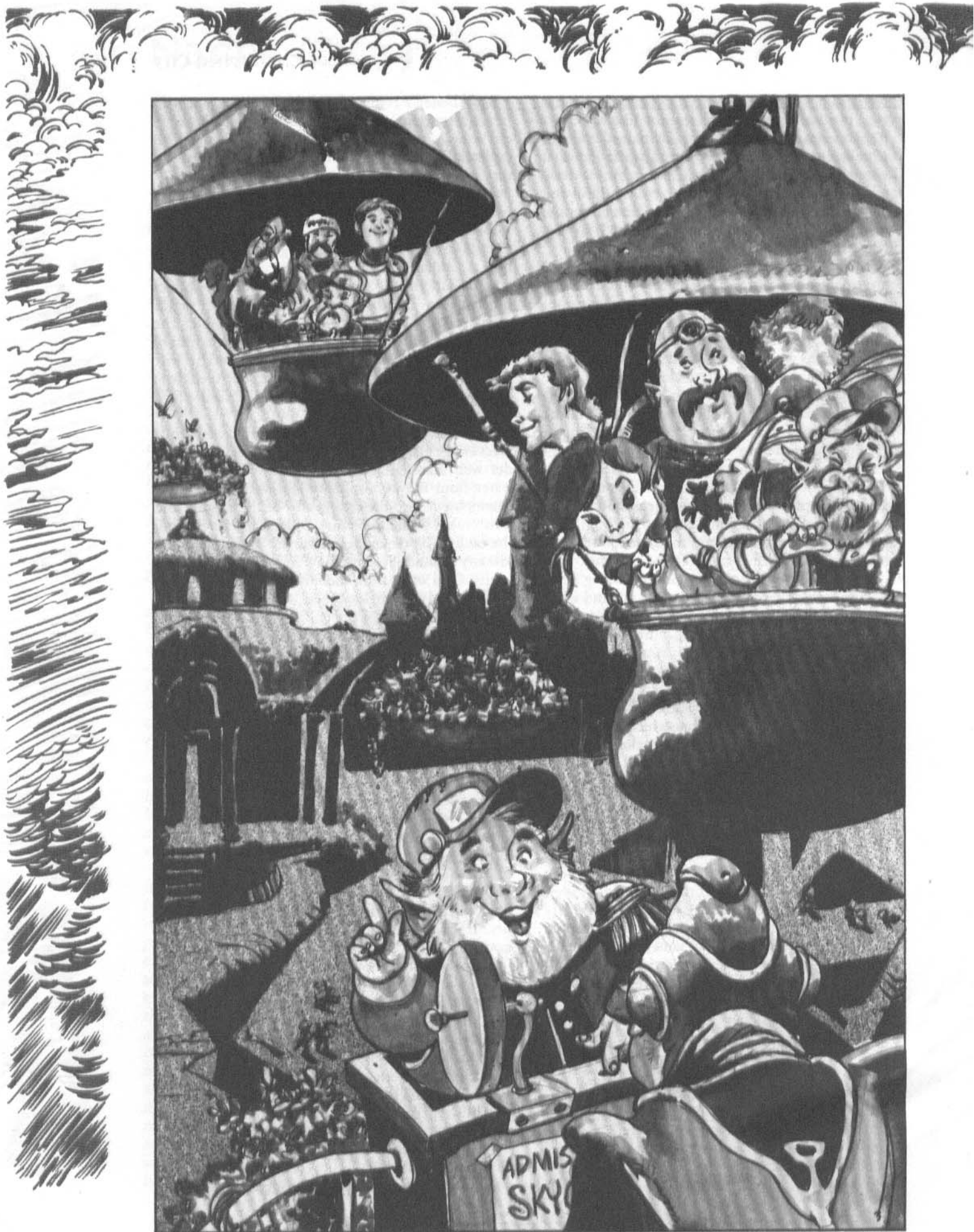
**37. Abandoned Launch Pads:** This long-disused launch pad is the final testimony to the attempts made by the gnomes to launch sky rockets to investigate distant planets. Rusting and twisted metal dominates the site. The old silos contain corroded, useless rockets. Gnomes still regularly use this area for testing dangerous and large machines. Innumerable ‘KEEP OUT!’ notices, gaily decorated with grinning skull-and-crossbones, surround the area.

**38. Wind Towers:** These are the homes of the majority of faenare who live in the city. Their homes are constructed of crystal and a rare quartz-like material which resonates and sings in high winds. The designs of these tall, slender, buildings are such as to create wind passages, resonances, and the like. These open, airy structures are arranged around a central tower made of much stronger crystal, magically toughened and veined with adamantite.

**39. Wind Organ:** The air flowing into this structure is funnelled and shaped by the faenare wind towers. A complex series of stops and valves allow the faenare to play this huge instrument to create loud, but ethereal, haunting music, in conjunction with the colonnades (see below). At least 20 faenare are needed to play this organ, and recitals are publicly announced well in advance.

**40. Colonnades:** These tall, delicately fluted, and variably-shaped tall sculpture columns of translucent crystal amplify and add harmonics to the sounds cre-





ated by the wind organ. It is possible to stand touching the colonnades and have sound conducted directly through one's bones in addition to through the air, an ecstatic and extraordinary experience.

**41. Sphinx Halls:** The city's sphinx population dwells here, at its very edge. Their monumental communal home is an amazing multilevel jumble of exhibits, collections, trivia, recorded riddles, obscure knowledge, and much else in like vein. Inside, all levels, halls and towers are linked by a single, multi-storey passageway (think of a tall Gothic cathedral with a few twists and turns). Sphinxes like to practice their roars over the edge of the city, avoiding stunning anyone within it — roars which can be heard as far away as the Great Library (a source of immense annoyance to Matazumi and his staff).

**42. The Onyx Tower:** This four-storey, 75-foot tower with basements is home to a small group of human mages and a few gnomish wiccans who receive training, and locate and learn new spells, and so on. There are some half a dozen mages here at any time, of which the most notable is *Erik Helsing*, a mage from Glantri (for details see the "Personalities of Sky City" section). The mages assist the gnomes with their experiments, and also with the defense of the city should the need arrive.

**43. Halls of Acolytes:** The term 'acolyte' here is used to mean anyone beginning a magical career (or in the early stages of this), and the halls usually have 4-10 young aspiring wizards being taught by those in the Onyx Tower. The advantages over training elsewhere are that a full range of spells is available, no one asks too many questions, the tutors give individual attention, the lecture schedule isn't too heavy, the food is good, and there are servile kobolds to unpack one's bags and do the cleaning. The fees are hefty (twice the normal fees). However, vacancies here aren't advertised — they are learned about by word of mouth, and acolytes here don't advertise in case they find the place full when they wish to return to it.

**44. Jet Ducts:** There are four of these, working on the principle detailed by Branwys Skyratchet in the preface to this section. The front pair actually pass through the shallow front of the city and into its undersections, passing the superhot exhausts below the shell of the city. Those on the back are affixed to the stern with bolting and support bracing of unbelievable strength, and are actually outside the basic infrastructure of the city.

**45. Screw Propellers:** These are used to alter the direction in which the city travels. They are controlled from the Air Traffic Control center. These are huge rods of iron, connected to the Control Tower by ratchet and cog systems of amazing complexity.

## Private Residences

A few of these, relating to NPCs mentioned in the text earlier, are marked on the fold-out map so the DM knows exactly where they are!

**46. Horrobin's Home:** Horrobin, master sage, lives here with his nagpa and tabi and undead.

**47. Ferdy Rumbleguts:** The most agreeable of the gnomish wiccans to outsiders, Ferdy is an 11th-level gnome wicca who is prepared to rent *anti-charm devices* to people. An *amulet of charm* resistance costs 5gp per day, an *amulet of immunity to charm* costs 20gp per day. Ferdy has both rings and amulets with this function, but there is always a 25% chance that he is busy experimenting and cannot be disturbed for 1-4 days.

**48. Branwys Skyratchet:** The gnome craftsman has his home and work studio here, and has 2-5 younger gnome craftsmen with him at all times.

Alexene Cloudmantle lives in location 38, of course. With private locations, it is also important to realize that groups of gnomes in particular will often share communal living quarters above experimenting chambers and laboratories. Many of their homes have basements where experimental work and constructions are performed (no place is really safe from them!).

## Serraine and the Known World

Despite nearly a thousand years of traveling through the skies of the Known World, Serraine remains a well kept secret. Until recently, the gnomes of the sky city avoided open contact with the rest of the world. Even now, few know of the city — usually folks with money and a desire to spend it.

What follows is a brief listing of the Known World's reaction to the city in the sky:

**Alfheim:** Stops other than Alfheim City are discouraged by elven leaders.

**Alphatia (and colonies):** Used to weird things in the sky. No problems here.

**Broken Lands:** No stops in orc country!

**Darokin:** The merchants here love Serraine!

**Ethengar Khanates:** No problems here either.

**Five Shires:** No problems here!

**Glantri:** Studiously avoided by the gnomes.

**Ierendi:** Love the city!

**Minrothad Guilds:** No problems with the city.

**Northern Reaches:** No stops among these distrustful, violent barbarians.

**Rockhome:** Dwarves and gnomes get along fine!

**Thyatis (and colonies):** The empire secretly desires the city for their own purposes!

**Ylaruam:** The emirates dislike flying, unbelieving foreigners and their sorcerous black magics.



# Life in the Flying City

*Serraine's a nice place to live, but I wouldn't want to visit here.*

—attributed to Horrobin, nagpa sage and tour guide

## DEFENSE & PROTECTIONS

Serraine has 12 foot high force fields around the city perimeter, except on the pathways connecting the landing strip to the city. The intent is to keep people from falling off the city edge to messy ends far below. *Vertical Levitation* ("Veel") cloud clippers try to rescue folk who fall off the city!

In addition to the mages, wiccans, shamans, and pegataurs who guard the city, there are the special *Ack-Ack guns*: the *fireball* and *ball lightning guns* (used against big targets), and the deadly *magic missile guns*. They are housed in turrets around the leading edge of the city with others placed strategically elsewhere. Another battery of nine guns, three of each type, sits atop the Great Library.

A *fireball gun* can fire once per 5 rounds. It fires a standard *fireball*, with a 20' radius, up to a maximum distance of 1,200 feet. Damage caused is 12-36 points. Roll 6d6, counting any roll of 1 as being a 2.

A *ball lightning gun* can fire once per 5 rounds. It fires a ball of *lightning*, with a 20' radius, up to a maximum distance of 1,800 feet. The range of this is sharply reduced to a mere 180 feet during storms. Damage is 12-36 points, same as a *fireball gun*.

A *magic missile gun* can fire once per round. It fires two *magic missiles* at a single target. Range is limited to a maximum distance of 900 feet.

The mountings for these *Ack-Ack guns* are designed so that they can be pointed at any location outside or above the city (but not into the city!). A crew of trained gnome gunners operates the guns. They carry small magical rings which they use to 'key' the guns, enabling them to operate them. It is necessary for two gnomes to use their keys to activate a gun, so that a 'double key' procedure is used. This reduces the chances of a prankster (e.g., a *tabi*) easily getting the means to operate one of these guns.

The other major defenders, of course, are the Top Ballista squadrons (see the "Top Ballista" section).

## LAW & ORDER

So far as rowdiness and trouble within the city are concerned, an example of the personnel at the Watch-house has already been noted (see city location 24). A typical light patrol of Watch guards includes 3-6 gnomes with short swords, clubs, nets, shields and leather armor, with a 4 HD officer (same items but armor and weapon are enchanted to +1). If the Watch is warned of significant trouble, reinforcements arrive from the Watch house in a few minutes. In the event of truly serious trouble, public-spirited citizens (including many spellcasters and powerful pegataurs) will assail troublemakers.

A special note is that magic-users of 5th or higher

level who reside in Serraine will be expected to cast nine spell-levels of 'fuel spells' into the engines of the Top Ballista aircraft if so requested. Details can be found in the "Top Ballista" section.

## TRANSPORT & UTILITIES

### City Movement

The city travels at a cruising speed of 15 miles per hour, or some 350 miles as an average for a day's travel. It can hover motionless if desired or accelerate to some 22 miles per hour as a maximum speed (it takes 2 minutes to gain, or lose, 1 mile per hour of speed). For each mile per hour of acceleration or deceleration, the DM should roll percentile dice. If the result is 00 the strain on the propulsion system causes a malfunction. Until the gnomes can effect repairs (1d4 days), the city's speed will drop to 1 mph.

### Cloud Clippers

The cloud clippers are the primary method of transport between the Flying City and the world below. Passenger cloud clippers are aircraft conveying up to 10 people and a total of 6000 cn. of freight (including baggage). Mercantile "clippers" convey 1-3 passengers and up to 18,000 cn. in weight. A diagram of a cloud clipper can be found on the fold-out map.

### Skychairs

The skychairs (or just '*chairs*') are the fastest method for getting around the city. Skychairs remind one of a cross between roller-coaster cars and cable cars. They travel on rails which follow paths shown on the fold-out map. Each skychair has a gnome conductor who collects the fee (standard 1 sp) and can convey up to 11 passengers (no standing allowed).

Skychair stops are located some 15 feet above ground level (this varies slightly). A cage-elevator (operated by a counterbalance) moves passengers from ground level to the stop. Any given stop will have a skychair visit every 10 minutes or so during the day and every 20 minutes during the evening. Each track shown has chairs going in both directions.

Skychairs use electrical energy in the rails to operate like some street cars. Most folk who ride them for the first time regret not walking. Yet the gnomes who drive them are certainly adept at crying "*wheee!*" when whipping through a tight bend, and cheerfully announcing "*I didn't think we'd make that!*" Even so, there have been no accidents since AC 982. On the other hand, the chair rails are deadly. The conducting element inflicts 20d6 points of electrical damage.

Skychairs do not operate in storms. As a precaution, the electrical charges (developed deep in the Undercity from elemental-like beings of lightning lured and trapped from strange, unknown planes) are grounded and discharged.

Unfortunately for the dwellers here, the gnome

who devised and built these miraculous contraptions did not commit his work to paper properly, and died without passing on the secrets of his summonings of the lightning beings. Thus, the use of electrical energies in other spheres of city life has been frustrated to date.

#### Amenities

Amenities within the Flying City are well organized. Gnomish machinery and inventions supply the city with hot water (from water heated by the jet ducts and piped around the city), lighting (*continual light* spells on the skychairs, and on lamps elsewhere), and the garbage disposal, amongst other things. Garbage disposal is a new advance — throwing stuff over the side has brought heated complaints from lands over which the city has been parked for a few days. Gnomish machines on barrows are wheeled about by skeletons while servants dump bags of garbage into them. The machines disintegrate the garbage after carefully sorting it out, and keeping and recycling metal, rock or similar substances. The machines contain man-sized creatures, but smaller creatures (like gnomes) will fit. For this reason members of the Watch often follow these machines as a precaution against burglary. So far, the use of these machines has so far been restricted to the city's upper class.

The hostels contain a number of labor-saving devices. A machine which washes clothes, dries them, and irons them has just been installed at the Imperial. While it tends to fill the basement with steam, initial reports of its success are encouraging. Only 22 guests have had their clothes completely destroyed so far. The optional robe — and cloak — pressing attachment is currently under order.

#### Storm-Proofing

Serraine has taken important precautions against storms and violent rainfall, lightning, etc. Lightning conductors can be projected through roofs of the tallest buildings in the city. Lightning energies are used to feed the city's electrical beings. Rainwater runoff drains into the water tanks and boating lake. Of course, pegataur shamans regularly cast *predict weather* spells to check for storms, and *weather controlling* spells will be used to drive off any really destructive storm.

#### ECONOMICS & TRADE

The Flying City has one major problem — food. The fish in the boating pond, the fungi grown in the Undercity, and a few food plants grown in private plots do not go far. Thus, Serraine is forced to import virtually all its food. This is bought from the lands below, and ferried up to the city by cloud clipper. Since the population of the city is on the small side (see below), this system works. Shamans in residence who are 10th or higher level are also formally required by city law to memorize the spell *create food* for the use of the

city, although this is accepted in lieu of taxes. Only by special order can this demand be waived.

The Flying City also imports a range of other raw materials, such as leathers, coarse cloths and fibers, ores, uncut gems, and the like, since it has no way of obtaining these.

In return, the Flying City earns a living in many ways. Its artisans and inventors earn much-needed hard cash for the city. There are usually enough countries where it is fashionable to own a gnomish machine to pay a fair sum into the city coffers, for a start. However, the brilliant gemcutters of the city (who occupy a specific niche in the Artisans Quarter) are much in demand for cutting, polishing and setting exceptional gems and gems for magical work. Their fees are on the high side, but there are no better in all the lands of the Known World. Students of the mages also pay taxable fees. But above all scholars wishing to visit the Great Library and consult the priceless treasures of knowledge therein pay hefty sums for the privilege. Scholars and students also buy goods and other services in the city, of course, bringing more money into it.

In recent years, two additional sources of income have become important although they have both been the subject of heated debate in the Council chambers.

First is the acceptance of a small number of humans and elves into training at the Top Ballista school. Conservatives argued against it on the grounds that it compromised security. The vote ultimately went in favor of the new recruits when it was pointed out that these folk wanted to be trained, not to purchase aircraft. Humans and elves simply did not possess the kind of minds capable of duplicating these wonderful constructions. The outrageous fees agreed upon did not deter these rich would-be pilots, and have provided useful income for the city.


Finally, and somewhat to the shame of many of its dwellers, the city has turned to tourism. The Imperial hostelry has been largely rebuilt and revamped to cater to tourists, and small parties of visitors come for escorted tours of the city. Traveling on the Flying City can be a very luxurious means of getting from place to place, without having to worry about sea monsters, the vagaries of *teleporting*, being attacked by dragons and the like.

#### Social Life in the Flying City

##### Population

The creatures which are present in the Flying City (not counting those in the Undercity) have approximately the following numbers:

Gnomes	1,500
Nagpa	125
Tabi	250
Sphinxes	0-10



Faenare	80
Pegataurs	120
Harpies	30
Gremlins	40
Kobolds*	50
Orcs*	20
Ogres*	6
Humans	100
Elves	70
Cloud Giant	1
Tourists	60-300

Races marked with an asterisk are indentured servants; often *charmed*, creatures which managed to gain entrance as stowaways and were put to work on menial duties, roadsweeping and the like. The ogres perform heavy labor under the cloud giant's direction. The number of sphinxes varies considerably.

The races get on surprisingly well. They all take pride in their Flying City (save for the gremlins who are indifferent to the whole business). While gnomes understandably dominate the place, every race contributes something to this unique city. Serrainers are Serrainers first and anything else second so far as life in the city goes. Faenare would normally be hostile to the chaotic, unlovable nagpa, but each race recognizes the contributions made by the other.

#### Government

So, the affairs of the city certainly seem settled, and indeed little discord is apparent in the Council chambers. The city has an elected Mayor and 11 councillors who debate budgets, set city taxes, enact and enforce laws and oversee (some would say meddle in) all areas of city life. Currently (AC 1000), the distribution of the council is: seven gnomes, one faenare, two nagpa, a pegataur, and Erik Helsing of the Onyx Tower.

Serraine is not a true democracy. No one is entirely certain exactly how this council is selected. In the early days of the city, a committee sat down to decide on a procedure which would give all races a say in the ruling of the city while allowing majority voting clearly to dominate the council. To this balance was added the need to have consultative members from professional groups (such as librarians, mages, sages, and the like), and so on . . . . After 14 years the committee came out with 4,044 proposals in 25 leather-bound volumes which were unanimously supported by whoever had voting rights at the time, to save them the trouble of having to read them. Rather suspiciously, the records of who did vote at the time have entirely disappeared from the Great Library. There are a few nagpa and gnomes who have read these 25 volumes, but after nearly 1,000 years of minor amendments the law is so obscure that no one is absolutely sure how it works. However, the Council appears to be vaguely representative of the people of the city and no one complains too much. Almost everyone votes for some vacancy on the council — they're just not sure which — and most professional

and scholarly folk get an extra vote for a special-interest councillor as well.

#### Power Groups & Politicking

There are folk with ambitions and the desire for power in Serraine — Erik Helsing a notable case. The sinister Grey Front (a militant body of anarcho-nihilist nagpa) have recently started a campaign of sabotage around the city. Gremlins present constant hazards, and the inhabitants of the Undercity grow stronger and more numerous with each passing day.

There is also the matter of gnome clan antagonisms. The most important clans of gnomes in the city are the following:

- **Clan Skyratchet:** Some 120 members, in important positions of public office and among the elite of the inventors and master builders. The strongest clan, and one of which others are increasingly jealous. Most of these gnomes are of Neutral alignment.

- **Clan Stormkinder:** Some 100 gnomes, who work as master artisans and builders but not designers. This is an economically weak clan, but one with influence by virtue of its numbers and crucial position as trainers of young apprentice builders. Though relatively uninvolved in clan rivalries, other clans are courting this clans favor. Gnomes of all alignments belong to this clan.

- **Clan Firehand:** The name of this 155-strong clan emphasizes their long-time empathy with smithing and construction work of all kinds, but of late this numerous clan has become a dominant force in merchanting and trade. This clan has done most to expand the links of Serraine with the lands below, and is beginning to scheme a takeover of the city. They know this will take decades, but they are beginning to make concrete plans for conspiring with other clans. This clan is dominated by those of Neutral alignments, with a significant minority of Chaotic gnomes.

- **Clan Lodestar:** This clan is only 70 strong, but has always been politically powerful. There is a powerful representation of shamanism and scholarship among Clan Lodestar. It has a reputation as a clan of thinkers and leaders. Though allied with Clan Skyratchet, it is not always happy at the larger clan's occasionally unrealistic and self-serving ways of thinking. Most gnomes of this clan are Lawful.

- **Clan Goldhand:** This clan has 240 members, but little political clout. Most clan members are at best fair artisans, but are usually only humble workgnomes and industrial craftsmen. If this clan attempted to translate its numerical importance into political influence, they would certainly become the kingmakers. The gnomes of this clan are mostly Neutral, with Chaotic the second most common alignment.

Gnomes who do not belong to any of these clans belong to smaller ones, or are 'clanless'. For skygnomes, most unlike their land-dwelling relatives, being clan-

less is an acceptable state. It covers a variety of states, from being a stowaway or legal immigrant to being an artisan whose work is so time-consuming that he has no time left to attend to clan matters. Clanlessness may be a temporary state, for an artisan who is spending a fixed period in such intensive work. Land-living gnomes find this quite incomprehensible, but to the skygnomes it is entirely natural.

### Customs in the Flying City

The skydwellers have some common expressions which visitors should learn. 'A lark day' is a fine, good day when larks will fly in a clear sky, so that the expression "Have a lark day" is a common farewell with an obvious meaning. 'Giant's trousers' is a common term, quaintly enough, for large, fluffy white and white-gray clouds, and the muttered "Down with the giant's trousers" simply means that there are clouds below, and that the weather prospects are mixed (the clouds are below, but the sky isn't clear) — more generally, it is a noncommittal greeting. It does not refer to Stompri the Cloud Giant. "May your sprockets spark" is a greeting between gnomes along the lines of, 'may your tools do better than you expect' and thus simply, 'Good luck'. "Gremlins in your Meddling Box!" is an old gnome curse which is now used by anyone other than gnomes (the gnomes are too superstitious to say it; to invite gremlins anywhere is something gnomes are hardly eager to do!). It really means 'I hope you get confused and mess things up.' There are many similar curious sayings of city folk, usually based on the weather or gnomish activities or both.

### Important Dates

There are few dates of major importance in the city, but these are the exceptions:

- 1st of Nuwmont, Swiftmont, Fyrmont, Klar-mont; collection of taxes from householders, artisans, voters, and freebeings (some people may be taxed under more than one rubric). The tax collectors work from the Council chambers, and evading them is popularly regarded as a city sport.
- Ack-Ack Day (9th of Fyrmont); this day is a celebration of a great battle against a flight of red dragons in AC 911, in which the role of the Ack-Ack guns proved to be crucial. People wear a small red square on a pin. Many inhabitants can remember the events, of course, and will readily give accounts to visitors — which usually exaggerate the number of dragons, and their personal role in the battle.
- Crafts & Guilds Day (second Lunadain in Eir-mont): The day when gnomish craftsmen display their finished inventions for the clan elders to judge, and award prizes, most notably the coveted Gemeye Medal (after the chief architect of the city itself). Last year (in 999) the Medal was controversially awarded to a brass kitchen machine that grated cheese, sliced

zucchini, nipped the top off boiled eggs in egg cups while simultaneously preparing and serving omelettes and forecasting the day's weather. Exhibits are usually judged and put on display in the Plaza of Triumph.

- Freedom Days (1 and 2 Ambyrmont). These were the days on which Serraine first passed its major levitation test and then took to the skies. It is an occasion of great civic pride marked by pegataur jousts, fly-bys of by all air craft in the city (including formation flying by the Top Ballista squadrons), displays of marching and Ack-Ack gun operation, and many similar sights and pageants. Street-jesting gnomes, hot pie and fizzy drink salesgnomes, and pickpocketing tabi mix freely with the crowds. Even the harpies appear to enjoy events, possibly looking forward to ambushing a drunken reveler. Most of the population eats and drinks too much (the city's automatic pilot functions are tested on this day). The Grey Front considers this the optimum time to take over Serraine, but unfortunately (from their point of view) a skeleton crew of powerful engineers, shamans, and wiccans remains sober and very alert.

### The Undercity

This has been left deliberately loosely mapped so that the DM can design layouts here as he wishes.

The originally inhabitants of the Flying City were gnomes like any other gnomes — they liked to live underground. To accommodate this agoraphobia, the gnomes built apartments, work chambers, fungi farms, passageways, and even a few mock caverns (the space is there — the library has 14 basement levels!) beneath the city decks (as they were first called). These areas are interconnected with maintenance shafts, sewers, a now-forgotten subway system and other portions of the city's infrastructure. As the gnomes lost their fear of heights, they abandoned and walled off most of the Undercity to join the other creatures on the city surface.

Down in these gloomy realms, in the miles and miles of unlit corridors, narrow access tunnels, cramped ventilation shafts, and abandoned gnome villages, there dwell creatures of which most city dwellers are unaware. Escaped orcs and kobolds hide here. Gelatinous cubes, carrion crawlers, and giant centipedes scuttle and swish about. Some have been placed here deliberately by the insidious Grey Front. Rats, giant rats, yellow molds, and similar pests are common. Planar spiders are common parasites near the jet ducts, attracted by the five-dimensional planar fracturing inside the drive units. Worst of all, shapes which may have been wraiths, or even spectres, have been glimpsed.

Usually, these creatures dwell in the abandoned areas, but even the bravest gnome technicians keep a wary eye when working down below.

# Personalities of the Flying City

Details are given here for previously mentioned important characters. These characters may interact with the PCs, and also serve as examples of the backgrounds, motivations, and interests of similar creatures in the Flying City.

Only magical or unusual possessions are given; add mundane items as desired. The statistical format uses standard gamebook forms, but the acronym 'THAC0' (To Hit Armor Class 0 [zero]) may be unfamiliar. The number represents the minimum number needed on a d20 roll to strike an enemy with AC 0. To hit an enemy with AC 1 requires a number one lower, to hit an enemy with AC -1 a number one higher. THAC0 scores given here do not include bonuses for any sort of magic (including any magical weapon carried), but they do include bonuses for Strength or Dexterity. Likewise, damage scores are adjusted for Strength bonuses but not for any magical effects.

## Alexene CloudMantle Faenare Windsinger

*History:* Alexene is a windsinger back with her folk in the Flying City after long, exhausting (and unsuccessful) adventure to find and bring back the lost, buried *Singing Spire of Skyreach* in Alphatia.

*Personality:* She is currently happy to stay with her people, teaching them of her travels, educating the young, and talking with the shamans. She is suspicious of all nagpa and is very ready to believe the worst of them. She is particularly fond of elves, and reacts well to all Lawful characters. Alexene is rather other-worldly, and unfamiliar with the gossip and current events of Serraine. She has a fondness for silver, and has several minor silver jewelry items.

*DMing Notes:* She is a useful as a source of information, as a guide, or as someone who can help PCs gain the trust of the better creatures of Serraine. She may also wish to hire adventurers to aid her in a second attempt to gain the *Singing Spire* (DM will have to create all particulars).

*Appearance:* Alexene is 5' 4" tall, slender and graceful, with grey feathering unusual for its silver-veining in one so young (she is 28 years old). Her large, warm brown eyes and a strikingly musical voice befit her career as a windsinger.

*Combat Notes:* 7th-level Faenare; AC 1 (*sword of defending* +4); HD 6; hp 31; #AT 2 claws or 1 weapon; THAC0 14; Dmg 1-4/ 1-4 or by weapon; MV 120' (40')/flying 300' (100'); Save E6; ML 9/11/12; AL L; S 9, I 10, W 18, D 9, C 10, Ch 16.

*Spells/songs:* 4-1st, 4-2nd, 3-3rd, 2-4th, 1-5th.

*Special Abilities:* immune to harpy *charm*, not attacked by natural avians, speak with birds, permanently protected from lightning, summon eagles within one mile.

*Languages:* Cloud giant, Elven, Faenare, Fairy, Giant eagle, Giant roc, Harpy, Lawful, Skycommon.

*Skills:* Persuasion (Ch), Singing +2 (Ch), Storytelling +1 (Ch).

*Notable Possessions:* *Sword of defending* +4,

*shortbow* +2, 6 *arrows* +2, *arrow of slaying spell users*, *staff of healing* (17 charges).

## Branwys Skyratchet Clan elder of Skyratchet Clan

*History:* Branwys is a young clan elder of the powerful Skyratchet clan, who will undoubtedly be elected a Councillor of the city. He has his fingers on the pulse of the city, and knows a great deal about its goings on. He has friends amongst most of the races, even among the nagpa, where he has taken pains to befriend one or two of Neutral alignment.

Branwys is ever an influence for moderation. He seeks to defuse disputes by showing that the causes of conflicts are not as serious as the aggrieved/angered party thinks. His cool words are slightly offset by a tendency to be a little flippant, but most people agree with his judgements once they have had time to reflect on them. Branwys has friends in the Council Chambers and the Watch, although the enemies of his clan would love to see him discredited or compromised.

*Personality:* Branwys effects the role of a standard eccentric skygnome with a real pride in what his people do. He says relatively little about himself, but is noted as a joker — even amongst the gnomes.

*Appearance:* Branwys is a 3' 9" tall gnome, of medium build, with long slightly wavy black hair, weathered skin, brown eyes, and a splendid drooping handlebar mustache which he loves to twiddle. Usually dressed in plain brown leathers or similar work clothes, he has little time for pomp or ceremony.

*DMing Notes:* Branwys can be an important means to involve the PCs in secret intrigues, adventures in service of the city, clan disputes, and similar important forays into Serraine life.

*Combat Notes:* 8th-level gnome/8th level shaman; AC 1 (*gnome chain mail* +1, *shield* +1); HD 8; hp 32; #AT 1; THAC0 11 (melee)/10 (missiles); Dmg by weapon type (+1 in melee); MV 60' (20'); Save D8; ML 10; AL N; S 13, I 14, W 14, D 16, C 10, Ch 12.

*Spells:* 3-1st, 3-2nd, 2-3rd.

*Special Abilities:* 90' *infravision*, aerial detection skills at 70%, +2 saves vs. air-based attacks, save vs. Death Ray for falls over 10'.

*Languages:* Dwarf, Goblin, Halfling, Kobold, Lawful, Skycommon.

*Skills:* Fantasy Physics +1 (W), Machine Building +1 (I), Myths and Legend: flying monsters (I).

*Notable Possessions:* Meddling box, skyhook box with *magical skyhooks* +1, *gremlin wand* (20 charges), *potion of antidote*, *scroll of delay*.

## Horrobin Nagpa Master Sage

*History:* Nearly 240 years old, Horrobin is a respected scholar and sits on several obscure Serraine city committees. He is a fair, if unexceptional, designer of machineries with a reputation for conservatism. He is known to have considerable funds earned

from work as a scholar and teacher.

In truth, Horrobin is the secret leader of the vile *Grey Front*, a group of 10 powerful nagpa who meet, hooded and obscured, in the depths of the Undercity. The *Grey Front* plots the downfall of the city, and seeks its conquest with an undead army and the aid of imported mercenary mages from Glantri. The *Front* has just discovered the secret of Erik Helsing and will use blackmail to gain his assistance. They expect their plans to require a further 3-5 years to reach fruition. Their intent is to run Serraine as a slaveship of the air, using its military might to terrorize lesser nations and extort riches and magic.

**Personality:** Horrobin is very chaotic and evil, a quite cynical and cruel creature.

**Appearance:** Horrobin is a 6' 3" tall, scrawny nagpa with bulging, unblinking, cold, ice-blue eyes. He dresses in steely gray or midnight blue robes or cloak, with plain gray or blue jerkins and britches underneath. He favors strong (hobnailed) leather boots. Both his magical staves are of bronze-bound dark walnut-wood, strong and thick.

**DMing Notes:** Horrobin, with his sidekicks (below) and friends in the *Grey Front* — with their servants — make excellent bad guys in Serraine to confront the PCs with a wide range of trials and tribulations!

**Combat Notes:** 9th-level Nagpa; AC -1 (*ring of protection* +3); HD 13 +2; hp 90; #AT 1 bite or 1 weapon; THAC0 8; Dmg 1d8 or by weapon; MV 120' (40'); Save MU13 (+4 bonus); ML 9; AL C; S 9, I 17, W 14, D 10, C 13, Ch 9.

**Special Abilities:** *Animate dead* 1/week (up to 9 skeletons/zombies can be controlled), *anti-magic* (20%), *corruption* 3/day, *create fire* 3/day, *darkness* 3/day, *paralysis* (Lawfuls only) 3/day, *phantasmal force* 3/day.

**Languages:** Ancient Languages: Arcane Sphinx, Ancient Thothian, Old Thyatian; Chaotic, Nagpa, Skycommon.

**Skills:** Appraisal (I), Direction Sense (W), Fantasy Physics +1 (W), History: Traladara, Thyatis, Serraine +1, Ylaruam (I); Science: Astrology, Astronomy (I); Teaching (I).

**Notable Possessions:** *ring of protection* +3, *snake staff* (14 charges; Dmg 1d6 +1 or better), *staff of dispelling*, *scroll of seeing*, *potion of gnome control*, *efreeti bottle*.

### Metzelaar

#### Horrobin's Tabi Servant

**History:** Metzelaar is Horrobin's loyal servant, one who has been promised great power "when the revolution comes." Metzelaar is quite cunning and manipulative, and totally loyal to his master.

**Personality:** Metzelaar is a curious, fairly friendly tabi — very ready to talk to strangers (and pick their pockets under cover of *invisibility* later). He can be made to talk indiscreetly, however, if given a large bowl of fermented fizzy catnip drink!

**Appearance:** Metzelaar differs from most tabis in having fur which is "not so much golden as ripe marmalade", as he puts it (usually while rubbing his growing paunch). Otherwise, he is a standard tabi.

**DMing Notes:** He is careful to give little away as he speaks, while extracting information from those he talks to by feigning innocent, naive interest.

**Combat Notes:** 5th-level Tabi; AC 4; HD 7; hp 30; #AT 2; THAC0 11; Dmg 2-5/2-5 + special; MV 60' (20')/flying 240' (80'); Save MU7; ML 12; AL C; S 13 I 13 W 8 D 16 C 9 Ch 9.

**Spells:** 4 of levels 1-3, 1 of level 4-6.

**Special Abilities:** *rotting blight* 100' radius, save vs. Fear at +3, poison claws.

**Skills:** History—northern Arypt, jungle ecology (both I).

**Thief skills:** PP 65, MS 80, HS 80.

### Skrinnikit

#### Ulzaq Homunculus (CC page 26)

**History:** Skrinnikit is Horrobin's familiar.

**Personality:** Snarling, sneering, jeering and sarcastic — never a good word about anyone.

**Appearance:** Skrinnikit usually appears as a wizened horned gnome with scaly skin. He can polymorph into a bat or frog if he needs aerial or swimming movement.

**DMing Notes:** Horrobin gains Skrinnikit's regeneration power if within 10 feet of the Ulzaq.

**Combat Notes:** Ulzaq; AC 0, HD 3\*\*\*\*; hp 20; #AT 2 claws/1 bite or only 1 bite; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-4 + special or 1-4 + special; MV 60' (20'); Save MU21; ML 8 (12 when with Horrobin); AL C.

**Special Abilities:** bite drains Strength (1 point per bite), immune to electrical attacks, causes *confusion* 1/day, can *detect magic*, *detect evil*, turn *invisible* at will, *regenerate* 1hp/round.


### Erik Helsing

#### Master of the Onyx Tower

**History:** He is actually Igor Gorevitch-Vozzlany, a member of the Third Circle (Red Dragon) of the School of Dracology in Glantri city. A distant cousin of Prince Morphail, sinister vampire ruler of Boldavia (in Glantri), he has been on the run from the Prince's anger for some 25 years — ever since he betrayed a number of the Prince's vampire pawns to a pair of paladin vampire-hunters (foolishly, taking the surname of one for his cover). He now passes himself off as an Alphanian, having spent long enough in the Empire to know its ways. He avoids questions about himself.

Erik keeps to himself and gives lectures and demonstrations to his students, but avoids personal one-to-one supervision or tutoring. Others in the Onyx Tower believe he hides a guilty secret, but his amulet always re-casts *mind barrier* spells to confound the truth. In any event, most of the other mages have secrets of their own, and rightly suppose that Erik already knows more of them than they do of him. As far as the rest of the city goes, Erik is a decent mage,





## PERSONALITIES OF THE FLYING CITY

vigilant regarding the city's defenses (an aspect of his generally paranoid nature) and a profitable source of tax income for the city. Though none know him well, most folk think well enough of him.

**Personality:** Cultured and well-mannered, but tinged with more than a small amount of nervous paranoia. Avoids close contact or personal involvements.

**Appearance:** While Erik appears to be around 40 years old, he's actually 112, with a real fondness for *potions of longevity*. He's of medium build, with pale skin, dark eyes, and jet black hair, and high forehead. He has a hacking cough, and a slight tremor.

**DMing Notes:** Erik could employ PCs to recover some magical item for him (especially if it blocks *divinational* spells!), to get some component for magical research, to spy on other mages, etc. He might tutor a PC magic-user. He can also be used as the victim for Horrobin's blackmail scenario, which will either force his departure or force him to assist Horrobin — with adventure possibilities either way.

**Combat Notes:** 18th level Magic-user; AC 3 (*displacer cloak*, *ring of protection* +2); HD 9d4+9; hp 46; #AT 1; THAC0 13 (melee)/11 (missiles); Dmg by weapon type (-1 in melee); MV 120' (40'); Save MU18; ML 10; AL C; S 7, I 18, W 15, D 17, C 13, Ch 9.

**Spells:** 6-1st, 5-2nd, 5-3rd, 4-4th, 4-5th, 3-6th, 2-7th, 1-8th.

**Special Abilities:** Protection from Dragons, Dragon Tooth, Dragon Eye, Dragon Paw (see *GAZ 3 Principalities of Glantri*, p. 71).

**Languages:** Alphatian, Chaotic, Common, Glantrian, Red Dragon, Skycommon.

**Skills:** Alchemy, Ecology of dragons, Genealogy: Gorevitch-Voszlyany family, History (I): Glantrian, Alphatian; Mythology of Dragons, Planar Geography (from *Dawn of the Emperors*), Glantri Politics (all I).

**Notable Possessions:** *Dagger* +4, *displacer cloak*, *ring of protection* +2, *amulet of protection from crystal balls and ESP*, *elven boots*, *helm of teleportation*, *ring of regeneration*, *ring of spell storage (mind barrier)*, *delayed blast fireball*, *power word blind*, *invisible stalker*, *wand of polymorphing* (24 charges), *wand of magic missiles* (15 charges).

### Leni Narayan Hostess

**History:** Leni owns the Imperial hostelry with its luxurious accommodations, including her own luxury penthouse atop the 10th floor (defended by many traps). Arriving in Serraine as a stowaway at the age of 15, she began life as a minstrel, performing in taverns, on streets, anywhere a gold coin could be turned. Her talents and stunning appearance won her the favor of a love-struck mage from the Onyx Tower, who lavished gifts and presents on her — a trend that many have continued. Leni added to her growing wealth by subtle thefts, including her treasured *ring of gremlin control*. Leni's wealth and influence are extensive. Half the ruling Council seek *her* favors.

Leni is secretly allied with Chaotic members of Clan Firehand, forcing gremlins to interfere with the workshops and projects of the Skyratchet and Lode-star clans. Her substantial fees have enabled her to develop the trendy and popular night club in the hotel's basement. Cheering patrons beg and plead for her to sing, putting her in the spotlight of their attention.

**Personality:** Clever, manipulative, incredibly self-centered and lustful of power. Loves none but herself and is neither fooled nor impressed by flattery. If she has weaknesses, they are her desires to be the ultimate object of everyone's attention and to remain beautiful forever.

**Appearance:** Leni is tall, somewhere in her early 30s, with a spectacular figure and a shock of fluffy blonde hair. Green eyes, fine cheekbones and delicate skin are gently accentuated by the best Alphatian cosmetics. Black and platinum are her trademark garb.

**DMing Notes:** Leni is another NPC who can be used as a bad girl (which she certainly is) to lure PCs into intrigues, thefts, or commissions to recover stolen items held by her. Again, she will have pawns and allies (Firestar gnomes, a lovesick paramour with political clout, perhaps one or two junior thieves — bellboys at the Imperial, perhaps), making it hard to get to her directly. Conclusive proof of her crimes is needed to impress the authorities of her guilt.

**Combat Notes:** 16th level thief; AC -2 (*leather armor* +4, *magical cloak Changeling*; see below); HD 9d4+7; hp 41; #AT 1; THAC0 12 (melee)/10 (missiles); Dmg by weapon type (+1 in melee; no S bonus for *rod of parrying*); MV 120' (40'); Save T16; ML 11; AL N; S 13 I 15 W 8 D 18 C 13 Ch 17.

**Thief Abilities:** OL 78, FT 76, RT 70, PP 95, MS 72 (90\*), CW 102, HS 60, HN 90.

**Languages:** Neutral, Skycommon.

**Skills:** Acrobatics (D), Acting (Ch), Alertness +1 (D), Deceive +1 (Ch), Singing (Ch) +1 (NB: many of these skills come from *Dawn of the Emperors*).

**Notable Possessions:** *Sword* +2, *rod* +5 of *parrying*, *leather armor* +4, *Changeling (cloak)*, *ring of safety*, *ring of gremlin control*, *amulet of spell storage (with dimension door x6)*, *elven boots\**, *potions of blending*, *human control*, *invisibility (x4)*.

**Changeling Cloak:** A gift from another lover, this gives her a -2 bonus to her AC, a +2 bonus to all saving throws, and allows her to alter her appearance. She can appear as a humanoid of any race and either gender, up to a 50% change in height and weight. This is most useful to her on spying missions, and for sitting around in taverns in ordinary guise, listening for gossip.

### Matazumi Chief Librarian at the Great Library

**History:** Matazumi, a druj spirit, arrived in Serraine in AC 913, the result of a mis-cast spell of summoning by a mage dabbling in necromancy. Matazumi broke free, killed the mage, and started

buzzing angrily around the city, wondering where he was. Hit by a *power word stun* and *maze* combination, the disoriented druj was easily overcome and magically imprisoned. The Master of the Onyx Tower was reluctant just to dispose of the druj without draining its mind of any knowledge first.

Surprisingly, the undead horror was a remarkable student of history. Mage and druj shared mutual interests! At that time, a rash of thefts plagued the Great Library. Desperate to protect its treasured records, the city would consider anything . . .

A deal was struck. Matazumi agreed to accept a *geas* to be Chief Librarian for 200 years — to be freed and rewarded upon his release. Thieves found his presence a definite discouragement to further pilfering. After all, an unsleeping guardian able to treat intruders with instant magical death was a decided deterrent to casual thefts. Matazumi quickly settled into his new job, increasing his knowledge of history, and correcting errors in the Library's collection.

Only Matazumi can authorize new Library Cards, and an interview with him is necessary to get access to the place. Matazumi speaks slowly and with a deep, hollow voice. He likes frightening people. Frightened people are quiet people (usually). If scaring fails, he has *silence* (and even *hold*) spells up his sleeve. He does not use *finger of death* against irritating library pests, however.

**Personality:** Somber, laconic, purposefully frightening. Has a morbid sense of humor.

**Appearance:** A floating spectral skull, oozing ectoplasmic slime and radiating terror.

**DMing Notes:** Matazumi is undead and chaotic, but not actively evil. Boning up on history pleases him more than mayhem and slaughter ("*too much effort*", is his laconic comment). Use him for his shock/amusement value. He might even act as an intermediary between PCs and either City officials or members of the Onyx Tower, with whom he is on good terms. If he has a weakness, it is for a really good aged brandy (he can't drink it, but he likes inhaling the fumes through his sinuses).

**Combat Notes:** Druj; AC -4; HD 14\*\*\*\*; hp 77; #AT 1 or 4; THAC0 = 8; Dmg 2-8 + poison; MV 90' (30'); Save F14; ML 12; AL C.

**Spell-like Powers:** *darkness*, *silence 15' radius*, *cause disease*, *animate dead*, *finger of death* (at 16th level, 1 per round at will).

**Special Abilities:** poison bite, 30' radius spoiling effect (*Dungeon Master's Companion*, p. 37), automatically detects *invisibility*, +2 or better weapon to hit, immune to spells of level 1-3.

**Languages:** Chaotic, Dwarf, Elf, Faenare, Gnome, Skycommon, Sphinx.

**Skills:** History: Alfheim and elves, Alphatia, Dwarves and Rockhome, Gnome history, Thyatis (all I).

**Notable Possessions:** *ear-ring of paralysis* (casts hold person 3/day at 16th level).

**Special note:** Magic has been used to allow Mata-

zumi to control his 30' poisonous radiant effect, which he does not use in the library!

**Santarian Keltander**  
**Pegataur Mayor of Serraine**

**History:** Santarian is at the start of a three-year term, his appointment the result of a need for change after 18 years of gnomish predecessors. Previously, Santarian was a captain of the pegataur defense force for five years, and an organizer of jousts, at which he is quite proficient. His clear vigilance and his skills of persuasion and intelligence made him an appealing candidate for the job.

In fact, Santarian took on the Mayor's job rather reluctantly. He dislikes the Council chambers, and becomes gruff when proceedings drag on. He's much happier inspecting the pegataur defense squads, the Top Ballista squadrons, the *Ack-Ack guns*, or doing something equally active. Santarian is friendly to elves, and those of Clan Erendyl who visit can expect a through interrogation of clan affairs.

**Personality:** Noble, intense, honorable.

**Appearance:** Santarian is a tall (20 hands), heavily muscled chestnut brown pegataur blessed with a glossy coat and a long mane. At 30 years old he is in prime condition. His heavy blue headband with intricately embroidered elven sigils and symbols distinguishes him from other pegataurs.

**DMing Notes:** Santarian may use intermediaries to employ strong PCs to help the city, or may act against them if they are disruptive and may even be the acting judge if they offend against Serraine's laws.

**Combat Notes:** 11th level Pegataur/4th level Shaman; AC -3 (+3 *plate barding*); HD 10+6; hp 78; #AT 2 hooves or 1 weapon; THAC0 7 (melee)/9 (missiles); Dmg 4-9/4-9 or by weapon; MV 180' (60')/flying 360' (120'); Save E11; ML 10; AL L; S 18 I 15 W 10 D 13 C 16 Ch 15.

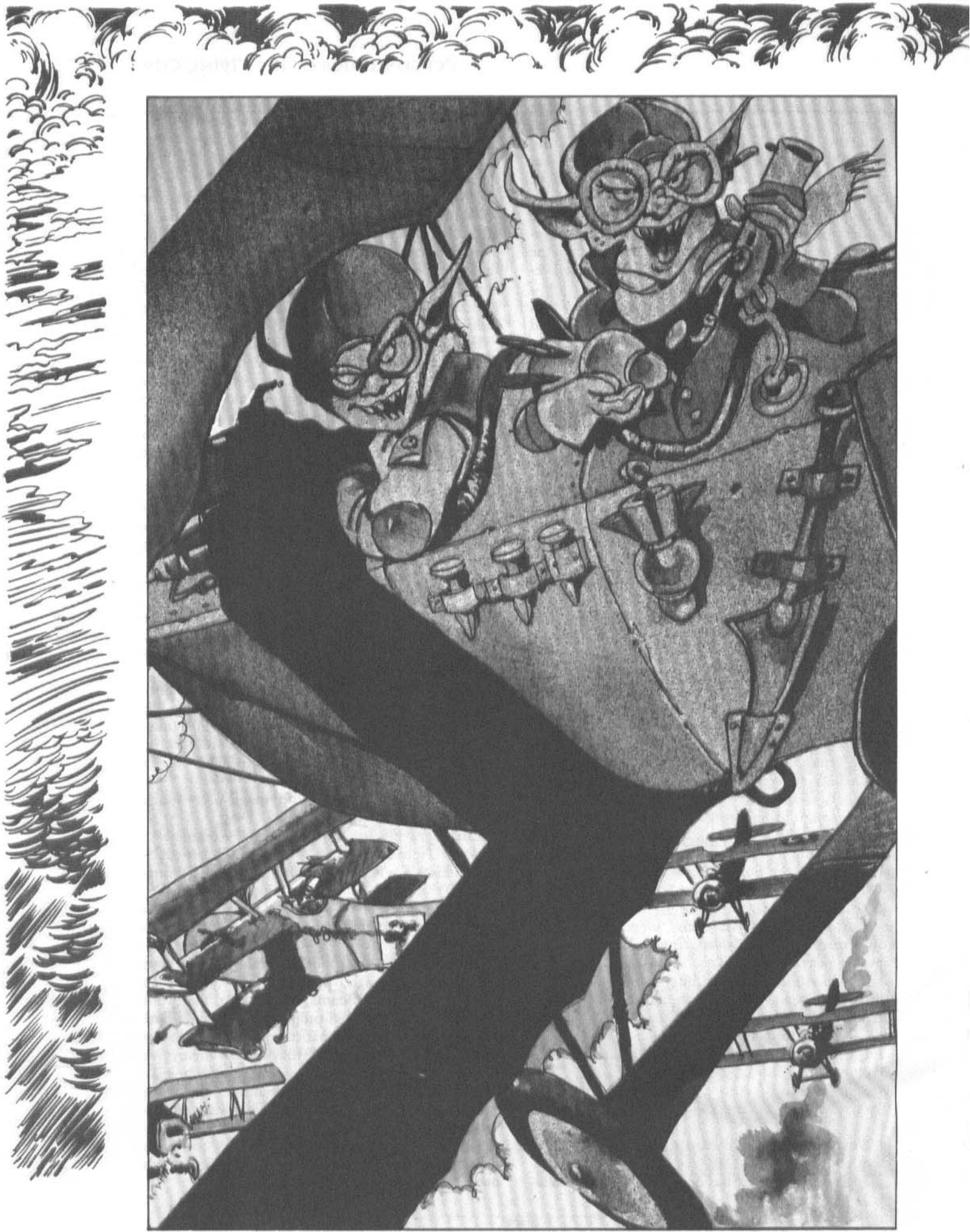
**Spells:** shamanic- 2-1st, 1-2nd; magic-user- 3 each of levels 1-4nd, 2-5th.

**Languages:** Elf, Lawful, Pegataur, Skycommon.

**Skills:** Fighting Instinct +1 (D), History- Alfheim's Elves (I), Persuasion (Ch), Stamina (C), Surprise (D), Survival- hilly/mountainous terrains (C).

**Notable Possessions:** Magical sword *Timesweep* (details below), *plate barding +3*, *potions of fortitude* (x2).

**The Sword Timesweep:** Santarian is never without *Timesweep*, his magical *two-handed sword +4*. In addition to its fearful damage (1d10+7), the sword possesses a trio of special properties. First, it is fast! Santarian does not automatically lose the initiative with this weapon. Second, he may *slow* an enemy five times per day (reverse of *haste* spell). Third, he may *haste* himself and up to six pegataurs or elves with him for three Turns, once per day. *Timesweep* is of elven make and has a grip of Clan Erendyl design (the current royal clan of Alfheim). Though Santarian does not discuss it, many guess that his family has owned the blade for three centuries.



# Top Ballista

*Top Ballista! Every youngster dreams of being the best in the bunch, of being a real daredevil flying ace. They're the only guys in the city who actually want to be attacked by dragons tomorrow . . .*

—Wylkys Firehand, airman Cadet, 2nd Squadron

The Top Ballista squadrons are the city's first line of defense, and its most renowned heroes.

## Locations

On the large fold-out map, locations 5-8 are home to the Top Ballista squadrons and their aircraft. These areas are all off-limits to visitors and non-military residents of Serraine.

**5a/b. Cadets: Dormitories.** They are the province of those fliers known as Cadets — everyone from the rank of Lance-Corporal on down. Those of higher rank maintain discipline among their juniors. Location 5a houses the Cadets of the 1st Squadron Polecats. Location 5b is home to the 2nd Squadron Topcats.

**6. 1st Squadron, Polecats:** This large building is mostly filled with the 10 Polecat (and three biplane fighter-bomber) aircraft of 1st Squadron. Half a dozen skygnome mechanics and maintenance gnomes work in the hangars. In the rear are Officers quarters, for airmen ranking Lieutenant and higher. The Squadron Leader's study is a large, well-appointed room, home to the brooding, dark-haired Richter von Manthofen.

**7. 2nd Squadron, Topcats:** Houses the 12 Topcat aircraft of 2nd Squadron. Maintenance gnomes and mechanics work here, and there are corresponding officers' rooms. The Squadron Leader's office here is occupied by the flamboyant, bizarre Captain Topcat.

**8. Officers' Mess:** This is a complex of rooms with a dining room, smoking room, map room, and the like. Normally for the use of Officers, but briefings for all the airmen may be given here.

## Top Ballista PERSONNEL

### Ranks

Table 16 shows the ranks of Top Ballista airmen.

Table 16. Squadron Ranks

Level	Kills	Rank	Special Abilities
1	0	Squirt	none
1	1	Striper	none
2	4	Corporal	+1 to Firing rolls
2	8	Lance-Corporal	-1 to AAC*
3	12	Lieutenant	+2 to Firing rolls
4	16	Flight-Lieutenant	-2 to AAC*
5	25	Pilot	+3 to Firing rolls
7	40	Senior Pilot	-3 to AAC*
9	60	Top Ballista	+4 to Firing rolls -4 to AAC*

\* "AAC" is an acronym for Aerial Ability Check.

**Explanations:** The 'level' shown is the minimum experience level required to hold the rank shown. 'Kills' means the number of aircraft the airman has shot down, including other planes, flying vehicles or ships, or dangerous flying monsters. Use some discretion here — chimerae, large hippogriffs, and dragons are all undoubtedly dangerous. Baby pegasi and hering gulls are not! The 'Kills' value is the minimum number an airman must have made *personally* to be reach that rank.

The 'ranks' here are quite a mish-mash. Airmen of Lieutenant rank (or higher) are *Officers*, those below are *Cadets*. *Stripers* are so called because they are allowed to wear a first stripe of rank on their dress jackets (as opposed to their leather flight jackets).

Special Abilities include 'Firing Rolls,' the 'to hit' rolls made when using aircraft mounted guns and other weapons; and 'Aerial Ability Checks' (AAC), which refer to the use of skills in maneuvering, bailing out, and so on. Note that a negative value is a *bonus* which improves the chance of making a low (successful) roll on d20 Ability Check.

The actual rank of *Top Ballista* is a special one. Only one Officer may be Top Ballista at any time. That flier may wear the "Hat" (much like a peaked baseball cap) with the legend 'TOP BALLISTA' emblazoned on it in big yellow letters. When there is no Top Ballista — like at the present time — the "Hat" sits atop a moose head in the Officer's Mess as an inspiration.

### Gunners

The rear gunners on biplanes have levels and ranks too. Their ranks are the same, except that the term 'Gunnery' is used as a prefix (though it usually comes out "Gunn'y" — so, there are Gunn'y Corporals, Gunn'y Flight-Lieutenants, etc.). The exceptions are Pilot and Senior Pilot, which are replaced by the terms *Gunner* and *Senior Gunner*. *Master Gunner* replaces Top Ballista. Gunn'ys gain bonuses to their Firing rolls one level earlier than airmen (as shown in Table 16), but bonuses to Ability Checks come one level later (and thus never gain a -4 bonus to these). A Master Gunner's Firing Roll bonus is +5.

### 1st Squadron Polecats

Squadron Leader, Senior Pilot Richter von Manthofen

2 Pilots	1 Gunner
2 Flight Lieutenants	1 Gunnery Lieutenant
2 Lieutenants	2 Gunnery Lance-Corporals
1 Lance-Corporal	1 Gunnery Striper
1 Corporal	2 Gunnery Squirts
3 Stripers	
6 Squirts	

**Support Staff:** 50 technicians & engineers. **Equipment:** 10 Polecat triplanes, 3 Pflanger-Skyratchet fighter-bombers.

## Top Ballista

### 2nd Squadron Topcats

Squadron Leader, Senior Pilot 'Captain Topcat'

1 Pilot	1 Senior Gunner
1 Flight Lieutenant	2 Gunners
3 Lieutenants	2 Gunnery Lieutenants
2 Lance-Corporals	3 Gunnery Lance-Corporals
4 Corporals	2 Gunnery Corporals
2 Stripers	4 Gunnery Stripers
9 Squirts	4 Gunnery Squirts

Support Staff: 40 technicians & engineers. Equipment: 12 Topcat biplanes.

### Richter von Manthofen

1st Squadron Leader

*History:* Richter is a heartthrob among the airheads of Serraine, but this ultra-cool, gum-chewing, clean-shaven human affects not to notice. At 27, he has been flying for five years, after pleading for 'political asylum' from a typical Darokin intrigue. He is engaged in a grim-jawed struggle with Captain Topcat to gain the ultimate rank of Top Ballista. Richter usually flies a Polecat triplane, but makes some sorties in his fighter-bomber with the squadron's senior Gunner, Oliver de Havilland.

*Personality:* Cool, unflusterable in combat. His macho hides an inability to make and maintain lasting personal relationships.

*Appearance:* Richter is 6' 2", of medium build, well-tanned, with short-cut thick dark hair and cool blue eyes (usually hidden behind the reflective goggles he favors). His leather flight jacket and britches, personal accouterments (cuff links, cap badge, etc.) are always bright and immaculate.

*Combat Notes:* Human 11th-level fighter: AC 1 (*leather flight jacket +3, ring of protection +1*); HD 9+4; hp 71; #AT 1; THAC0 11 (melee)/10 (missiles); Dmg by weapon type (+2 in melee); MV 90' (30'); Save F11; ML 11; ALN; S 16, I 13, W 9, D 18, C 16, Ch 16.

*Special Abilities:* +3 to all Firing rolls, -3 bonus to all aerial Ability checks.

*Languages:* Darokin, Neutral, Skyccommon.  
*Skills:* Alertness (D), Leadership (Ch), Fighting Instinct (D), Piloting +2 (D).

*Notable Possessions:* Sword +2, casts *fly 2/day*, Bumber-Chute.

### Gundal Lodestar

'Captain Topcat'

*History:* Gundal's nickname, 'Captain Topcat', is deserved. First, his squadron flies Topcat biplane aircraft. Second, Gundal is a gnomish weretiger (an unpublicized rarity). In the heat of battle, Gundal sometimes shapechanges into a weretiger of gnomish proportions (his flight jacket remains intact). It's a bit tricky using the controls with tiger's paws, so Gundal suffers a +2 dice modifier penalty to all Ability checks and firing rolls in lycanthropic form.

Gundal only transforms in situations of extreme stress (DM's option) and when he does he gains 2d8 hp and fanatic (12) morale. Gundal returns to gnome form as soon as the danger has passed, so his lycanthropy is known to few. Most folk give little thought to his nickname, and ascribe the oddly feline smell of his equipment to his ginger tom cat, Algy.

In weretiger form, Gundal's stats do not change from those which normally apply (saving throws, THAC0, etc.) except for the minor changes noted above.

Gundal flies a Topcat biplane fighter-bomber with his Senior Gunner (and cousin), Lewis Lodestar, also nicknamed 'Loose Guns' (and Algy too!).

*Appearance:* Gundal stands 4' tall — very tall for a gnome — with dark brown hair and beard, a crooked smile, and mischievous eyes. He is always attired in his gnome-sized flight jacket and tough britches. He usually has his magical goggles either around his neck or atop his head when not using them.

*Personality:* Gundal is a crazy, fearlessly manic gnome who cannot resist needless stunts and aerial pranks when flying. He is personable and friendly with his pilots, and at least polite to others.

*Combat Notes:* 9th-level Gnome; AC 0 (*leather flight jacket +2, displacer cloak*); HD 9+2; #AT 1; THAC0 9 (melee)/7 (missiles); Dmg by weapon type (+1 in melee); MV 60' (20'); Save D9; ML 10; ALN; S 13, I 9, W 10, D 18, C 13, Ch 16.

*Special Abilities:* 90' *infravision*, aerial detection skills 70%, +2 saves vs. air-based attacks, save vs. Death Ray for falls over 10' (at +3).

*Languages:* Dwarf, Goblin, Halfling, Kobold, Skyccommon.

*Skills:* Fantasy Physics (W), Fighting Instinct (D), Piloting +3 (D).

*Notable Possessions:* Bumber-Chute, *dagger +1*, *potion of gaseous form*, *Troppenribb's goggles*.

### Squadron Life

A typical day's work for members of the 1st and 2nd Squadrons runs much like this:

06.00 hrs- reveille, bathing, breakfast.

07.00- inspection of quarters by Squadron Leader.

08.00- day briefings (usually by Squadron Leader).

09.15- maintenance work on aircraft (pilots are expected to be familiar with how their craft work).

11.00- tiffin time. 'Tiffin' is a weird social function involving drinking herbal tea.

11.30- morning practice flights.

13.15- lunch.

15.00- afternoon training flights.

18.00- at this hour, officers collect to have a pre-dinner schnapps or sherry-like drink while the junior ranks nip over to the Skypilot for an ale.

19.00- dinner (end of day meal).

'Lights out' — the time the juniors are expected to be asleep in their dorms — is at 22.30 hours, or 23.30 on holidays.

"What? You be talkin' to me? Uh, that's right, I were a Cadet in 1st Squadron fer a time. I like planes, but I found I could build 'em better'n I could fly 'em, so I be a mechanic now. I get to fly the airplanes from time to time, testing 'em out, leastways.

"You ask about hats? Oh, sure, hats. Well, there be only one 'Hat.' The rest are 'covers.' Every airman has a personal flyin' cover with his nickname written good and big on it — 'Spider', 'Duck', 'Jaguar', 'Grease', 'Joker', 'Adder', that sort of thing. Squadron Leader Manthofen, he's got one with 'Glacier' — cool as ice, that man. Great pilot. He's goin' to be the Top Ballista, mark my words. He's a genius.

"It's competitive, fer sure. Each year only the best flier who started out as a squirt that year gets his name engraved on a plaque in the Officer's Mess. Some famous names are on those plaques, like those of Manthofen and Captain Topcat. You wanna get your name on there? Oh sure, you and a hundred others . . ."

#### Player Creature Squadronnaires

If a player wants to have his player creature or character become an airman, there are certain minimum requirements. The PC must have a minimum Dexterity of 13; below this he will not be considered for service. Second, the PC must have spent some time in residence in Serraine. Its defense forces are not going to accept someone who simply arrives in the city out of the blue, after all. This may be a good way to get the PC into an adventure in the service of Serraine, after which his service could be rewarded by his being given the opportunity to join a squadron. Third, the PC will still have to wait some time for a vacancy to crop up (as determined by the DM) and must somehow gain the favor of one of the Squadron leaders or, at least, his second-in-command.

PCs who manage to join a squadron will have to serve with it all the time unless exceptional circumstances arise. A clever DM will make sure that his adventures accommodate the need for air cover and authorized air transport. Otherwise, the DM will be continually making excuses for the airman to get away.

#### Flying Rules

These rules are a summary of those which appear in *Dawn of the Emperors*, and include details of the Top Ballista flying machines to which they apply.

#### Aerial Movement and Scale

When conducting aerial battles, using 20mm or 25mm blank hex-sheets to represent the aerial battlefield and the ground below allows the use of miniatures and scale models. Each hex represents 10' of distance. If play area is limited, consider using 5mm hex paper, recording the flight paths in pencil.

#### Air Speed and Maneuvering Factor

Each creature and air craft has an Air Speed — this is the 'Move' value for a monster or air craft. The Maneuvering Factor (MF) is the number of times in a Round a monster or vessel can perform a maneuver. Maneuver types are detailed below. All flying monsters and vessels must move in multiples of 10' between maneuvers — it's too much trouble to keep track of distances otherwise. Continuing a maneuver does not constitute starting a new one. Let's say an air craft starts to climb; beginning that climb is a maneuver, continuing it is not. If the air craft levels off to horizontal flight, that's a new maneuver.

#### Piloting Skill

The first maneuver performed in any round of combat is usually 'free' — if the pilot is conscious, and the machine intact and responsive, the maneuver is automatically successful. However, under some circumstances a Piloting skill check must be performed by the pilot. This occurs when:

- (a) the maneuver being attempted is the second (or subsequent) maneuver attempted in the same round; or
- (b) the pilot took one-tenth or more of his hit point total in damage in the last round; or
- (c) the rider or pilot has taken one half (round up) of his total hit points in total damage; or
- (d) the pilot tries to take off in a very difficult situation (hailstorm, fierce cross-winds, etc.); or
- (e) circumstances are present which, in the DM's judgement, would make maneuvering difficult.

The Piloting skill check is made by rolling d20 equal to or below Dexterity score (with any bonuses for multiple skill level).

*Exception:* A second maneuver (but no more) may be performed automatically by a pilot who has the rank of Senior Pilot or higher; his skills are such that two automatic maneuvers are allowed per round!

Failure of the Piloting check can mean any number of things; a chart of sample outcomes follows later.

#### Turning Maneuvers

Any turn up to 60 degrees (one hex side) counts as one maneuver. The number of such maneuvers which can be performed in a round is the craft's *Maneuvering Factor* (MF). More complex maneuvers (like U-turns) can be built up from single maneuvers: e.g., a U-turn of 180 degrees is made of three maneuvers of 60 degrees each.

#### Climbing Maneuvers

When a pilot wishes to climb, he trades in some forward air speed for altitude. Altitude changes are made in increments of 20'. Climbs come in three varieties: One-Maneuver, Two-Maneuver, and Three-Maneuver Climbs.

**One-Maneuver Climb:** This is a smooth, gradual climb at about a 30-degree angle. Break Airspeed into units of 20'. Any remainder is lost unless used for



## Top Ballista

a later maneuver this round. Decide how many Airspeed units will be used in the climb. Each unit yields 10' of forward movement and a 5' altitude gain.

**Two-Maneuver Climb:** This is a steeper, 45-degree angle climb. This climb requires two maneuvers to commence. Break Airspeed into units of 30'. Again any remainder is lost unless used for a later maneuver this round. Decide how many Airspeed units will be used in the climb. Each unit yields 10' of forward movement and a 10' altitude gain.

**Three-Maneuver Climb:** This is a very steep, difficult climbing maneuver. It requires two maneuvers to commence. Break Airspeed into units of 50'. Again, any remainder is lost unless used for a later maneuver this round. Decide how many Airspeed units will be used in the climb. Each unit yields 10' of forward movement and a 20' altitude gain. The DM may bar some monsters (and aircraft) from using this climb, as it places terrific strain on the creature or craft.

*Example: Richter von Manthofen wishes to climb in his Polecat, which has a forward airspeed of 450 feet per round. He has an enemy on his tail, and needs to get into a EAST climb. He heads straight into a Three-Maneuver Climb! Normally, this would require two Piloting skill checks (the first maneuver is free), because this climb needs three Maneuvers. But, since Manthofen is a Senior Pilot, he gets his second maneuver for free. He need only make one Piloting check, and with a d20 roll of 4, this is easily successful. His 450' forward airspeed is translated into nine 50' units — so he moves 90' forwards and 180' upwards in this round. The dragon looks up helplessly as Manthofen soars into the sun . . .*

### Diving Maneuvers

As with Climbing, there are three diving rates.

**One-Maneuver Dive:** For each 10' of forward airspeed, the craft moves 10' forward (as usual) and also loses 10' of altitude. Here, the Dive Rate is equal to the craft's Air Speed.

**Two-Maneuver Dive:** Here, the aircraft moves 10' forward for each 10' of forward airspeed and *also* loses 20' of altitude. Now, Dive Rate is equal to twice the craft's Air Speed.

**Three-Maneuver Dive:** This is a controlled plummet, a crash-dive. The craft plummets almost straight down; it does not move forward (or only negligibly so), but it falls 20' per 10' of forward airspeed, plus terminal falling velocity of 1,440' per round as well! If the fall is uncontrolled (e.g., the airplane is shot up and the controls don't work) then the rate of falling is just 1,440 feet per round.

### Partial Climbs and Dives

Pilots can decide to climb or dive part of the way into a round — e.g., they want to move forward some distance and then climb (or dive).

*Example: Captain Topcat's craft has a forward airspeed of 420'. He sees some hills about 300 feet away,*

*and — wishing to impress the onlookers — he moves forward 240 feet and then pulls into a Two-Maneuver Climb. He has 180 feet of forward airspeed left, which is converted into 60 feet extra forward airspeed and 60 feet upwards climb. At the end of the round Topcat has just cleared the pinnacle of the tallest hill as the squirts of his squadron cheer him on!*

Likewise, at times there may be some specific reason why a pilot may wish to climb or dive at a rate less than those noted. This is fine, but it will still take a Maneuver to enter such a shallow dive (or climb).

### Takeoff and Landings

Takeoff is always successful unless there are special circumstances (such as enemy aircraft shooting up the landing strip!) in which case the DM can demand a Piloting skill check. This is also true for landings, unless two or more maneuvers have to be made on the round preceding landing — a Piloting skill check must then be made in addition to avoid a botched landing, causing 3d6 points of damage to anyone in the airplane and 10 + d4x10 points of damage to the airplane itself.

**Damage to Aircraft** Aircraft suffer damage, from dragons breathing over them to being shot up by mad wizards with *fireball guns* or propeller-mounted cat-trop cannons. Damage reduces the ability of the craft to perform maneuvers and impairs the ability of the pilot to control it.

Aircraft have structure points called 'hit points' out of sheer convenience. Apply these rules when aircraft lose hit points:

**25% Hit Point Loss:** Any Two- or Three-Maneuver Climb in a single round needs an extra Piloting check to be successful (that is, 2 or 3). When this damage threshold is reached roll a d20. If the result is 20, the plane loses one MF (to a minimum of MF<sup>1/4</sup>\*).

**50% Hit Point Loss:** Three-Maneuver Climbs cannot be achieved. Two-Maneuver climbs need 3 successful Piloting checks to be successful. When this damage point is reached roll a d20. If the result is 18-20, the plane loses one MF (to a minimum of MF<sup>1/4</sup>\*).

**75% Hit Point Loss:** The pilot must make a Piloting check at a +4 penalty *every round*. If successful, the aircraft can be kept on an even keel, but cannot climb. If failed, the craft loses height in a slow dive (100'/rd). It can dive more rapidly, of course. When this damage point is reached, roll a d20. If the result is 15-20, the plane loses one MF (to a minimum of MF<sup>1/4</sup>\*).

**90% Hit Point Loss:** What's left of the craft loses altitude in at least a Two-Maneuver Dive rate. A Piloting skill check is needed to make any direction changes. Craft's Maneuver Factor drops to 1/4\*.

**100% Hit Point Loss:** Aircraft fragments plummet at 1,440'/rd! Get out the Bumber-Chutes!

● Fractional Maneuver Factors are possible. When a movement factor would drop below 1, it becomes 1/2 (or one maneuver every two rounds). From 1/2, it drops to 1/3 (or one maneuver every three rounds). From 1/3 it drops to 1/4 (or one maneuver every four rounds).

**Losing and Regaining Control**

If a Piloting check is failed, then control of the airplane is lost in some way. What happens? This depends largely on what the pilot is trying to do. The DM needs to consider whether the situation is stressful or mundane. Mundane circumstances are: non-combat; Two-Maneuver climbs/dives/turns; sky mostly clear of other creatures and craft; etc. Here, if the pilot screws it up, the effects are going to be annoying but not disastrous. Stressful circumstances are Three-Maneuver climbs/dives/turns, combat situations, trying to buzz the Air Traffic Control tower, etc. Here, if the pilot blows it, he's going to make a serious mistake. These rules are somewhat more detailed than those given in *Dawn of the Emperors*.

Just as the context of the mess-up matters, it is also important how badly the pilot messed up. That is, by how much did he miss the skill check? For example, a pilot with a Dexterity 13 and Piloting +1 who rolls 19 on d20 has blown the skill check by a factor of 5 (he rolled 5 above maximum possible success number).

Table 17 shows the outcome of failed skill checks.

Table 17. Loss of Control Table

Missed Roll By	Mundane Situation	Stressful Situation
1-2	One maneuver lost	One maneuver lost
3-4	Accidental maneuver (DM choice)	Accidental maneuver (DM choice)
5-6	Engine splutter, half normal move rate	Stalls into Two-Maneuver dive until control regained
7-8	Control lost for 1 round—no maneuvers possible this round	Stalls into Crash-Dive until control regained
9+	Stalls into One-Maneuver dive until control regained	Flat Spin!!*

\* A Flat Spin occurs when the aircraft whirls round and round horizontally, utterly out of control, falling 300-800 (200 + d6x100) feet per round. The ghastly thing about this is twofold. First, control can only be regained if a Piloting skill check is made with a penalty to the dice roll of +15 (a roll of 1 always succeeds)!! Second, the bizarre "G" effects created mean that the crew can only bail out if they make a successful roll against one-third Dexterity score each round (round fractions down). A Flat Spin is a terrible, lethal occurrence feared by all airmen.

The results shown in Table 17 are fairly self-explanatory, save for the matter of regaining control. Control can be regained by making a successful Pilot-

ing skill check, and this check can be made more than once per round — the number of times is equal to the aircraft's *current* MF (minimum of once per round, even with fractional MFs). Only one skill check has to be made to regain control.

However, there is a catch: the dice roll is penalized equal to the margin by which the control loss was incurred in the first place! If the original skill check was failed by 5, then Piloting skill checks to regain control must be made at a +5 penalty modifier. The worse the pilot blows it to begin with, the harder it is to regain control properly. The exception is the Flat Spin, as noted above.

*Optional rule:* For one round after regaining control, the pilot can only fly the aircraft straight and level, as he regains complete control over the craft. This can be waived if doing this would lead to disaster (e.g., flying right into a mountain) — but the DM may apply a penalty modifier to skill checks which must be made on the rounds in which, and immediately after, control is regained (+2 or so is adequate).

**Crashing Damage**

Tables 18 and 19 show how fast an airplane falls, and the damage suffered by its occupants if it crashes.

Table 18. Falling Distance Table

Time Fallen	Distance Fallen This Second	Total Distance
1 sec	32'	32'
2 sec	64'	96'
3 sec	96'	192'
4 sec	128'	320'
5 sec	160'	480'
6 sec	192'	672'
7 sec	192'	864'
8 sec	192'	1,056'
9 sec	192'	1,248'
10 sec	192'	1,440'

The standard rule of thumb is that damage suffered from falls is 1d6 per 10' of fall. This works well at short distances and for pit falls, etc., but for crashes in aircraft something rather different is needed, as shown in Table 19.

Table 19. Falling Damage Chart

Distance Fallen	Time Taken	Damage Taken
10'	less than 1 second	1d6
20'	less than 1 second	2d6
30'	1 second	3d6
40'	less than 2 seconds	4d6
50'	less than 2 seconds	4d6
60'	less than 2 seconds	5d6
70'	less than 2 seconds	5d6
80'	less than 2 seconds	6d6
90'	2 seconds	6d6
100'-190'	3 seconds	9d6





## Top Ballista

200'-320'	4 seconds	13d6
330'-480'	5 seconds	16d6
490'-670'	6 seconds	19d6
680' +	6+ seconds	20d6

*Optional rule:* Average fall damage above 680' is 70 points; some fighter-types with decent Constitution could survive this with a good degree of probability. For such extreme falls, the DM is entitled to have a PC make a saving throw vs. Death Ray at -4 to avoid being killed outright.

**Crash & Burn** When a plane crashes, determine the number of hit dice of spell magic left in its fuel tank (using the Fuel & Propulsion rules found under Airplane Design later in this section). This energy is released as a *fireball*-like explosion.

**Keeping Track of Aerial Movement** Using hex paper to keep track of aerial moves/combat in two dimensions is strongly suggested. In addition, each player (and DM) should keep a record of flying craft (or monsters) with Altitude, Movement Spent (per round), and Dive/Climb Rate (if diving/climbing), which should be amended round by round as necessary. This record doesn't have to include lateral moves or horizontal maneuvers — the hex paper will do that. This makes it much easier for the DM to give helpful information such as, "you're 800 feet from the city landing strip, 120 feet higher, approaching it at level flight," etc.

## Airplane Design

Four designs are standard in Serraine: Polecat triplanes (fighters), Topcat two-seater fighter biplanes, Pflanger-Skyratchet biplane fighter-bombers (a slightly modified Topcat design), and cloud clippers, which are not usually used for combat purposes. Full designs and specifications can be found for these craft on the fold-out city map.

Some players may wish to design their own aircraft. Use the same principles as used for gnomish machine construction (see "Skills" section). The following construction stages: chassis, one extra stage per wing (2 for biplane, 3 for triplane; a single-wing design cannot bear wing weaponry!), one stage for engine/propulsion fitting (which will almost certainly have a magical component). The design is Difficult. Designing a hot-air balloon or a fire elemental driven Zeppelin should be an easier task, but such a craft will be more vulnerable to attack.

The DM will also need to develop specification (Airspeed, fuel consumption, etc.) for the craft. The existing designs are state of the art, so anything a player designs might not perform quite so well.

## Fuel and Propulsion

Serraine aircraft use magical energy for fuel. The spells listed below can be cast into the fuel tank of

each craft. The tank is magically crafted so as to absorb the spell levels and transform them into magical fuel. Spells are converted into fuel in the form of Hit Dice (of spell) = "X" feet of distance traveled (based on Airspeed expended).

Spell	Footage per HD of spell
<i>Fireball</i>	20,000'
<i>Wall of Fire*</i>	24,000'
<i>Conjure Fire Elemental**</i>	special
<i>Delayed Blast Fire Ball</i>	30,000'
<i>Explosive Cloud*</i>	30,000'
<i>Meteor Swarm*</i>	40,000'

\* For these spells, the level of the caster is used instead of the HD of damage the spell would usually cause. The 'meteors' caused by the Meteor Swarm spell are at once converted to energy within the tank!  
\*\*The conjured elemental imparts magical energy worth 3,000 of forward airspeed per HD. A 16 HD elemental would provide a 48,000' flying range, after which it returns to its home world.

Fliers of air craft will need to keep track of how many 'feet' of fuel they have left (there are fuel gauges in the cockpits, of course). Also, fuel tanks have maximum capacities — if overfilled the fuel spills out (causing a *fireball*-like explosion with excess 'footage' converted into HD of fireball as shown above).

Other motive forces (e.g., elementals) are possible, of course. Note that while magically driven, the airplanes do use propellers — these are how the fuel is transformed into forward thrust.

## Airplane Weaponry

The following weapons are fairly typical of those which may be used in gnomish airplanes. Others may be devised by the DM (or players with DM permission). Weapons have Enc(umberance) values shown; each batch of 50 cn slows forward airspeed by 10'/round (but not fuel consumption, so two figures should be recorded for airspeed and fuel usage per round).

### Missile Weapons

**Ballista:** Only one may be installed per craft. A very, very heavy crossbow-like weapon that can be located either in the middle of the upper wing or as a rear-mounted weapon in a two-seater plane. Fire rate 1 bolt/round; Dmg 2d8 + 2; Reload is automatic after 1 round; Ammo 10 bolts; Enc value 200 cn (bow), 50 cn for each bolt load.

**Crossbows:** Can always be carried by a gunner, but also can be carried as synchronized wing-mounted pairs (left and right) on any wing. Cannot be used for target point firing (see below). Fire rate 1 spike/round; Dmg 1d6; Reload is automatic/instant; Ammo 20 bolts per bow; Enc value 30 cn for each bow, 40 cn for each bolt load.

**Caltrop Cannons:** Can be used as synchronized wing mounts but also may be used as a frontal weapon firing a volley of small, sharp spiky disks down a tube at the center of the propeller or with a rear gunner. Fire rate 2 caltrops/round; Dmg 1d6; Reload is automatic/instant; Ammo 40 caltrops; Enc value 40 cn for cannon, 80 cn for 'caltrop cartridge.'

**Spike guns:** Like the above, but iron spikes are fired instead. Fire rate 1 spike/round; Dmg 1d8; Reload is automatic after 1 round; Ammo 20 spikes; Enc value 40 cn for cannon, 100 cn for 'spike cartridge.'

### Bombs

Bombs are usually only carried in fighter-bombers. In some circumstances the DM may permit a gunner in a two-seater to carry a bomb and drop it over the side, although this will require a hit roll at -4 and may be very hazardous! Bomb bays are usually only found in fighter-bombers (two-seaters) and are operated by gunners.

**Oil:** Oil bombs have Enc 50 cn and contain the equivalent of 4 flasks of oil. They are only really useful if the bomber has a magic-user on board or a *fireball gun*, etc., to ignite the oil.

**Acid:** Acid bombs have Enc 50 (4d6 damage) or Enc 80 cn (6d6 damage).

**Black Pudding Bombs:** These contain 2HD black puddings and an Enc value of 100 cn. Having an angry pudding suddenly appear on your airplane can be very scary! These bombs cannot be carried by a gunner.

**Grey Ooze Bombs:** Very, very unpleasant because of the structural damage they cause, these bombs contain a 1 HD grey ooze which causes 1d8 points of damage and eats through the airplane at this rate of damage! The bomb has Enc 150 cn and cannot be carried by a gunner.

The DM may want to restrict access to black pudding and ooze bombs, given their dangerous nature, or to develop equally peculiar but less hazardous weaponry.

### Target Point Fire

Non-area effect weapons (e.g., spike guns, caltrop cannons, etc.) which are not part of a synchronized wing pair can be used for *target point fire*. The firer (pilot or gunner) must inform the DM of his intention to use this attack mode in advance. With target point fire, the firer shoots at a specified part of the target — the most obvious case being the pilot of an airplane (or the rider of a flying mount). There is a -4 penalty to the hit roll for firing at a pilot or gunner of an aircraft (who is well covered); if the attempt is a miss, then the shot misses entirely.

With 'ordinary' missile fire, the shot will hit the airman as well as his craft 10% of the time — roll d10 for each hit. On a result of 10, the pilot has been hit by a shot which penetrated and damaged his airplane and then hit and damaged him as well.

### Magical Weaponry and Spell Use

**Fireball Gun:** The most important magical weapon commonly used is a *fireball gun*, which functions as a *wand of fireballs*. It can only hold 6 charges at a time and may be used by non-spellcasters. It is recharged by a wicca of 9th or higher level on a one charge per spell basis.

**Snooze Gun:** This fires small green globes (ranges: short, 100 feet, medium, 200 feet, long, 300 feet). On striking the target, the globe creates a *sleep* spell effect in a 20-foot cube. Standard rules for the *sleep* spell apply. This weapon is great against novices, not much use against flying aces.

The DM can easily dream up additional weaponry, but don't allow overkill. *Meteor swarm cannons* are not a good idea, and there aren't that many level 21+ wizards around to recharge them anyway.

With spells or magical items such as a wand of lightning, etc., there is a special rule which the DM should consider using here. A magic-user cannot just automatically target a spell effect on the intended target. After all, he's aboard a noisy airplane, maneuvering and weaving about, not conducive site for spellcasting! For a spellcaster aboard an airplane or a flying creature (or *flying carpet*, etc.), an optional rule is strongly suggested. The magic-user must make a hit roll successfully to target his spell where he wishes it to go. However, the AC of his target is a function of its size only (bigger targets are easier to hit); man-size or smaller creatures are AC2, creatures of larger size (e.g., a pegasus or an airplane!) are AC6. Hit adjustments for Dexterity and for range (+1 if target is less than 80 feet away, -1 if more than 240 feet away) should be applied.

If you are using hex maps and careful mapping (and you should!), a missed shot (e.g., from a *fireball gun*) or spell will be centered 10 + 10xd6 feet away from the target in a random direction (use a d12 roll and a 'clock-face' principle), and also 10 + 10xd4 feet beyond (1-3 on d6) the target, or nearer to the firer (4-6 on d6). Substitute a d4 for a d6 in the rolls above if the target was less than 100 feet away. These results may be altered if a nearer-to-the-firer result would imply that the firer himself is within the area of effect!! In this case the DM may reroll the result.

### Weaponry Limitations

Flying fortresses (no pun intended) should not be encouraged. Airplanes are usually limited to the following weapons: 1 bomb bay (Enc limit up to 400 or so); 1 or 2 guns in the gunner's seat of a two-seater (magical wands can also be carried); 1 ballista or 1-2 wing-mounted weapon pairs (forward facing, operated by the pilot); 1 propeller-tube weapon (caltrop cannon, spike gun, etc.).

# Appendix

## Adapting this Book to the AD&D® 2ND EDITION GAME

Many D&D® game players will progress to, or already play, the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® 2nd Edition Game (or possibly an older version of AD&D). This section helps such gamers to use this book in their AD&D games. The differences between the D&D and AD&D games are small enough that adaptation should not be much of a problem. However, for those of you who are not familiar at all with the D&D game, there are details that need clarification. For simplicity, topics appear in alphabetical order.

Keep in mind when adapting your D&D game adventures that AD&D game characters are slightly tougher than D&D game characters at low level, but D&D game characters can deliver much more damage at mid to high levels.

The D&D game is designed to handle very high levels of play, up to a maximum of level 36, and D&D game characters gain higher levels for far fewer XPs than AD&D game characters do. For this reason, it is suggested that while you keep the same levels of experience in the two games, up to level 14, beyond this you should assume that each three D&D game levels equal one character level in the AD&D game. Thus, a 36th-level D&D game cleric is about equal to a 24th-level AD&D game cleric.

Serraine, the Flying City of this book, can be introduced into any game world such as Faerun (the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Campaign Set) or Oerth (the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® Fantasy Game Setting), since it could appear in the skies anywhere! The meddling gnomes could reasonably invent some planar-shifting (*one-shot!*) drive unit for the city.

Assume that any races in this book that are not a part of the AD&D game are reclusive, live in rare habitats, etc., and thus can plausibly be introduced as previously unknown races.

**Alignment:** D&D game characters have only three alignments — Lawful, Neutral, Chaotic. In the AD&D game, assign Good, Evil, or Neutral alignments, depending on the context; most nagpa are Chaotic Evil, for example, but tabi are usually Chaotic Neutral.

**Classes:** In the D&D game, elves, dwarves, and halflings are character classes. D&D game elves correspond to AD&D game elven *fighter/wizards*. D&D game dwarves and halflings are *fighters*. At high levels, D&D game demi-humans use *Attack Ranks*, which are abilities to fight better; ignore these in the AD&D game. Human fighters, clerics, thieves are unchanged, but magic-users are called *mag*es.

**Coins (cn):** The *cn* abbreviation stands for *coin*, a measure of weight: 50 *cn* equal 1 lb in the AD&D game.

**Dominions:** These are lands under a character's rule, like AD&D game baronies. Rulers receive taxes from inhabitants as well as income from natural resources and services. D&D game dominion populations grow an average 15% — 5d10 people per month. At 50 inhabitants per square mile, the growth tops out at 1d5% — 5d10 people per month.

**Encumbrance:** See *Coins*.

**Equipment:** The terminology in the D&D game is very similar to that in the AD&D game. Equipment costs, encumbrance, damage in combat, and AC protection are slightly different, but not enough to be worth mentioning. Use the AD&D game statistics.

**Experience:** Total accumulated experience for characters is different between the two games, but again, not enough to substantially affect play.

**Immortals:** These are equivalent to AD&D game deities. Immortals often are NPCs who have reached 36th level, and completed an heroic quest of some sort. Immortals belong to various "spheres", namely:

**Matter:** Usually related to Lawful beings, fighter types, or the earth element. Opposes Sphere of Time.

**Energy:** Usually related to Chaos, magic-users, or the element of fire. Opposes the sphere of Matter.

**Time:** Usually related to Neutral beings, cleric types, or the element of water. Opposes the sphere of Matter.

**Thought:** Often related to any alignment, thief types, or the element of air. Opposes Sphere of Energy.

**Entropy:** Related to nothing but destruction. Opposes all other spheres and corresponds to the AD&D game lower planes. Lords of Entropy are demons.

**Monsters:** Some monsters mentioned herein do not exist in the AD&D game, or exist but are described differently. Keep an eye on balance: differences in HD and special abilities may occur at times, calling for adjustments.

**Morale:** Whenever NPCs or monsters run into difficulties, especially during combat, there is a possibility that they would surrender or flee. Use the AD&D 2nd Edition game morale system instead.

**Movement (MV):** Movement rates in the D&D game are given in *feet per turn*, and then in parentheses, *feet per round*. In D&D, 100' = 10 factors in the AD&D 2nd Edition game or 10"/round for the older AD&D game.

**Ranges:** All distances are expressed in feet, rather than inches. Assume 10' = 1" in the older AD&D game (AD&D 2nd Edition game also use feet).

**Rounds and Turns:** Rounds and turns are used the same way in both games. A D&D game round equals 10 seconds; a turn, 60 rounds. For simplicity, use the AD&D game equivalents, without converting.

**Shamans:** Shamans are spellcasters with clerical spells (some have druidic spells too). The AD&D 2nd Edition game handles each type of spellcasting monster separately in the *Monstrous Compendium*.

**Spells:** Some D&D game spells have slightly different names than their AD&D game counterparts. Simply use whatever comes closest. Modify the number of memorized spells listed for spellcasters, to match the AD&D game rules.

**Wiccans:** Wiccans are spellcasters with wizard spells. The AD&D 2nd Edition game handles each type of spellcasting monster in the *Monstrous Compendium*.

This booklet is for the DM only. If you are planning to be a player in any of the adventures here, don't read this booklet! To do so will spoil the excitement and surprises of the adventures, and ruin your own enjoyment.

Dungeon Masters, welcome! This booklet, which complements the *DM's Booklet*, is devoted to several ready-to-run adventures featuring the skydweller races and the Flying City of Serraine. The shorter adventures are suitable for a few hours' play, and the longer "Heart of Darkness" which will need several play sessions to complete. "Heart of Darkness" is useful for introducing both DM and players to the Flying City. It features key skydweller villains and outsiders, uses the Flying City setting, and can be used with skydweller player creatures or more conventional adventuring types.

## Characters & Adventures

### Relative Character Level

A potential problem with the player creatures outlined in the *DM's Booklet* is that you, as DM, may not realize exactly how *strong* they are! The experience levels for player creatures, will usually be different from humans because they need to earn many XPs even to get to 1st level in most cases. For example, a 1st-level sphinx has 13 HD and is clearly far more powerful than a 1st-level fighter or cleric! If you're used to DMing elves, dwarves, fighters, clerics and the more conventional PC types, balancing adventures for skydwelling player creatures may be difficult. The Creature Crucible solution is a special comparative levels chart.

Table 20 shows the experience levels for each creature hero type as they compare against each other and against a typical human (or demi-human) adventurer. The **H-Level** column represents the experience levels of these conventional type adventurers relative to the creature heroes found in the *DM's Book*. To discover a creature hero's equivalent H-Level, start with that creature's column on Table 20. Find the creature's level (or negative XP total range) in the column. Finally, read across that row to the left-hand column (H-Level) to find the relative level of the creature as compared with human-like heroes. You may always adjust this if you feel the creature in question is particularly powerful (many magic items, very good ability scores, etc.) or weak (relatively few hit points, poor Dexterity or Constitution, etc.), but no make no more than a 1-2 level adjustment.

Keep in mind that adventures play best when all the player characters (or creatures) are approximately equal in strength and ability. This 'balancing' of characters is true whether they are conventional adventurers like fighters, clerics, elves, and dwarves or creature heroes like gnomes and nagpa. None should be either too weak or too strong with regard to the rest of the adventuring party.

H-level computation is important when consider-

ing published adventures (including those found in the *D&D® Gazetteers* or in *Dungeon®* magazine). Such adventures are usually advertised as being "suitable for characters of levels 5-7", for example. Using Table 20 you should be able to work out what sort of player creature will fit within the general level of toughness and difficulty presented by the adventure.

**Special Abilities & Countermeasures!** The special abilities of certain player creatures can be quite potent in certain situations. When you evaluate an adventure or design a new one, consider how you would act as a player if you had a certain type of player creature. Careful thought will help you ensure that special abilities don't overwhelm your game and make adventures unplayable. The following are a few special abilities and the countermeasures that could be used to defuse their power:

- Tabi have a potent, poisonous claw attack. The attack is potent because it's *usable at will*. However, it's perfectly reasonable to rule that some creatures are immune to this poison. Consider creatures with lots of body fat such as bears or boars, or ones with very thick, hard skin such as trolls. The poison might not penetrate into such a creature's bloodstream. At higher levels, make sure important foes have access to a cleric with a *neutralize poison* spell. If the adventuring group becomes well-known, its major foes will be sure to have an alchemist prepare an antidote to tabi poison, or protection against it (maybe adding +4 to their saves), or even both. Multiple solutions exist, one just has to consider what they might be.

- Higher level sphinxes have spell immunity as a special ability. Nevertheless, enemy magic-users and clerics know enough about sphinxes to target their *higher-level* spells on the sphinx and save the lower-level stuff for other opponents. This immunity may transform into a liability as the sphinx becomes the primary target for *ice storms*, *delayed blast fireballs*, *maze* spells, and so on.

- A harpy's charm effect is less troublesome than you might think. The harpy can only have one charmed victim/follower at a time. Fresh saving throws are allowed with the passage of time and the *charm* doesn't allow communication unless it is otherwise possible. The *charm* is a good example of a special ability which needs few countermeasures — the harpy is not very strong (as an individual) and she needs a protector!

Again, such considerations will be particularly important when you use adventures written by others (including published adventures). You need to check carefully whether central plot elements, intrigues, difficulties due to normal movement restrictions which can be bypassed by the flying creatures in the *DM's Booklet*, and the like may need amending for use with player creatures of different sorts.

The best advice is: *know the characters*. If you un-

derstand the character abilities well enough to run them cleverly yourself, you'll rarely be caught off-guard when a pegataur's player decides to fly and spy under cover of an *invisibility* spell. You will expect this tactic, and you will know in advance whether to place a guard with a magical ring which allows him to *detect invisibility*, and if he will react to the pegataur when he sees it or bide his time, not alerting the pegataur to the fact that he has seen him . . . . As a side bonus you gain a better handle on how to best run the player creatures as awesome NPC baddies!

### Compatibility

The most serious drawback of adding variety to the types of available player characters is the added complexity it brings to the game. Add the skydwelling player creatures found here to the standard character types in the D&D® game, and maybe even the new creature races presented in *PC1, Tall Tales of the Wee Folk*, you obviously have a wide range of possible player character options — and a wider range of options that you, as DM, much seek to properly challenge. Yet the problem (if it is a problem at all) can be made less that it seems.

To start with, allow only one or two new player creature types in an adventuring party, or else to play a one-shot adventure with all player creatures and none of the traditional types. Playing a campaign with a mix of traditional character classes and new player creatures may be something to work up to! It's important to have a balance which works. Thus, strong fighting creatures (pegataurs and sphinxes) may tend to replace human fighters (because of their special abilities — particularly true for players who try to "beat the rules" instead of roleplaying). Likewise, the thieving skills of tabi make them a possible partial alternative to thieves, especially when they can use low-level spells such as *invisibility* to assist their sneaking. Look to the strengths of new player creatures and think of what niche they would best fit into in a conventional adventuring party.

Even so, player and DM alike must justify (in a roleplaying sense) the reasons for a player creature to join a group of adventurers. How might a nagpa rationalize joining a band of humans and . . . ugh . . . halfings for a trek through the wilds of the *Isle of the Dawn*? What would tempt a faenare to leave the fellowship of her clan?

Alignments must also be compatible. Even in all-human parties, it isn't plausible to have Lawfuls and Chaotics cheerfully adventuring together. While many of the creature races presented in the *DM's Booklet* are typically Chaotic (with rulebook entries giving this alignment), player creatures can choose another alignment. A fair minority of normally Chaotic creatures might be Neutral — a few might even be Lawful! A mix of Lawful and Neutral player creatures and characters is always the best mix for adventuring.

### PC and NPC Races

In some situations, you may need to modify the outcome of interactions, because of PC-NPC affinities or dislikes. For example, in the adventure "Tabi Hunt?," the pegataur *Rolane* might immediately tell a pegataur PC exactly what he is doing while he would keep secrets from races he considers weak. There are cases where a particular player creature race will have some advantage like this. It's impossible to design for all such instances, but major occurrences are easily taken into account by a DM who has prepared for most situations.

The adventures here assume that the PCs are *not* residents of the Flying City. If you have PCs who are residents, changes must to be made — e.g., with "Crash Landing" the PCs would have to be passengers in the cloud clipper which has plummeted to the ground.

### The Game's Afoot!

The following format has been used for the adventure in this booklet:

**Set Up** Overcoming adventurer inertia is always a problem — in a campaign setting, how do you logically get the adventurers into an adventure? The "news heard in the tavern" bit gets old after just a few usages. So, these are suggestions, usually made in a fairly general way, to get your PCs off and running. With very little difficulty (change a name here, a place there) they can be custom fit to your campaign, whether it takes place in the Known World or not.

'Patrons' are use frequently. A Patron is someone who guides the PCs to the adventure, often by offering a reward for some course of action (such as recovering some valuable or important item). The Patron can be a friend, tutor, eccentric old wizard, the secretary of a powerful cleric, a knowledgeable sage, or appear in any similar form. They are useful tools so keep a few of them around to act as plot devices to get the PCs moving.

Their approaches and commissions should always make sense, though. A Lawful cleric is not going to hire a thoroughly Chaotic party for a task; and, indeed, few creatures would be foolish enough to commission such a party to do anything given their probable untrustworthiness (at least not without first submitting to *geas/quest* spells).

### DM's Background

This section summarizes the adventure's plotline and gives important background details. In most cases a location for the adventure is supplied — many in *Karameikos (GAZ 1, The Grand Duchy of Karameikos)*. The final adventure, "Heart of Darkness," uses the settings of *Thyatis* and *Alphatia* as detailed in *Dawn of the Emperors*. In all cases, you will find all the maps needed to run these adventures. Your enjoyment of these adventures will most likely be en-

hanced if you have access to the two D&D® *Gazetteers* listed, but they are *not* essential to play. In fact, you are encouraged to modify these adventures to fit *your* game world!

**The Adventure**

The adventure proper follows the background material, and uses standard D&D® game statistical forms and formats. Adventures frequently use creatures and NPCs from the *DM's Booklet* as enemies. To keep your players on their toes, these creatures are not all Normal Monsters of their type. Players cannot just say, "Oh it's a *tabi*, I know all about them", because these creature may just be more powerful than the Normal Monster form!

The adventures use a variety of pre-planned encounters (including creature lairs) and an option for possible random monster encounters, selected to fit the locations and atmosphere of the adventure. It's your decision whether you use any of these random encounters or not, but it is important *not* to use them if they would weaken a party shortly before it comes to the climax of the overall adventure (thus making the climactic encounters too challenging and ruining the players' enjoyment)! Usually, six of these random encounters are given, which allows the DM to make truly random choices by rolling a d6.

**Follow-up Adventures**

Each adventure concludes with suggestions for spin-off and follow-up scenarios. Use them to fuel your own imagination for logical sequel adventures.

**Published Adventures AND the Flying City**

Published adventures can be used, but you'll need to give thought to the special player creature abilities and their effects on play (which the original adventure writer did not have to consider). Dungeons can be converted into Undercity settings with some judicious alterations. Intrigue adventures can usually be re-written into the Serraine setting by changing the principle characters, while keeping the themes intact. In the case of adventures which obviously *cannot* be set in the Flying City (e.g., undersea ones), the Serraine can be used as a means to get the PCs to the adventure setting.

"NM" means Normal Monster (as found in the rule-books), so NM-1 means "Normal Monster or 1st level."

Beyond the values shown in the table, a creature's relative H-Level is the same as its creature experience level. Exceptions are the *nagpa* and the sphinx. For *nagpa*, the progression is: 12/13 = level H18, 14-16 = level H19, 17-20 = level H20. For the sphinx, each two levels added to the creature's experience levels increases in its H-Level level until the two are the same (at level H29!).

**Shamans & Wiccans:** For balance purposes consider creatures with shaman, wicca, or windsinger abilities as one level higher than the comparative H-Level.

Table 20. Relative Character and Creature Levels

H-Level	Relative Character Experience Level							
	Faenare	Gnome	Gremlin	Harpy	Nagpa	Pegataur	Sphinx	Tabi
H1	-4,000XP	NM	—	-6,000XP	—	-20,000XP	—	—
H2	-2,000XP	1	—	-3,000XP	—	-15,000 XP	-3,000,000XP	-32,000XP
H3	NM	2	-3,000XP	NM	-1,100,000XP	-10,000XP	-2,700,000XP	-24,000XP
H4	1	3	NM-1	NM	-1,000,000XP	NM	-2,400,000XP	-16,000XP
H5	2	4	2-3	1	-800,000XP	1	-2,100,000XP	NM
H6	3	5	4-5	2-3	-800,000XP	2	-1,800,000XP	1
H7	4	6	6-7	4-5	-600,000XP	3-4	-1,500,000XP	2
H8	5-6	7	8	6	-300,000XP	5	-1,200,000XP	3-4
H9	7-8	8-9	9	7-8	NM	6-7	-1,200,000XP	5
H10	9-10	10	10	9-10	1	8	-900,000XP	6-7
H11	11	11	11	11	2	9	-600,000XP	8-9
H12	12	12	12	12	3	10-11	-300,000XP	10-11
H13	13	13	13	13	4-5	12-13	-300,000XP	12-13
H14	14	14	14	15	6	14	NM	14
H15	15	15	15	15	7	15	1	15
H16	16	16	16	16	8-9	16	2-3	16
H17	17	17	17	17	10-11	17	4-5	17

# Tabi Hunt?

This adventure is suitable for characters of levels 1-3, with a total of 15 experience levels. Except for random encounters, combat should not be a significant part of this scenario until the final battle.

The Dymrak Forest in Karameikos forms the setting here, but any extensive wooded area will serve. Use Map 1 for the overland trek.

"Tabi Hunt?" is an adventure designed as a lead-in to others of the DM's choosing. It introduces the PCs to NPCs who can become long-term friends, enemies, information sources, companions, and even Patrons.

## Set Up

- A Patron hires the PCs to find a small group of tabi. He has learned that the tabi know the location of some ancient Traladaran ruins (see *GAZ 1, The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*), and details of the treasures there. He wants that information. The job: find the tabi, get the desired information and return with it.

- A tabi child (-32,000XP) fearfully fleeing something bumps into the PCs, immediately adopting them and asking to be taken to his family. Complications might include that the tabi "belonged" to the nagpa De'Ath (or even to Heydrech, the vile nagpa from "Heart of Darkness").

- Rolane the pegataur (see below) hires the PCs to capture a live tabi and bring it back for questioning. Once this is accomplished, Rolane will ask the PCs to accompany him to find *Quenstin*, a tabi trickster.

## DM's Background

A small, reclusive group of tabi dwell in the Dymrak forest. They depend upon their leader, the strongest of their group, to protect them with spells and guile. In this case, the leader is *Quenstin*, a learned and clever old rogue and trickster. *Quenstin* has the information and knowledge the PCs seek (if this is part of the set up).

The second part of this jigsaw of characters is *Rolane the Pegataur*. Rolane has flown down from the Altan Tepes to the north, hoping that he might regain from the tabi an elven clan-hilt weapon once possessed by him. This weapon was stolen under uncertain circumstances, and Rolane regards tabi as thieves and cheats entirely responsible for the crime. To complicate matters, someone stole his magical dagger and he is convinced he saw a tabi turn invisible and fly off with it. Rolane regards tabi as vermin, fit only to be exterminated . . . .

To this add *De'Ath* (DEE-eth), a young nagpa, who desperately seeks an old book of Traladaran history which the tabi possess. *De'Ath*, late of Serraine, damaged a valuable book, incurring the wrath of *Matazumi*, the undead librarian. Terrified, the nagpa fled the city and his years of accumulated historical

trivia. He now pins his hopes on that chance that obtaining this book might regain *Matazumi's* favor — or at least stop the librarian from killing him.

Regardless of any specific mission details, the PCs' goal is to find the tabi, negotiate a deal with them, and return with the object of their quest. Furthermore, they must also prevent *Rolane* from killing the tabi. *De'Ath* serves as both comic relief and nuisance value. Yet he also has a potential importance: if befriended (or at least tolerated) he can tell the PCs of *Serraine*, the Flying City.

## Rolane

### 1st-Level Pegataur

**Appearance:** Rolane appears to be around 25 years of age in human terms. He is of medium size, well muscled, with black hair and mane and deep brown eyes.

**Personality:** Rolane is stern, suspicious, and definitely stubborn, but also quite loyal and very, very brave. While Rolane is no fool, he doesn't understand humans (nor demi-humans or other player creatures) well. He believes his word to be sufficient bond for anyone. If PCs suggest that sometimes this may not be enough, he demands a trial of strength to test his truthfulness. To his way of thinking, this is a fair test; it's the way pegataurs think! His intelligence is tactical awareness and fast 'mental reflexes', not true analytical smarts. He should be roleplayed gruff, no-nonsense, and very pragmatic.

**Combat Notes:** AC 2 (superior chain barding); HD 5\*; hp 27; #AT 3; THAC0 14; Dmg by weapon +1 (usually 1d10 +2 with *two-handed sword +1*) and 2 hooves for 2-7/2-7; MV 180' (60')/flying 360'/(120'); Save E5; ML 10; AL N; S 15, I 13, W 9, D 13, C 12, Ch 12; XP 500.

**Skills:** Alertness (D), Fighting Instinct +1 (D), History: Alfheim elves (I), Stamina (C), Survival-Mountainous (C).

**Spells:** *magic missile* (spellbook also has *protection from evil*, *read magic*, *shield*).

**Notes:** Two-handed Sword +1, 6 arrows +1 (normal longbow), *scroll of three spells-ESP, magic missile, protection from evil; potions of invisibility, super-healing.*

## De'Ath

### Immature Nagpa

**Appearance:** *De'Ath* is 5' 8" tall but looks much shorter since he stoops heavily. He has gray feathering and watery gray-blue eyes, and wears a voluminous heavy gray cloak folded about him. **Personality:** He feigns to be weaker than he is. *De'Ath* has an obnoxious superiority complex, yet cycles between whimpering cowardice, smarmy self-abasement and pompous self-righteousness.

**Combat:** (-800,000 XP range); AC 5 (*ring of protection +1*); HD 6\*; hp 30; #AT 1; THAC0 15 (melee)/14 (missiles); Dmg 1d6-1 (staff in melee) or 1d4 (sling); MV 120'/40'; Save MU6 +1; AL C; S 8, I

15, W 11, D 11, C 11, Ch 8; XP 500.

**Skills:** Appraisal (I), History- Karameikos, Thyatis, Flying City, Gnome Clans (all I), Mythology and Legend- Gnome Immortals (I), Society and Customs- Gnomes (I).

**Notes:** *Ring of protection +1, flying carpet, 2 potions of super-healing, ring of zombie control* (see below), and *cursed sword -2*.

**Special Abilities:** *paralyze* Lawful creatures 3/day, *darkness* 3/day, *create fire* 1/day, all saving throws at +1.

**Notes:** De'Ath's *ring of zombie control* allows any Chaotic creature using it to *animate* two completely obedient zombies at any time (providing corpses are present). The zombies may save against any successful Turning attempt at the level (or hit dice — whichever is greater) of their master. De'Ath currently has a human zombie with 14 hp and an elf zombie with 12 hp.

De'Ath quite honestly believes his *cursed sword* to be a decent magical weapon. He hopes to trade it for some other magic item, since he dislikes its weight. You can use this to great effect if De'Ath trades with a PC. Try to hide the sword's cursed nature from that PC for as long as possible. Remember, De'Ath really thinks this sword is a nifty magical weapon!

## Random Encounters

While the PCs explore the Dymrak forest in search of tabi, the following encounters may be used:

- 1 1d6 + 2 goblins (B31), armed with shortswords and shortbows. They will try to ambush the PCs' camp by night.
- 2 1d6 + 2 Calarii elves (levels 1-3) (B30), who tell the PCs to take a detour west. Their clan is having an important clanmeet, and the PCs aren't invited.
- 3 1 werewolf and 1d4 wolves (B33/39) track the PCs by day, attack by night.
- 4 1-3 Black Bears (B26), very hungry, but can be delayed by throwing food to them.
- 5 Black Dragon (B28) flies overhead, comes back and circles an hour later. It won't attack the PCs; this is just to make them nervous. Roll dice, shake your head sadly, then tell them the dragon flies away.
- 6 1d4 + 2 hobgoblins (B31), armed with normal Swords and crossbows; their leader has a *shield +2*. They attack the PCs at night if possible.
- 7\* 1d4 + 1 bugbears (B27), each with 13 hp, carrying normal swords and crossbows.
- 8\* A pair of ogres (B35), with 13 and 19 hp, carrying clubs, hostile and hungry for tasty treats!

\* The two encounters marked \* should not be used until the PCs have met and befriended Rolane and possibly De'Ath also.

## Meeting the NPCs

Stage the meetings with Rolane and De'Ath carefully.

**Rolane:** Have the PCs encounter Rolane first. If you use Rolane as the PC's Patron in this adventure, have an NPC elf (who either knows the PCs or knows of them) recommend the PCs to Rolane as people who might serve his needs. Otherwise, Rolane can encounter the PCs as they begin trek. A good way to stage this encounter is to have Rolane help the PCs if they get attacked by goblins or hobgoblins from the Random Encounters section.

When first met, Rolane acts reserved, but friendly. He is clearly more favorably disposed to elves than other PC types. If the PCs mention tabi, Rolane will at once become interested and ask to accompany the PCs. If the PCs don't mention tabi, Rolane will bring up the subject.

He explains his pursuit of tabi thieves whole stole a magical dagger from him while he slept in the woods a few days ago. If an elf accompanies the PCs, Rolane will pompously state that there is another matter also; one of "*importance to elves. Great importance!*" He might be pushed into saying that it is "*an elven clan matter,*" but nothing else beyond that.

Try to engineer Rolane's joining with the PCs. If the PCs won't have him, then the pegataur will follow them, flying while *invisible* if need be. If Rolane does join the PCs, then try a 'random' monster encounter to demonstrate Rolane's worth in battle.

Rolane's complications: he thinks tabi are dishonorable, dishonest, thieving little vermin and he intends to kill them. He's willing to force captives to talk first, but he really loathes these little creatures and wants to kill them eventually. It will take some serious roleplay persuasion to stop this murderous bent (on a case by case basis). Appeals to Rolane's pragmatism will fare much better than appeals to his moral nature (Rolane is Neutral).

**De'Ath:** Bring in De'Ath later on, at least after the first skirmish between PCs and the tabi. De'Ath will witness this, then will spy on the PCs' camp, overhearing part of what they say. He uses a *potion of ESP* to check their thoughts — thus learning a fair bit about the PCs' activities. De'Ath will then follow the PCs at a distance. To introduce him to the PCs, have a PC scout run into him, or have De'Ath meet some hungry black bears, and flee from them — straight into the PCs' camp.

De'Ath whines, whimpers and tries to ingratiate himself to the PCs. He will say that he seeks a certain lost item, and no more. He will beg the PCs not to hurt him, and ask grovellingly if he can walk a little distance off, sleep near their camp, etc., just for a little extra safety. He will do this and come creeping back even if the PCs chase him away.

De'Ath is a truly horrid creature even by nagpa standards. In combat he is the sort of creature who would grab a halfling and use it as a shield, while



## Tabi Hunt?

begging an enemy not to strike at him. He will use his spells to support the PCs in a fight, though (especially if his own hide is on the line). His zombies present a special problem. Many PCs may be unhappy with these about. De'Ath points out that they are tireless porters, unsleeping guards, uncharmable fighters ("there are harpies about, you mark my words!", the nagpa adds), and generally very useful. He will not *de-animate* them!

If allowed to hang around the PCs, De'Ath will become increasingly uppity with each passing day until challenged by someone angry with him — in which case he becomes snivelling and subservient again.

Rolane will accept De'Ath if the nagpa expresses support for Rolane's quest and echoes his line about tabi — which he will be an unscrupulous creature. The PCs will have a challenge keeping their relationship with this pair even moderately amicable!

Play up the exchanges between these two to get the most out of this adventure.

## Stone Creatures

When the PCs are near to the tabi lair, they will stumble across a couple of perfectly life-like statues in different places — one a tabi, the other a goblin. These may cue the PCs to a future threat.

## Tabi Skirmish

After a suitable period of search and travel, have the PCs encounter a small group of immature tabi in the trees (about 20'-30' above ground). Make a secret Ability Check against one-half each character's Int score (elves who are used to woodland settings can subtract a -2 bonus from the dice roll). If a check succeeds, that PC sees the tabi. When the PCs react to the tabi (e.g., by telling other PCs or pointing to them), the tabi flee. These youngsters want to avoid combat.

**Immature Tabi (3):** AC 6; HD 2\*; hp 10 each; #AT 2; THAC0 18; Dmg 1-4/1-4 + special (venom); MV 60' (20')/flying 240' (80'); Save MU2; ML 6; AL C; SA Pick pockets 25%, move silently 15%, hide in shadows 15%; XPs 50.

The PCs can either let these tabi go, try to capture one (e.g., with a *web* spell), or kill them (a pointless, evil act). A captive can only communicate by sign language (the youngsters speak only tabi and goblin). A captive tabi will be terrified and ready to tell the PCs almost anything. Rolane will want it killed after capture, and De'Ath will agree. The PCs must protect the terrified tabi captive, and argue for its safety. If the tabi is wounded, make a note if the PCs heal it (or try to). This will be important.

You may repeat this encounter to allow the PCs a chance to capture an immature tabi. How they behave toward the creature will be important when determining later events in this adventure.

## SURROUNDED!

The party is woken at night by Quenstin, a single, ancient tabi, who suddenly appears in the midst of their camp. It shouts to wake them. Attacks on him are fruitless — the tabi is a *projected image* and is actually quite far away, with the protections of *mirror image* and *invisibility* spells. If, somehow, the PCs manage to locate and attack Quenstin, he will escape with *pass plant*. Hopefully the PCs will have the sense just to listen for a while at least.

The PCs are also surrounded by a large group of normal tabi, who stay at a distance while Quenstin does his talking, getting closer at his signal only.

### Quenstin

#### 9th-level Tabi

**Appearance:** Quenstin is a mangy, moth-eaten, venerable old tabi with a rather bloodshot left eye.

**Personality:** Though Quenstin is Chaotic, his 275 years have mellowed him, making him wise and peaceful. He ignores disrespect and talks to other creatures as one would speak to a slow, troublesome child, with patience and gentle reprimands.

**Combat Notes:** AC 0 (*ring of protection* +3); HD 9 + 2\*\*; hp 45; #AT 2; THAC0 10; Dmg 1-4/1-4 + special; MV 60' (20')/flying 240' (80'); Save MU9; ML 11; AL C; S 10, I 17, W 13, D 18, C 9, Ch 16; XPs 1,750.

**Special Abilities:** save at +4 vs. Fear, rotting blight 100' at will, *lore* 1/week.

**Skills:** History- Alphatia, Thyatis, Traldar peoples (all I).

**Spells:** *charm person*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *haste*, *confusion*, *pass plant*, *projected image*.

**Notes:** *ring of protection* +3, *medallion of ESP*, *potion of super-healing*.

Quenstin begins by telling the party members what they're doing and what he thinks of it. Remember, Quenstin has a *medallion of ESP* and knows what the party is thinking — although he keeps this secret at first. With Rolane, he tells the pegataur that he, Quenstin, does indeed know where to find the sword he seeks (Rolane is quiet at first, and then blusters somewhat. Give the PCs time to calm him down if they want to). Quenstin explains that the tabi do not have it themselves. "*Do not be so presumptuous, pegataur. One thief does not make us all thieves. Learn some common sense!*", this last sentence spoken rather sharply.

To De'Ath the tabi says, "*We do have what you want, but you don't seem to be thinking of what to offer us for it*", rather pointedly. De'Ath, grovelling as usual, asks what the tabi wants. "*The ring, I think*", he replies. De'Ath whines until Quenstin replies, "*without the book, old Matazumi will make*

sure you can never go home. The ring, please", and the nagpa, looking almost stunned, leaves it at the feet of the old tabi's projected image.

What Quenstin says to the PCs depends on their mission. If they have been hired to search for some object or source of knowledge, Quenstin states that he knows what they want and can grant access to it. However, no matter what the PCs want, there is a task the tabis require them to carry out first, which requires the aid of Rolane and De'Ath (De'Ath is allowed his ring back, temporarily).

Quenstin dispels his projected image and approaches in person, with a ring of five hefty tabi bodyguards (Normal Monsters, 26 hp each) around him. Eight more tabi (20 hp each) lurk in the underbrush.

Quenstin comments on the stone creatures nearby and their cause: a large gray lizard which lairs in a nearby shallow ravine. The creature is a threat to the tabi and Quenstin is reluctant to risk his own people. The PCs and their needs show the chance for a reasonable trade. The PCs, Rolane, and De'Ath will get what they came for if they will deal with the lizard.

Allow the PCs a little time to think this over, and to talk with Rolane and De'Ath. Rolane will be gung-ho to attack the monster, De'Ath will whine and suggest ways to cheat the tabi and run off with the book he has come for. When the PCs agree, go to *Den of the Basilisk* below.

Should the PCs decide not to attack the lizard out of cowardice, they don't get whatever they came for, Rolane leaves them in disgust, and you should harass them with random encounters on the way back. If the PCs have used no violence against tabi, Quenstin and his followers let them go.

### If PCs are Violent

If the PCs attack the tabi in their lair, the tabi should easily overwhelm them. Quenstin gives a first warning, but if the PCs persist he attacks with the other tabi. Quenstin uses a *confusion* spell to weaken the PCs. The deluding venom attacks should do the rest. Defeated PCs are stripped of everything but their basic clothing and thrown out into the forest. Rolane will fly away at this point. The PCs can fashion crude quarterstaves (1-4 damage only) from saplings in the woods.

If the PCs attacked and killed immature tabi in the woods, Quenstin will learn of it only after the PCs have fought the basilisk. Any survivors return to tell Quenstin. If none return, the anxious Quenstin interrogates the PCs. Using his *amulet of ESP* he will find out the truth. If the PCs don't fight the basilisk, but killed the immature tabi, they will be pursued by tabi and attacked, possibly after an interrogation — in this case the PCs will certainly be killed.

### Den of the Basilisk

If the PCs ask for help, a guide is provided, along with a pair of silver mirrors. Quenstin is also prepared to cast *invisibility* on one PC if asked, but this won't be a particularly valuable protection.

Map 2 shows the basilisk's lair and the ravine in which it is set. The basilisk lurks in the main chamber (area #1), unwilling to be drawn out. PCs can enter this chamber through the 5-foot-high, narrow entrance (too small for Rolane) two per round. If hard pressed, the basilisk scuttles off into area #4 and fights at the entrance point, where only two PCs can stand and fight in a row.

Inventive PCs can draw the basilisk into combat so that the party can attack it from all sides. For example, lobbing in oil and igniting it with a thrown torch will fill the basilisk's burrow with greasy smoke and force the creature out, also giving it -2 to its hit rolls for 1d4 + 1 rounds after it comes out!

**Basilisk:** AC 4; HD 6 + 1\*; hp 29; #AT 1; THAC0 14; Dmg 1-10 + petrification; MV 60' (20'); Save F6; ML 9; AL C; XPs 950.

Area #3 holds a pile of coins (86 sp, 580 gp, 85 pp) and a pouch of three chrysoberyl gems (75 gp each).

Area #5 has been left unmapped for later expansion. This could be an old, disused entrance leading to a dungeon filled with goblins, hobgoblins, shadowwelves, or any other creatures. If the PCs were paid to find an entrance to an old dungeon or set of ruins, this is the genuine article!

### Quenstin's Rewards

If the PCs came for a specific object (for a Patron), they receive it. If they have been friendly to the tabi, and agreed readily to fight the basilisk, Quenstin also gives them some treasure found on the body of a luckless adventurer: a suit of *plate mail* +1, a *shield* +1, and a *longbow* +2. Rolane is given a *two-handed sword* +2 with the Grunalf clan hilt, and De'Ath is given a dusty tome which accurately recounts the early life and battles of King Halav of the Traldar people (see *GAZ 1* for details).

### Follow-up Adventures

The PCs might delve into the ruins below the basilisk's lair. Rolane could ask his new-found brave friends to come to Alfheim with him — giving you the chance for adventures in Karameikos, Darokin, and even Alfheim itself!

# SCREAM OF TERROR

This adventure is suitable for characters of levels 3-5, with a total 25-28 experience levels. Any light woodland setting can be used. Try using this as an interlude during a long cross-country trek.

## Set Up

- A single PC is picked off by harpies and is *charmed* (a night-time guard, for example). The other PCs must rescue their friend before he becomes a light snack!

- A Patron offers the PCs payment to recover an item the harpies possess. This might be a magical book, an unorthodox *weather-predicting crystal ball*, etc. The Patron does not wish to face harpies himself — he (or she) might be old, physically unfit or sick. The Patron offers four *potions of immunity to charm* to help the PCs (lasts 4-16 turns, confers immunity to all forms of *charm*), and a suitable payment upon completion (as suits the campaign). This is the best set-up for a weak party as it gives them extra aid.

- The adventure begins with the Rachlann encounter (below). The PCs will be asked to help save Gralic and Rhallene, NPCs *charmed* by the harpies.

## DM's BACKGROUND

This is a straightforward adventure with an important moral dilemma for the PCs. Their enemies are a small scream of harpies, which have acquired a modest treasure from their victims. With their *charm* powers, the harpies are clearly dangerous to the PCs. Furthermore, two exceptional harpies; the scream leader who can *charm* by touch as well as by song, and an old female shaman pose additional hazards.

However, the harpies are protected by two *charmed* Lawful NPCs — a cleric and an elf. The PCs' dilemma is to overcome the harpies while sparing these unfortunate captives.

The adventure allows for the possibility of hit-and-run tactics, with the chance that a subgroup of PCs may be forced to flee, leaving *charmed* friends behind them! This possibility is dealt with later.

The DM should allow for the chance of the PCs trying to negotiate with the harpies if they have a harpy in their own number. The two harpy leaders will conduct negotiations if the PCs appear strong and well-organized. Nevertheless, they will try treachery as soon as they have some clear tactical advantage. Don't pull punches on this one; the harpies are Chaotic, untrustworthy, and vicious. It isn't plausible that they will abide by an agreement if they have any hope of doing better for themselves.

## RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Use the following encounters to vary the pace of play and provide clues about the harpies:

- 1 1d4+1 Neutral-aligned 1st-level elves, who may tell the party exactly where the harpies are;

- 2 One dryad, if the party has a male PC with Ch 16+, who will try to *charm* him and take him away;
- 3 1d3+1 bugbears, out hunting, who may use their surprise chances to ambush the PCs;
- 4 A hsiao which may use *cure light wounds* spells to assist Lawful PCs;
- 5 1d4+2 leprechauns, who will try to cause havoc with their sense of humor — a violent reaction by the PCs should be strongly penalized here; the leprechauns may be friendly with an old treat!
- 6 A giant boar, crazy with a violent toothache, which charges and attacks at randomly selected PCs (allowing the injured to back away and be healed).

## The Adventure

As the PCs travel through light woodland, their first encounter is with a pale, ill-looking young fighter, his younger squire and their two mounts. The fighter's right sleeve has been ripped away, revealing a recent injury. Using an herbal wash, the squire tends to the painful, filthy, septic wound which runs along the length of the fighter's forearm.

### Rachlann

#### Mercenary Fighter

*Appearance:* Rachlann is 26 years old, 6' 2", strongly built, with brown hair and eyes.

*Combat Notes:* 6th-level fighter; AC 2 (*chain mail* +1); HD 6; hp 32; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg by weapon (+2 in melee); Save F6; ML 10; AL N; S 16, I 10, W 9, D 16, C 14, Ch 13.

*Notes:* *Longsword* +1, *chain mail armor* +1, *potions of healing*, pouch with 17 pp and 40 gp.

### Sarion

#### Rachlann's Squire

*Appearance:* Sarion is 18 years old, 5' 10" tall, of medium build, with short curly brown hair and hazel eyes. His weapons are sword and crossbow.

*Combat Notes:* 1st-level fighter; AC6 (leather armor and shield); HD 1; hp 7; #AT 1; THAC0 17 (melee)/ 19 (missiles); Dmg by weapon (+2 in melee); Save F1; ML 8 (11 if Rachlann lives); AL L; S 17, I 7, W 13, D 9, C 12, Ch 12.

Assuming the PCs are friendly to this pair, they are happy to talk. They are mercenaries on their way to Specularum, to enter service with Baron Stefan Karameikos, ruler of the realm (this may give the PCs a well-placed friend in Karameikos). A harpy attacked Rachlann, and — as bad luck would have it — the ugly thing bit him as he slew it. The wound has festered and gone bad. Rachlann needs both *cure disease* and *neutralize poison* cast on it. If the PCs offer what help they can (e.g., *cure light wounds*) Rachlann thanks them but explains that he must ride on quickly to get proper clerical help.

Rachlann also says that the harpies may have cap-

tured a human earlier on. Nearby villagers were lamenting the loss of their cleric to the harpies. If asked — Rachlann also says that the village shrine was of the Church of Karameikos. A cleric PC would know that this Church tend towards Law, and the cleric will almost certainly be Lawful or Neutral.

### Pigs in a Poke

The PCs meet a group of some 11-15 travelling folk, gypsies and tinkers, who have a sizeable flock of (stolen) pigs which they claim are at pasturage in the woodland (a not unheard-of custom). The gypsies will remain in the general area for a while. The PCs can return to them later if they wish. The point of this encounter is that a creative roleplayer might think to buy off the harpies (return of *charmed* hostages, etc., in return for a number of tasty pigs). This won't work, but it's worth an XP award if attempted.

**Color:** Have a PC pick-pocketed by a snotty-nosed nine-year-old 1st-level thief, or a challenge to a fist fight by an irate (and very strong) young gypsy who fancies he saw the (male) PC looking the wrong way at his beloved Esmerelda.

### ENCOUNTERING the Harpies

Place the harpy lair (Map 3) wherever you want in the wooded area. Remember to allow reasonable places for the random encounters (if any) to occur. In any event, the first encounter the PCs will have with the harpies will be at dusk. Two harpies (11 & 15 hp), patrolling some distance from the scream's nests, will move within 300 feet of the PCs, undetected, and begin to sing. Two PCs must make standard saving throws vs. Spells or be *charmed*, walking towards the song. The harpies escort any *charmed* PCs to the scream if other PCs don't intervene. If no PCs are *charmed*, the harpies try to escape. If attacked, they fight only if PCs have been previously *charmed*.

In addition to these two, a third harpy with 16 hp lurks another 60 feet away, with her *charmed* guard, Rhallene the elf. She relies on his *infravision* in the darkness. This pair will attack from a flank if the PCs attack the first two. They arrive after a two round delay and have a 3 in 6 chance of surprise!

#### Harpies (Generic statistics)

AC 7; HD 3\*; #AT 2; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-4/1-4; MV 60' (20')/flying 150' (50'); Save F6; ML 7; AL C; XP 50.

The harpy guards have 9, 14, 14, and 20 hp. An average harpy has 13 or 14 hit points.

#### Rhallene

##### 3d-level elf

**Appearance:** Rhallene is 5' 8", of slim build, with very fair hair and green eyes; he wears a green and brown cloak over his armor. **Combat Notes:** AC 3 (*chain mail* +1); HD 3; hp 15; #AT 1; Dmg by

weapon (+1 in melee); THAC0 18; Dmg 1d8+2 (*Sword* +1); MV 120' (40'); Save E3; ML 12 (while *charmed*) or 10; AL L; S 13, I 13, W 8, D 13, C 9, Ch 10; XP 50.

**Notes:** *sword* +1, *chain mail* +1, gold ring with topaz setting worth 115 gp, pouch with 23 gp, earplugs (see below).

### Charmed Creatures

Rhallene will wade into the fight to aid his friends the harpies against their enemies (the PCs). He will not retreat from battle once joined.

The PCs must disable (not kill!) the elf with spells such as *hold person*, *web*, etc. If a PC spellcaster successfully casts *dispel magic*, the *charm* will be dispelled and Rhallene will be confused, not fighting for either side. The PCs need the elf; he will give them an important edge in the final combat.

The *charm* can also be broken by killing the harpy which *charmed* the elf. In any event, if the *charm* is broken, Rhallene will be highly confused for one turn before he realizes what has happened to him. Rhallene is from Alfheim. The harpies have eaten his horse, so will be happy to help the PCs and travel with them afterwards. Rhallene can cast two 1st-level spells and one 2d-level spell if allowed to consult a PC's spellbook (the harpies took his).

Rhallene remembers little of the scream, having been in a dazed reverie. He does remember a tribal spellcaster with an enslaved human bodyguard, but cannot dredge up further details.

Rhallene has a box of six beeswax earplugs which he uses to keep harpy song out (he didn't know about this scream). If worn, these confer immunity to harpy song, but not a touch attack. However, spellcasting is impossible with no sense of hearing. These earplugs may be more useful to fighters, thieves and some player creatures.

A *charmed* PC will not attack his *real* friends in the PC party unless they specifically attack the harpy who *charmed* him. However, that PC may attack any party member he never really liked! The *charmed* PC protects the harpy who *charmed* him, but doesn't become a kamikaze killer — after all, his friends in the party are still his friends too, unless they directly attack his new-found best pal.

### Lair of the Harpies

A PC with Tracking skill can detect the harpy lair by following a *charmed* PC victim (being careful of his harpy guards), or by random searches. *Infravision* can help see harpy guards at a distance. Map 3 shows the layout of the trees with nests, and guards.

As soon as any PC approaches within 60 feet of a harpy guard (unless that PC makes a successful move silently roll), the guard will at once use its *charm* song to deal with the intruder and warn the scream. *Invisibility* is only 50% effective because of small noises

(crunching twigs, etc.) and scent.

You do not have to make a fresh saving throw for each PC against every single harpy's song. Make one saving throw against the first song heard, and a second saving throw when the PCs are attacked by the scream leader or the shaman. If a PC makes a successful saving throw twice, then the (related) songs of this scream will not affect him. However, a *charm person* effect by touch still requires a saving throw to be made, *once for each harpy that tries it*.

In addition to the four harpy guards, the following special harpies are present in the scream and are shown for initial position on Map 3:

#### Ssilantha

##### Scream Leader

**Combat Notes:** 3d-level Harpy; AC 5; HD 5\*; hp 31; #AT 2; THAC0 14 (melee)/12 (missiles); Dmg 2-5/2-5; MV 60' (20')/flying 150' (50'); Save F5; ML 9; AL C; S 15, I 9, W 8, D 16, C 11, Ch 14; XP 500.

**Appearance:** Ssilantha is a fairly young, large, well-muscled harpy who is swift and dextrous. **DM-ing Notes:** Her nest contains a couple of heavy stones which she can use as missiles dropped on to people (Dmg 2-9). Ssilantha has the special ability to *charm person* by touch 1/day.

#### Gerelda

##### Harpy Tribal Shaman

**Appearance:** Gerelda is an aged, withered hag of a harpy, quite evil and cruel-looking, with long and filthy talons. She has a *ju-ju* (evil shamanic charm) of mummified human ears and small roc tail feathers on a leather thong about her neck; this has no magical effect, it just looks sinister.

**Combat Notes:** 4th-level harpy/4th-level shaman; AC 7; HD 6\* (Con penalty); hp 19; #AT 2; THAC0 14; Dmg 1-4/1-4; MV 60' (20')/flying 150' (50'); Save F6; ML 10; AL C; S 9, I 13, W 16, D 9, C 7, Ch 7; XP 850.

**Special Abilities:** Gerelda can *charm person* by touch up to 3 times per day.

**Spells:** *cure light wounds* (x2), *bless*.

#### Gralic

##### Captive Human Cleric

**Appearance:** Gralic is 33, slightly portly of build, 5' 8", with thinning brown hair and brown-hazel eyes. He walks with a slight limp due to an old wound in his left leg.

**DMing Notes:** He cannot cast spells due to his *charmed* status, but he usually memorizes *cure light wounds*, *protection from evil*, and *bless*. His holy symbol of the Church of Karameikos is visible at 30 feet or closer (except in the dark). A PC cleric or any Karameikan should recognize it. Other PCs have to make an Intelligence check at a +2 penalty to the die roll to recognize the symbol.

**Combat Notes:** 4th-level cleric; AC 2; HD 4; hp 14; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-6 (mace); MV 60'

(20'); Save C4; ML 12 while *charmed*, or 10; AL L; S 11, I 11, W 15, D 9, C 12, Ch 13; XP 75.

**Notes:** Silver holy symbol with small moonstone inlays (value 150 gp), gold bracelet with moonstones (125 gp).

## Harpy Tactics

While these creatures are not bright, they are cunning. Ssilantha will drop her rocks on PCs before coming down to attack. Gerelda will certainly cast her *bless* spell to help herself, Ssilantha, and Gralic before she comes down to fight. Gerelda will readily fly off to use her *cure light wounds* spells if hurt, returning to fight when healed. Gerelda knows that the three potions in Ssilantha's nest are magical but does not know what they are; either Gerelda or Ssilantha will fly up to get one if things are going bad for the harpies, drinking one at random (this takes 2 rounds, since the harpy must open the vial with its claws; not easy). See the treasures below for these potions.

Gralic is *charmed* by Gerelda. She won't try to *charm* anyone else unless Gralic is disabled (*webbed*, etc.) or badly hurt. *Charm* rules for PCs and NPCs are as discussed in the *DM's Book*. This is a fairly tough fight for the PCs, but with sensible preparations (*bless*, *silence 15'*, *invisibility*, possibly *haste*, etc.) they should succeed.

## Treasure and Experience

Ssilantha's nest contains stashed 'pretties'; 132 sp, 115 gp, 77 pp, and two aquamarines worth 200 gp each. There are also three potions in a case. These are *healing*, *heroism*, *invisibility*. Gerelda's nest has a marble egg worth 85 gp, a silver ring on a skeletal hand (15 gp), and three small gems (50 gp, 50 gp, and a small emerald worth 450 gp) inside a skull. Casting *detect magic* reveals one of the twigs in the nest to be a *wand of magic missiles* with 17 charges remaining.

If Rhallene and/or Gralic are freed and live, then reward the PCs with three times the usual XP award for this. Monster and treasure XPs are as normal. The goal-award XP (recovering the Patron's property, rescuing a kidnapped fellow PC, etc.) is 200 XP per PC. Additional XPs can be awarded for good roleplaying of player creature special abilities, trying to buy the harpies off with pigs (or thinking of this!), and so on — up to 100 XPs or so per PC involved.

## Follow-Up Adventures

A satisfied Patron will have other commissions in the future! Rhallene will rejoin his clan, and the PCs will have a friend in Alfheim who knows them to be smart and capable. Gralic the cleric will send a favorable report to his superiors — maybe a superior of a PC cleric in a distant city such as Specularum, an excellent way of introducing a city adventure. Maybe original owner of the wand of magic missiles might want it back.



### Crash Landing

This adventure is suitable for characters of levels 3-5, with a total of 20-25 experience levels. The party *must* include a magic-user, elf, or player creature with wicca abilities. It is designed to introduce PCs to the existence of the Flying City some of its inhabitants and to give them a rough time trying to hunt down an elusive, tricky pest. The adventure has been placed on the Karameikos/Thyatis border (Map 4).

### Set Up

The PCs sight the falling cloud clipper at night. It appears to be an object of some size, lit inside, and gliding to earth some distance away in western Thyatis. Faint sounds of spluttering and humming can be heard from it.

If this doesn't get the PCs going, have a Patron hire them to find the 'vessel' (Patron's term) and provide a full report, plus samples if appropriate.

### DM's BACKGROUND

The vessel is a cloud clipper, borrowed and piloted and crash landed by foolish young gnome joyriders of the Stormkinder clan. They had the misfortune to pick a cloud clipper in which Beazley the gremlin was sleeping, and the mortified mite soon created havoc with the craft, disabling it. The skygnomes are cur-

rently in the land west of Machetos (Map 4) trying to repair the airplane and find their way home. Serraine is high above Thyatis City now.

### Trek and Random Encounters

The PCs should be able to locate the cloud clipper without too much difficulty — Map 4 shows its location. The woodland here is fairly light and the gnomes aren't skilled at camouflage. Possible random encounters along the way include:

- 1 Two Thyatian woodsmen, who saw the 'shooting star' and can give accurate directions to help find it.
- 2 1d4 + 1 Vyalia elves (B30), unfriendly but not hostile, who did not see the falling craft (they have traveled from some distance north).
- 3 1d4 ghouls from an old burial mound hidden in a copse of heavier woodland.
- 4 1 mule (B34), with saddlebags still containing 240 sp and some iron rations, no sign of the rider, will have to be captured by the PCs.
- 5 1 Rock Python (B37). Hungry! Food distracts it.
- 6 1d4 + 4 pegasi (E54) fly overhead, out of combat range, ignoring the PCs.

### The Gnome's Airplane

The cloud clipper is visible from about 900 feet away in the woods. The gnomes have made a disastrously

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ineffective attempt at camouflaging it, using a brilliant emerald green tarpaulin-like cover. The sounds of muffled hammering and banging can be heard up to 1,500 feet away.

The gnomes have guards around their camp, stuck up in trees about 300 feet away due east and west of the airplane (or move them, so that one of them challenges the PCs as they approach). A guard seeing the PCs issues the challenge, "Halt! Who goes there, friend or foe?" Assuming the PCs say "friend" the gnome replies rather feebly, "Oh good. I say, you couldn't be helping me get down from here could you? I can't seem to be climbing down properly", and a PC who can *Climb Sheer Surfaces*, has a *levitate* spell, etc., can get the gnome down safely. The PCs are then taken to meet *Air Cadet Dunbar Stormkinder*, the group's self-styled commanding officer (he is only a *Squirt*, in fact). The PCs also get to see the cloud clipper, of course.

## The SkyGNOMES

### Dunbar Stormkinder

#### Pilot & Shaman

**Appearance:** Dunbar is 3' 9" tall, of medium build and has thick eyebrows, a walrus mustache, and weather-tanned skin (quite odd for a standard gnome).

**Personality:** Dunbar is smart and manipulative. He will pretend to be a gung-ho, slightly dense gnome while sizing up the PCs, but will do whatever he has to gain their help.

**Combat Notes:** 3d-level gnome/shaman; AC 5 (leather flying jacket); HD 3; hp 16; #AT 1; THAC0 17 (melee)/15 (missiles); Dmg 1-6 (shortsword or crossbow); MV 60' (20'); Save D3; ML 10; AL N; S 10, I 14, W 13, D 16, C 9, Ch 11.

**Spells:** *cure light wounds* (x2).

**Special Abilities:** infravision 90', +1 vs. air-based attacks, aerial estimation skills, saving throw vs. Death for falls over 10'.

**Languages:** Dwarf, Goblin, Halfling, Kobold, Neutral, Skycommon.

**Skills:** Fantasy Physics (W), Machine Building (I), Piloting +1 (D).

**Notes:** potion of human control (4 doses), wand of fireballs (17 charges).

**Gnomes (4):** AC 6 (leather armor and shield); HD 1; hp 7, 7, 6, 4; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-6 (shortsword or crossbow); MV 60' (20'); Save D1; ML 9 (10 while Dunbar lives); AL N.

Dunbar's fellow gnomes are very loyal to, and proud of, their kinsman — a member of 2nd Top Ballista Squadron, no less! They are industrious, honest, and usually happy-go-lucky.

## Dunbar's Request

Dunbar explains that his craft has crashed (which is obvious), although it is repairable. He brandishes his skyhook set to demonstrate this fact. However, the gnomes need time — time to repair their airplane, and time to chop down the forest into an airstrip to enable them to take off. They are worried about monsters in the woods, and ask the PCs to help protect them while they get on with their work.

The PCs may well ask, not unreasonably, what's in it for them. Dunbar offers the *wand of fireballs*. He wants 10 charges from this dumped into the fuel tank of the cloud clipper (which a PC magic-user, elf, or wicca can do). The PCs can have the wand afterwards (with its 7 remaining charges). Dunbar says that he can't offer the PCs money because he doesn't have any with him. Back home, however, he has a good stash and offers the PCs 1,000 gp if they help him get back. Sadly, Dunbar is lying. He has only 150 gp of his own, but is desperate to get back to Serraine.

If the PCs ask about Dunbar's home, the gnomes give them suspicious glances and mutter among themselves before Dunbar gives a very brief description of the Flying City, trying to get the PCs interested (without revealing too much). He will say that he can transport up to six PCs as passengers if he can but get airborne . . . .

Dunbar *desperately* wants the PCs to stay and help. He knows that he and his small group would need weeks to effect repairs and cut down trees (gnomes are small folk). Hungry monsters could easily kill his kin. If needs be, Dunbar will use his *potion of human control* covertly to influence a high-Charisma PC (or one who appears uncertain) to stay and help.

## The Problem

There are four logistic problems for the PCs: repair, runway building, protection, and food.

**Repair:** This is done by the gnomes. They need 30 gnome-days to do their work. Anyone other than a gnome counts as half a gnome for the purposes of this work. All the gnomes have Machine Building skill but only Dunbar has Piloting, so make sure Dunbar doesn't get killed! (Alternatively, allow an 'ordinary' gnome to have this skill also). The problem here is the gremlin, Beazley, detailed below.

**Runway Building:** This requires 30 man-days. Halflings and gnomes count as half a man for the purposes of this work, elves as 75% of a man. This investment yields a mostly flat strip of some 1,800 feet, barely long enough for the craft to take off. **Protection:** This is the PCs' other problem. They must protect the gnomes while they work. Two PCs should be with the gnomes. If this is done, the monsters will attack the PCs first (giving their all in defense of the industrious gnomes).

**Food:** The PCs may well get low on food. Dunbar

has emergency rations (raisins, sweets, nutritious crackers) in little packets inside tins, but the gnomes eat this. Allow the PCs to forage or encounter an edible monster (maybe a nice, fat wild boar), or starve them a bit and inflict Strength loss, making it harder to get work done, etc.

### Beazley the Gremlin

Beazley has taken refuge inside a rotted tree stump some 750 feet northwest of the clipper. He is feeling vengeful and nasty, and intends to use his Chaotic aura to mess up the gnomes' efforts. He must get within 18 feet to do this, but given his cunning and his *potion of invisibility* he only has to make a Hide in Crannies roll (to avoid telltale noises) so long as the potion lasts.

If Beazley can get this close undetected, he need only succeed in a Simple task attempt (6+ on d20) to mess up the day's work for the gnomes (e.g., a vital nut-and-bolt assembly falls apart and a jury-rigged repair comes crashing down). Each day, a clearly unnatural event will occur, ruining any work done.

Make it clear to the PCs that what is happening is deliberate, albeit very bizarre, sabotage (though don't reveal its source). The gnomes at first appear mystified, then begin muttering "One o' them again."

When the PCs ask "who are 'them?'," brief them on the subject of gremlins, and if you wish (especially if they have placed extra guards near the airplane) they may see or hear Beazley — a PC with a *detect invisibility* spell will certainly do so if the spell is cast at the right time.

Now the PCs must hunt Beazley. Don't pull any punches; make the little horror difficult to pursue and drive off. Use his aura to make their armor fall off, their wands drop from their hands, and their pants fall around their knees as their suspenders snap. He will use his spells to enable him to steal from the PCs, if he can! If the PCs manage to inflict half of Beazley's hit points in damage, the gremlin stays away for 1d3+1 days, but returns soon after. The gremlin must be killed, or somehow incapacitated if the repairs are to succeed. PCs who capture Beazley and wish to spare him will have a hard time of it — keeping him permanently drunk (and incapable of focusing his Chaotic effects) is just one solution.

### Beazley the Gremlin

**Combat Notes:** 6th-level Gremlin; AC 6; HD 4+3\*\*; hp 27; #AT 1 knife; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-3; MV 120' (40'); Save E4; ML 12; AL C; S 9, I 9, W 13, D 13, C 11, Ch 7; XPs 275.

Spells: Leg whip, side-splitter.

Special Abilities: 18' radius Chaotic aura, enemy attacks at -1, hide in crannies 60%, +3 on saves vs. mind spells/illusions, fall up to 20' unharmed, leaps (12'/15' horizontal, 6'/9' vertical).

Languages: Chaotic, Gremlin, Skycommon.

Notes: *potion of invisibility* (3 doses).

### Marauding Monsters

Put the PCs under the hammer with some attritional warfare here. There shouldn't be an absolute stream of wandering monsters arriving noon and night, but the PCs should be kept under pressure by a mix of relatively easy and then tough encounters. Adding this to the initial slowness of progress as the gremlin does its thing, and then the frustrations of trying to deal with the hateful little mite, can make this a stern test of character for the PCs. To soften this a bit, allow some of the wandering monsters to carry a little treasure — e.g., ogres can have the ever-faithful *Mk. I Ogre Sack* with a few silver and gold pieces in among the dwarf burgers and elf salad.

Planned encounters should be developed by the DM, and paced as the situation demands.

### Departure Time

By one of those fortunate coincidences, Serraine will happen to be overhead within a day or so of the work being completed. Dunbar hops with joy when a little glowing light appears in one of the quartz display globes on the controls of the aircraft.

You now have to consider whether you want the PCs to get to Serraine now or not. If you do, then Dunbar will indeed give up to six PCs a lift to Serraine (more if some gnomes have died); the airplane cannot carry more than this. The PCs won't be allowed to stay (no proper papers), but they can spend a day or two as tourists before being dumped off somewhere close to their homes by cloud clipper, at night. This gives them a chance to look around. Of course, they might decide to stay aboard the Flying City as stowaways!

If you don't want to have the PCs get to Serraine yet, but just want to whet their appetites for a later spell in the city, then the gnomes have access to a powerful sleeping draught which they slip into the food at the end of the final day (they have consumed an antidote, of course). PCs must make a saving throw vs. Poison at -4 or sleep all night. If just one or two PCs make the save, Dunbar explains apologetically that he really cannot take the PCs with him. He tells the truth — that he is in deep trouble back home, and doesn't want the PCs (who *should* be his friends by now) immersed in it when he returns. If necessary he uses his *potion of human control* here. The gnomes won't leave the PCs if they are all asleep. They will stand guard over them, protecting them from nocturnal monsters until dawn. The PCs will wake to find their hands tied with gentle knots that can be slipped in a few minutes, and a note from Dunbar giving them the full story. Nothing will have been taken from them.



# Heart of Darkness

## Introduction for the DM

This adventure is designed for characters of levels 7-11, with a total of 55-60 experience levels. The bulk of the action is set in the Flying City itself, and is best played here (although with much fussing around it could be relocated elsewhere).

"Heart of Darkness" revolves around an inhabitant of Serraine, the nagpa Heydrech. Heydrech is rich, clever, charismatic, a collector of magic, utterly selfish and quite *evil*. He is involved with so many wicked plots that it would be a major enterprise to unweave and separate the strands of his endeavors.

Heydrech is a member of the Grey Front, the sinister nagpa group which seeks to plunge Serraine into anarchy and chaos, enslave its people, and use the city as a flying fortress to terrorize and blackmail lands below. His basement is a meeting-place for members of this sinister group of nihilists.

Heydrech is an ardent collector of magical items and dabbles in undead control and monster mutations. While nagpa are not magic-users, they are highly magical creatures. Heydrech is having fun experimenting — *It's what he's experimenting on that's the trouble.*

Since nagpa can animate dead anyway, Heydrech has been experimenting with means of summoning undead. In doing so, he stumbled across some secrets of necromancy known only to the specialist mages of Glantri, and also managed to find and use an unpleasant magic item, the *lamp of the shroud*, which is enabling him to make great progress in this area.

Intelligent undead do not like the idea of becoming the pawns of a nagpa, especially true for powerful necromancers like Prince Morphail Gorevitch-Woszlany of Glantri (a nasty nosferatu) who has learned that someone in Serraine is experimenting with well-guarded secrets of necromancy. Too paranoid to investigate himself, the Prince has sent another to spy. The nosferatu Baron Miroslav Gorevitch-Stekel, a blood relative (as it were) has recently arrived in Serraine — under a pseudonym of course. Miroslav and his hunchbacked servant Yegor are here to investigate possible necromantic activity.

Miroslav's arrival has triggered off another flurry of covert activity. Erik Helsing, Master of the Onyx Tower, saw Miroslav at dinner in the Imperial Hostel and almost collapsed with heart failure at the sight of his distant relative. Helsing (really *Igor Gorevitch-Woszlany* of Boldavia in Glantri) believes that Prince Morphail must have sent Miroslav to wreak revenge on him. Helsing is almost incoherent with paranoia and fear, but he's going to find the courage to destroy Miroslav as soon as he can.

This is the situation that the PCs are going to walk into. They'll try to spy on Heydrech and find a nosferatu already doing so with a master magic-user spying on him. They'll be harassed by the authorities and end up pursuing Heydrech in a furious airplane chase to one of the vilest lands of the Known World!

However, it is quite important that you read through the adventure before playing it. You will have to wing it at times and react swiftly to innovative or unexpected play by players. To do this, you must understand both the characters and the plotline well.

In addition to the normal adventure sections, the general courses of activity for NPCs are described as are PC options (spying, break-ins, dealing with the law, etc.) and recommendations for dealing with the courses of action that the players choose — the matter of the Law of Serraine is of particular note here. After this a full detailing of a key adventure location — Heydrech's home is fully detailed. Next, you are briefed on how to bring the adventure to a rousing climax — the airplane chase. This all leads into the concluding part of the adventure, set in the dire land of Blackheart in Alphatia.

## Major NPCs

### Heydrech

#### 10th-Level Nagpa

**Appearance:** Heydrech is 5' 11" tall — unusually tall for a nagpa — and he holds himself high, again unusual for one of his race. He has fine slate-grey feathering about his head and neck, and his hands are long-fingered and strong. His eyes are unblinking, grey and cold, punctuating his continual sneer.

**Personality:** Cold, shrewd, and very evil, Heydrech is a power-crazed monster. His research experiments into magical effects are purely from the point of view of achieving greater mastery and power. He is shrewd and manipulative, but polite and apparently friendly, even charismatic. Even so, he secretly despises others and avoids personal interactions whenever possible.

**DMing Notes:** First, Heydrech always makes sure that his sidekicks protect him as much as possible — his homunculus, hellhound, golems, and Tarras Firehand the gnome, not to mention the undead in the basement. These creatures are all detailed with Heydrech's home. Staging a battle is dealt with later.

Second, Heydrech's gauntlets and staff make him deadly in melee (total adjusted THACO 5, Dmg 1d6+4 or better) and he doesn't hesitate to use charges from the staff to blind and injure PCs. He prefers to stay behind guards and use his special abilities, but can slug it out if he must. If pressed, Heydrech always flees. In staging any fight with him, he really should escape (or else the final part of the adventure may be hard to stage). He has his *potion of gaseous form* and the *ring of spell storage* to provide him with fast getaway routes, and his scroll can create a delay (e.g., a tunnel-filling pit) to frustrate pursuers.

Third, Heydrech has additional magic items in his home, which should be taken into account in any battle there. Finally, he has two special magic items — the *lamp of the shroud* and the *meistercloak* — which are of particular importance to him.

**Combat Notes:** AC -2 (ring of protection +2); HD 13+4\*\*; hp 86; #AT 1 weapon; THACO 9 (melee)/7 (missiles); Dmg by weapon; MV 120' (40'); Save MU13+4; ML 9; AL C; S 9, I 16, W 16, D 16, C 13, Ch 14; XPs 3,050.

**Special Abilities:** *animate dead* 1/day, anti-magic (20%), *corruption* 3/day, *create fire* 3/day, *darkness* 3/day, *paralyze* Lawful creatures 10' radius 3/day, *polymorph self* (humanoid form) up to 10 hrs/day, saving throws at +4.

**Languages:** Chaotic, Common, Nagpa, Skycommon.

**Skills:** Alertness (D), Appraisal (I), History: Alphatia, Serraine, Thyatis (all I), Knowledge: Alternate Magics, Extraplanar Monsters, Theology, Undead Lore (all I).

**Notes:** *Amulet of spell storing* (as ring), with *dimension door* (x2), *fly*; *gauntlets of ogre power*, *girdle of fire resistance* (as the ring), *lamp of the shroud* (h), *meistercloak* (h), *ring of protection +2*, *ring of quickness* (*haste self* only 1/day for 1 turn), *staff of harming* (18 charges), *shortsword +4* (carried, envenomed, when in thief form — see below) (h), *potions of gaseous form* and *super-healing* (x2), *scroll of trapping*. Items labelled (h) are usually kept at home, but vital enough to warrant inclusion here also.

### Lamp of the Shroud

This disgusting lamp has several powers, depending on the level of the character employing it and the fuel used to feed it. Use of this evil magical item is a very, very, Chaotic act. Its powers include:

- (i) A character of 5th or higher level can burn the lamp once per day for one Turn to *animate dead* (skeletons, zombies). One HD of undead per level of the character can be created. This function uses ordinary oil as fuel. The undead remain animated for 12 + 4d6 hours before becoming lifeless again.
- (ii) A character of 7th or higher level can do the same as above, but no bodies are needed for the animation; they are magically created. However, a half-pint of (humanoid) corpse fat is needed as fuel.
- (iii) A character of 9th level can burn the lamp for six Turns, once a day, requiring a pint of oil rendered from human corpse fat, and summon 2d4 shadows or 1d3 wraiths which remain until the next sunrise.
- (iv) A character of 11th or higher level can burn the lamp for six Turns, twice a week, to summon 1d4 + 1 spectres or 1d2 vampires, which remain until the following sunrise. However, this requires the use of a pint of human corpse oil and special fetid incense which has been cursed by a Chaotic cleric.

Any undead created or summoned will automatically be wholly loyal to their creator; their relation is as of undead pawns to an undead liege (see *Master DM's Rulebook*, pp. 22-23). If an attempt is made to Turn the undead, they are allowed a saving throw vs. Spells at the level of their creator/summoner (with a -2

penalty if they have 4 HD or fewer). There is an additional -2 penalty to this roll if the usual result of this Turning attempt would be 'D' on the matrix.

The powers above are simply those which Heydrech *knows* about. He is *certain* there are more, and that at higher levels the *lamp* can summon or create horrors like spirits, phantoms or worse. This is left to the DM to detail further.

### Meistercloak

A humanoid wearer of this cloak can act in all respects as a 10th-level thief for up to six Turns per day. Skills, attacks from behind, moving silently, etc., are all performed as by a thief of that level, but the character's hit points, AC, etc., remain as normal (**Note:** to hit rolls stay the same, but the +4 bonus for the attack from behind, and additional damage, apply as normal for a 10th-level thief). If the character wearing the cloak is a thief of 10th or higher level, the cloak grants +5 (or +25%) to all skills for the duration of its effect.

Heydrech uses this for sneaking and spying when he is abroad on 'Front business, and *polymorphed* to avoid recognition.

### Baron Miroslav Gorevitch-Stekel (alias the musician, Boris Vasiliev) Glantrian Nosferatu Noble

**Appearance:** Standing a full 6' 4" tall, with pale skin, brown eyes, and black hair with a widow's peak. Miroslav looks sinister in his black, scarlet-lined cloak and dark clothes. He looks 35 years old (he is actually 386), and moves in a slow, deliberate manner.

**Personality:** Miroslav has a cultured, polite persona. As 'Boris Vasiliev' he is well-mannered, quiet, and prefers solitude for his 'nerves'. His real personality is one that is slow to think, but thinks deep thoughts. He doesn't react to changing events quickly, but is almost never fooled. He is not really evil, and he doesn't like killing anyone whose blood he feeds on. At Morphail's insistence, he doesn't create other nosferatu; he doesn't wish to anyway.

**Cover Identity:** 'Boris Vasiliev' is a concert clavier player from Glantri on a rest cure away from the pressures of public appreciation. He feigns fatigue and 'nerves'. His music skills are such that he can get away with this pretense (300 years of practice hasn't hurt). 'Boris' has a suite of rooms at the Imperial with his manservant, the hunchback Yegor.

**DMing Notes:** Miroslav uses spells when he can for offense and defense, and avoids melee. Spells such as *wall of stone* are used to block people closing to melee. Miroslav does not use flashy magics which might attract public attention — the *lightning bolt* is a last resort, while *feeblemind* is much preferred as is his *wand of paralyzation* which he uses sparingly.

Miroslav has all the talents of the vampire and will certainly try to use his charm power on a solitary PC if given the chance. He is also careful to use investigative spells (*detect invisible*, *wizard eye*) when he first



checks out any area. He's cautious and conservative.

Despite his great powers, He won't take undue risks. Miroslav prefers to run when faced with danger. His nosferatu powers, flying and gaseous form, give him superb evasion skills. Combining gaseous form and *invisibility* is a favored choice for covert actions.

Adjusted THAC0 scores and damage for Miroslav with his magical weapons are: melee, THAC0 9, Dmg 1d8 + 2; missile fire, THAC0 7, Dmg 1d6.

**Combat Notes:** 16th-level Magic-User; AC - 2 (*ring of protection* + 1); HD 9\*\*\*; hp 57; #AT 1 bite or 1 weapon; THAC0 11 (melee)/8 (missiles); Dmg special or by weapon; MV 120' (40')/flying 180' (60'); Save MU16; ML 10; AL N; S 11, I 13, W 13, D 18, C 13, Ch 14; XPs 3,000.

**Spells:** *detect magic*, *magic missile* (x2; 4 missiles per spell), *read magic*, *sleep*, *detect invisible*, *ESP*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *web*, *dispel magic*, *haste*, *hold person*, *lightning bolt*, *slow* (reverse of *haste*), *charm monster*, *confusion*, *polymorph others*, *wizard eye*, *feeblemind*, *magic jar*, *teleport*, *disintegrate*, *wall of iron*, *create normal monsters*, and *power word stun*.

**Languages:** Common, Glantrian, Gnome, Neutral.

**Skills:** Etiquette (Ch), History of Glantri (I), Musicianship (stringed keyboard instruments; D); Politics of Glantri (I), Undead Lore + 1 (I).

**Notes:** *Sword* + 2, *crossbow* + 1, *ring of protection* + 1, *wand of paralyzation* (9 charges), personal jew-

elry (cravat-pins, cuff pins, gold waistcoat chains, etc.), total value 1650 gp.

**Special Abilities I — Nosferatu Abilities:**

- *Charm person* by gaze 3/day (a saving throw vs. Spells at - 2 negates).
- Summon rats (4d10) or giant rats (2d4) only in Serraine, otherwise animal summoning as per Vampire.
- Bite drains blood, not energy levels.
- Immune to *sleep/hold/charm* spells.
- Immune to damage from non-magical weapons.
- Regenerate 3 hp per round in combat.
- Can turn into gaseous form at will, also into wolf or giant bat forms.
- A creature slain by nosferatu comes back from dead as nosferatu *only if the slayer wishes this*.
- weaknesses as for vampire, save the following:
  - sunlight causes 1 hp damage per round only;
  - unaffected by garlic;
  - because of his great age, and a carefully-worded wish, Miroslav is Turned as a spirit.

**Special Abilities II — Necromantic:**

- Can protect self (only) against 16 HD of undead. Lower levels affected first in a mix of types. Usable three times a day with a 76% chance for success.
- Can control undead, up to 16 HD. Lower levels are affected first in a mix of types. Effect lasts until next full moon or until the Baron or his allies at-

tack the undead. Range up to 24 miles, twice a day with a 66% chance for success.

- Can create undead, once a day with a 56% chance for success, up to 7 HD per individual undead — up to 16 HD total. Takes 1d6 hours per \* rating for undead creation. A body is required for corporeal undead.

- *Raise dead fully* once per week with a 46% success chance.

## The Minor Cast

Each of the major NPCs has an assistant.

### Yegor Ponomarenko

#### Bodyguard/spy for Miroslav

**Appearance:** Yegor is 5' 7" tall, but doesn't look it, because he is a hunchback. His torso is broad and clumsy in appearance; his legs too short; while his arms are long and muscular. He has tanned skin, straight black hair, brown eyes, and yellow, snaggle teeth. Yegor is 31 years old, but looks to be anywhere from 30 to late 50's.

**Personality:** Yegor is not overblessed with intelligence, and though his malformed body seems a disadvantage, he is a gifted thief. However, he still has a pronounced inferiority complex, and is acutely aware of his uncharming appearance and people's reactions to it. He intensely loyal to Miroslav, who does show him respect and some slight affection — he's the only human being who ever has, *even if Miroslav isn't actually human*. He has been repeatedly charmed by Miroslav for so many years that the effect is permanent now. No magic will dispel it.

**DMing Notes:** Yegor's adjusted THAC0 and damage scores for his magical weapons are: melee, THAC0 9 and Dmg 1d8+4 with his *sword +3* (THAC0 10 and Dmg 1d4+3 with the *spare dagger +3*) and THAC0 8 (7), Dmg 1d6 (+1) with his *crossbow +2 (bolts +1)*.

Tactically, Yegor has important defenses (the potions) which are used before any *expected* major combat. Don't forget his relevant skills. Yegor is hard to surprise. He readily uses the defensive spells on the scroll, but reserves the *polymorph other* spell for an emergency. When with "the master," Yegor won't attempt to flee unless Miroslav leads the retreat. On his own, Yegor always attempts escape rather than risk a confrontation with unknown dangerous types. He uses the *continual darkness* effect from his sword to blind enemies, casting it at their eyes.

**Combat Notes:** 13th-level Master Thief; AC -1 (*leather armor +3, earring of protection +2*); HD 9d4+8; hp 53; #AT 1; THAC0 12 (melee)/10 (missiles); Dmg by weapon type (+1 in melee); MV 120' (40'); Save T13; ML 9 (11 while Miroslav lives); AL N; S 13, I 8, W 9, D 18, C 16, Ch 7; XPs 2,300.

**Languages:** Common, Neutral, Glantrian.

**Skills:** Alertness +1 (D), Fighting Instinct +1 (D), Gambling (D).

**Thief Skills:** OL 97, RT 97, PP 115, MS 98, CSS 99, HS 95, HN 1-5, can cast magic-user spells from scrolls (10% chance for error).

**Notes:** *crossbow +2* (with 11 bolts +1), *dagger +2, leather armor +3, potions of fortitude and invulnerability, ring of protection +2, scroll of five magic-user spells (invisibility, mirror image, fly, polymorph other), sword +3*, casts *continual darkness* three times a day on command.

**Tarras Firehand** 'Research Assistant' for Heydrecht

**Appearance:** Tarras always wears his leather armor beneath a plain brown or grey robe, and looks quite ordinary. He is of average gnome height (around 3' 11"), average build, and has fairly plain features, with a mousey-brown beard and thinning hair.

**Personality:** Tarras is a whining, hateful little creature. He despises his clan for being weak, and the other clans for not making clan Firehand the leaders of the skygnomes. He hates his family for rejecting him (as he sees it) and loathes everyone else on principle. This is a severely embittered individual.

Tarras finds undead congenial company and had begun work on machines which might *animate* corpses and amplify the power of undead. He met Heydrecht when they bumped into each other while trying to retrieve the corpse of a tourist slain by a harpy. They joined forces — reluctantly at first. Tarras gained the advantage of a secure place to work while the nagpa gained Tarras's technological skills (and wicca abilities). Neither has any real loyalty to the other.

**DMing Notes:** Tarras prefers to keep foes at a distance and blast away with his wand, spells or other ranged attacks. He will consume his *potions of giant strength* and *invulnerability* before combat if possible, and use defensive spells such as *mirror image, protection from evil*, and *fly* (for a getaway).

Tarras's adjusted THAC0/Dmg values for his magical weapons are: THAC0 10, Dmg 1d6+2 with his sword (Dmg 2d8+2 if he has consumed his giant strength potion), THAC0 8 (7), Dmg 1d6 (+1) with his bow (arrows +1).

**Combat Notes:** 7th-level Gnome/7th-level Wicca; AC 1 (gnome-sized *leather armor +3*), HD 7, hp 42, #AT 1, THAC0 13 (melee)/10 (missiles), Dmg by weapon, MV 60' (20'); Save D7; ML 9; AL C; S 9, I 15, W 9, D 18, C 13, Ch 8; XPs 1,750.

**Spells:** *charm person, magic missile* (2 missiles), *protection from evil, mirror image, phantasmal force, dispel magic, fly, polymorph other*.

**Special Abilities:** infravision to 90', aerial detection skills at 70%, +2 saves vs. air-based attacks, save versus Death Ray for falls over 10'.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Goblin, Halfling, Kobold, Skycommon.

**Skills:** Alchemy, Knowledge: Mutant Monsters, Machine Building +2, Undead Lore (all I).

**Notes:** *leather armor +3, potions of defense +4,*

*giant strength, invisibility (x2), and flying; ring of invisibility detection (casts detect invisible 3 times a day, six Turns per use), rod of cancellation, shortbow +2 (with 8 arrows +1), shortsword +2, wand of cold (8 charges), gold bracelet, emerald/silver ring, ruby/roseate quartz brooch — total value 1,750 gp).*

### Set Up

How you set up this adventure depends on whether the PCs are natives of the Flying City, are just visiting as tourists, or if they have never been there before.

#### Set-Up for Newcomers

There are two ways to set the adventure going. Try setting up a trail to Heydrech during a series adventures (as was done in "Tabi Hunt?"). Paint him as a generally interesting (and unsavory) individual. Of course, this requires playing out some earlier adventures as lead-ins, but this will be necessary anyway if your PCs are not of sufficiently high level.

The PCs must still get to Serraine, of course. They will need to know where it is, and find someone who can tell them the city's current itinerary (as it were), which could be an adventure in itself . . . .

As an alternative, have a mid-high level magic-user Patron hire the PCs to investigate Heydrech and make a full report on his activities. As a twist, this magic-user mistakenly believes (and tells the PCs) that Heydrech is working on a new magical form of *teleportation* usable by non-mages. Since confusing appearances are a part of the plotline here you might as well mislead the PCs into the bargain.

This mage-Patron could well be encountered in *Floating Ar* in Alphatia (see *Dawn of the Emperors*) — a distant relative of the mage who created the floating cities of Ar, explaining his general interest in magics of *levitation, flight, teleportation,* and 'transportation magic.' It also gives a nice thematic unity to the link with a flying city. This mage could be used to feed the PCs a canned history of the Flying City. He might even buy them tickets for "*the vacation trip of a lifetime!*"

Either way, the PCs should only get tickets for a trip of moderate duration (seven days or so), since the city isn't accepting passengers for longer trips right now. This creates some time pressure, always a good way of keeping PCs from spending too much time agonizing and getting them out in the streets to do something. It's important, though, that the City should be over *Blackheart* (in Alphatia — see *Dawn of the Emperors* if you have it) at the end of the adventure. You may need to wangle the timeline a little (delay the city with a freak storm, hunt for people lost overboard, stop for repairs, etc.).

Don't forget to do plenty of scene-setting when the PCs arrive in Serraine. There's so much to see in this weird place; the PCs shouldn't just get there, dump their backpacks and set off looking for their man (or nagpa). They should have a day to get their "sky-

legs." Use one of the guides from the DM's Booklet to show the PCs the sights and wonders of the place! Consider the humor in using Horrobin the nagpa (a member of Heydrech's Grey Front) as the guide.

#### Set Up for Residents

For PCs or player creatures who are residents of Serraine, use a sequence of events which could be dropped into a series of (unrelated) mini-adventures in the City over a short time period (7-10 days or so). These might include:

- A number of tourists have disappeared and their bodies cannot be found. Always a hazard — people fall off the city (despite the magical barriers and common sense) or get eaten by harpies, etc. — but an alarming number have disappeared recently. Bad for Business!

- Miroslav and Yegor arrive at the Imperial. They certainly look weird, and speak in wonderful Romanian-style accents, so they're conspicuous. This should alert the PCs to their presence.

- There are mutterings about "*those nagpa and their bags-o'-bones servants*" (i.e., skeletons) in many quarters. The nagpa's distasteful necromantic interests generally are tolerated, but recently, some creatures feel the nagpa are "*going too far*". This is only rumor and vague grievance, though.

- In a street near Heydrech's home, a group of the City Watch managed to stop a nagpa dragging a tourist's body home in a sack; the nagpa ran off and couldn't be tracked down. The news broadsides announce that the death of the tourist, an Alphatian noble, has prompted the Alphatian consul to cancel further visits by citizens of the empire. Economic disaster looms!

All this won't specifically draw the PCs to Heydrech, but should get them into the plotline. How the PCs might approach the problem is detailed later on.

### Actions for the Major NPCs

In order to give the players a feeling that they are participating in a full-blown story (one in which their actions must eventually play a significant part), the actions here are scripted almost as if the PCs didn't exist. Further on, NPC reactions to specific PC activity are given which modify the simple outlines given below.

#### Heydrech and Tarras

Heydrech and Tarras mostly stay at home and experiment with their undead. They emerge rarely, although Heydrech does visit both the Great Library and the homes of two other nagpa members of the Grey Front. He always travels in *polymorphed* form, leaving by the back door and gate of his home (Map 5). He appears as a medium-built, 5' 9" tall human male half the time, and as a slim, short (5' 3" tall) elf female the other half (he has suitable garb to accom-

pany these disguises). He usually wears his *meister-cloak* to enable him to move silently, hear noise, etc.

Visits to other nagpa are done to further the work of the Grey Front. This isn't fully detailed, but it involves blackmail of petty officials, plans for sabotage, extending nagpa control of undead, treasure maps (for lands below) showing items which can be used to control creatures (charm items, control potions and the alchemists who make them, etc.). Heydrech's home contains many such plans and items and details are given later. The two nagpa, Schamman and Baraith, are scholars, both 2d-level (55, 52 hp) and Chaotic.

Heydrech's travels to the library are more interesting. Here, he meets Matazumi in a private office magically protected against scrying (*crystal balls, wizard eye spells, even a commune!*). His deal with Matazumi is this: Matazumi allows Heydrech access to the *Shroudwell collection* (a highly restricted set of magical tomes about necromancy) to aid the nagpa in his research. In return, Heydrech has promised to find a way to break the *geas* on Matazumi. Research into controlling undead should give him a good chance. Matazumi wants to be a librarian, but it matters to him whether he has a *choice* in the matter. He is prepared to take a risk and help the nagpa.

Heydrech is unaware of Miroslav's purpose here. He doesn't visit the Imperial and has only half heard tales of a Glantrian musician taking a rest cure.

#### Miroslav and Yegor

These two have the distinct disadvantage of being highly recognizable, and so cannot travel abroad in their normal form. This is not a great problem. Yegor has *potions of invisibility*, although he will only use them if Miroslav has not already cast his *invisibility* spell on the thief. Miroslav can travel in gaseous form (so long as there are no high winds, storms, etc.), and he has his *invisibility* spell if not already cast on Yegor.

Miroslav is being extremely careful and patient. He has no reason to believe that there is any time pressure on him. Yegor will make a preliminary scouting of Heydrech's home to get basic dimensions and a plan of the area. Miroslav then makes a nocturnal visit to find a human to feed on (something the PCs may hear of by way of rumors). He will also visit the library, following Heydrech from his home, then try to obtain a library card. Yegor's second investigative trip scouting out Heydrech's home (in which he is driven off by hellhounds) may be one the PCs manage to disturb (see below).

#### Other NPCs

Obviously, the four NPCs of central importance to this plotline aren't the only ones in town.

Having the PCs meet a Top Ballista flying ace if they don't know one already is a good move, because the PCs will need a pilot for the airplane chase later on. Meeting a group of drunken pilots in a tavern is a good way of staging things so that the airman (or air-gnome, etc.) owes the PCs a favor for being beastly

rude to them, being sick over their robes, etc. This could also be a time to cash in any favors owed to the PCs by Dunbar Firehand (from "Crash Landing").

#### COURSES OF ACTION FOR PCs

Your choices amongst these will depend on whether the PCs are specifically spying on Heydrech to begin with. If not, you must steer them in his direction. This can be done with rumors, a sighting of a furtive-looking Heydrech as he leaves the Great Library with a heavy notebook, by tailing Yegor on a spying trip to Heydrech's home, with a tip-off source among the PCs' friends in the city, or other similar means. Obviously, what the PCs do will be affected by what NPCs are doing and *their* reactions to the PCs.

It's important that the PCs don't just go barging into Heydrech's house, using violence in public, etc. They will have to enter the house eventually, but good players should be scouting, spying, trying to find out what may be happening. Open violence will get the PCs into trouble with the law, a matter dealt with later.

The following courses of action are the likeliest for the PCs to use.

#### SPYING ON MIROSLAV & YEGOR

The PCs could begin by hearing rumors about this pair. This will turn little up, save that hotel staff at the Imperial have been told firmly not to enter their suite of rooms without knocking and waiting to be let in. Several people think they're significantly sinister, but there is no concrete lead for the PCs to follow. If they engage them in conversation (e.g., a PC musician speaks with Miroslav about music) they will get only small talk. A line such as "*I loved your concerts in Eriadna last year*" will gain only immediate suspicion unless the PC is very cleverly cultivating the image of a pretentious idiot.

Searching the suite of rooms occupied by Miroslav and Yegor is possible if the PCs stage this carefully — e.g., the PCs create a diversion (such as a fire) to get them out of their rooms while they make a fast search. No solid information about Miroslav's activities is revealed, but the following items of note can be found:

- A wizard locked moneybox with 500gp and 150pp.
- A set of luggage, one small valise of which has the Gorevitch-Stekel coat of arms. A character from Glantri making an Intelligence check, or a character with a Knowledge skill relevant to Glantri, can recognize this as closely related to the Gorevitch-Wozslany coat of arms.
- A sealed (*wizard locked*) silver flask which contains 1 pint of blood treated with an anti-coagulant, so it stays fresh and liquid.

Tailing Yegor (Miroslav only goes out at night in gaseous form) is possible, but the PCs will have to be

very careful. Yegor will either be *invisible* when he leaves, or guzzle a *potion of invisibility* soon after leaving. He won't be easy to follow. He heads for Heydrech's home. If they stake out the house, the hellhounds may alert the PCs to Yegor's presence.

### Death of a Librarian

Miroslav makes only one obvious trip; to the Great Library, to attempt to get a library card from Matazumi. He goes out at dusk (the library is open late). He's learned of Heydrech's visits from Yegor, and wants to discover Heydrech's choices in reading matter. He emerges some 10-15 minutes after entering, looking furious. If the PCs follow this up, an assistant librarian (who has been slipped a few gold pieces) states that "Mr. Vasiliev didn't have any luck getting a card. Such a pity when he wanted something so unusual . . ." The assistant librarian clearly indicates his hope that the PC will hand over a few more gps, and then hesitates and waves the PC away. Miroslav is at the entrance, looking pointedly at the PC and the librarian. He walks up to the counter and asks if he has left his walking stick (he didn't have one) there, and stares at the assistant librarian, successfully *charming* him. Having been told that he left no stick, he leaves. Miroslav is now suspicious of the PCs. The librarian won't tell the PC any more. If pestered he tells the PCs to go away and leave him alone.

The assistant librarian doesn't turn up for work the next day, because he's dead (killed by Yegor). The PCs have no evidence to prove this, so all they can do is try to talk to another assistant covertly (at home, at a hostelry for dinner, etc.). If this is done, then the assistant says that the ~~first~~ librarian did mention the odd request of the gent from Glantri, and for a measly sum (say 50 gp) the librarian will tell all. The collection 'Vasiliev' wanted to see was the *Shroudwell collection*, a highly-restricted set of books on necromancy and experiments with undead. The PCs cannot get to see this.

This second step requires good detective work by the PCs. Unfortunately Tarras Firehand will overhear the conversation. Matazumi will have tipped off Heydrech about the visit of 'Boris Vasiliev' and the PCs. Tarras will investigate both. Now the PCs' activities will be anticipated by Heydrech as well as the Glantrians. The second assistant librarian will be killed as well (stabbed by Tarras). Miroslav and Yegor have an excellent alibi as they were at a private dinner with a Karameikan countess at the Imperial when the gnome was killed. This could really throw the PCs!

### Slurp, Slurp

Miroslav also goes out on alternate evenings to feed. If you wish, a delightful young female known to the PCs (or who develops an attraction to one) can be the victim, becoming pale and wan until the traditional remedies are taken (garlic buds in all rooms, etc.) after which Miroslav takes the usual counter-measures (*charming* the maid and telling her to remove them

all, etc.). This is an optional plot complication, but can be rather fun. Miroslav won't kill the girl in the time the adventure takes to complete.

## SPYING ON HEYDRECH & TARRAS

### Heydrech's Travels

Heydrech's actions and visits to the library and to his two friends have been detailed previously. At the library, Matazumi personally escorts the nagpa to the Shroudwell collection, but will not allow Heydrech to borrow any of the books overnight. No librarian can tell the PC where Heydrech does his reading.

Optionally, one librarian talks, but he too will be murdered for telling the PCs this — stage a scene like Miroslav's re-entry to the library as described earlier, this time for Heydrech. Tarras kills the librarian later that same night. Invisible PCs are warned that Matazumi detects invisible automatically (if he sees them, it is a BIG library though).

The PCs can learn something about Heydrech's library visits if they think carefully about them. If they have been told by a Patron that he may be dabbling in teleportation magic — works on this topic are not in the restricted section of the library, as any *surviving* librarian can tell them (though the librarians will quickly put two and two together — talk to the PCs and they find you floating face down in Lake Gemeye the next morning).

The PCs can also trail Heydrech to his nagpa friends and then do a little background checking on these two. Schamman is a maker of water clocks and similar small creations, including smoke-puffing automata-puppets and the like. He is fairly rich, not greatly liked, and is quite antisocial. Baraith is known as a scholar of ancient history who has travelled to archaeological excavations and digs, and who has a particular interest in burial sites (though so do most other nagpa). He too is antisocial and not much liked. If the PCs have heard of the Grey Front, then you might have an informant (and not just someone in a tavern!) mention that Schamman is suspected of being a member of this organization.

### Tarras

Tarras doesn't go out of the house until he or Heydrech have been made aware of the PCs' investigative activity. This can be something as simple as the hellhounds warning of a PC snooping around the house, or Heydrech finding out from Matazumi about the PCs asking questions at the library. As noted earlier, Tarras will follow one or more PCs to see what kind of queries they are making.

**The key rule:** Tarras and Heydrech will *never* be away from the house at the same time.

### A Snooping Base

The PCs need a base of operations. Chances are, they have been operating out of a hostels. However, an ideal place for the PCs to keep tabs on Heydrech and

Tarras is by taking over a house near to Heydrech's own and using it as a base. If they make inquiries (at the Inquiries Office in Serraine) they will be directed to Greede & Grabit, Property Managers, who can offer them a house just across the street for a rental of only 25 gp per week — minimum lease: unfurnished, 3 months, plus 250 gp deposit.

Players this cunning deserve a break. Spying on the house will lead to some key observations; details follow later.

### Breaking in to Heydrech's House

This is the culmination of the PCs' actions. However, the PCs should be warned off from taking this course of action immediately by regular Watch patrols and the like. Spying on the house — trying to get close enough to look through the windows, etc., or using a *wizard eye* spell or other scrying magics — is dealt with under the house description.

### Oddball Actions

There are many other unusual things the PCs might try. Here's how you might deal with a few of them.

#### Breaking into the Library

Impress on the PCs that this is a tremendously *bad* idea. Not only is Matazumi a never-sleeping guardian of horrifying power, but the library is very close to the central Watch house. It is protected with *wizard locks* (30th-level casting), the glass in the place has the consistency of steel, it is impossible to *teleport* (or *dimension door*, or travel *ethereally*) into the place, and no fire-based or electrically-based spells work inside the library. Basically, anything that can be done to prevent illegal entry into the library and/or destruction of the contents has been done.

This is something the PCs really shouldn't do. If they do, throw Matazumi at them; then a double strength group of the City Watch; and so on. If they flee fast, they might get away. If not, they are banished, or deported, or executed, as appropriate.

#### Breaking in Elsewhere

The most likely locations are the homes of Schamman and Baraith, Heydrech's nagpa friends. What the PCs get from this depends on how they manage matters.

If the PCs are smart, let them glean some information. Smart means a quiet break-in; using cover of darkness or a diversion; making sure the Watch isn't about; trying to be sure that the nagpa inhabitant is out; using as little violence as possible (each house has skeleton/zombie guards and others, if you wish); and so on. If the PCs approach a break-in this way, they may glean some evidence that the nagpa who lives here is connected with the Grey Front. For example, there may be notes on possible acts of sabotage, or a list of targets for *control* magics. However, there should be nothing to implicate any other NPC or creature.

If the PCs just charge in like a bunch of bulls in a china shop, they discover nothing, except that a group of the Watch arrives to find out what's going on. Again, a fast exit will be essential if the adventure is to continue at all.

#### Trying to get a Library Card

This involves an interview with Matazumi, which should be extremely unnerving (play up Matazumi's weird appearance and fondness for fright). The PC applying will only get a library card if references can be supplied from three creatures of distinguished position in the city (healers, Council members, senior mages, etc.). This is *unlikely* to be possible for PCs. In any event, access to restricted collections (like the Shroudwell) will not be allowed. Mention of the Shroudwell collection will make Matazumi instantly suspicious, and he will inform Heydrech.

#### Violence Against Major NPCs

Some PCs may try this out of frustration, or because the players have become overly dependent on this kind of approach for problem-solving. They may attempt to kidnap Yegor to interrogate him, or trap Heydrech on the way home from the library for the same purpose. Such attempts are a big mistake. The NPCs all have ways of fast escape, and if these don't succeed, the PCs will be seen by a bunch of eyewitnesses who just happen on the scene at the wrong time. The agents of the law will be after the PCs from this moment on, making their goals far harder to realize, since all their future work will have to be done in secret.

#### Talking with other NPCs

The PCs may try interrogating other NPCs about Heydrech, Tarras, Miroslav, or Yegor. They might talk with chambermaids at the Imperial, Heydrech's next-door neighbor, a faenare windsinger (about musicianship and Miroslav), or one of a score of different possibilities. It's impossible to cover them all, so what the PCs get should depend on two things.

First, would the NPC in question know anything of importance, perhaps as something half-glimpsed or as a careless word overheard?

Second, are they willing to tell the PCs? Also, bear in mind how subtle the PCs act. If they are running around, asking questions of everyone they can think of — they are playing their hand poorly. Being subtle and selective is a better strategy. Reward more clever play with a little extra information and XPs.

### The Attitude of the Law

Other than crimes against person and property, Serraine has a fairly loose legal code. If the PCs commit some really serious crime (murder, kidnapping, etc.), make sure there are witnesses, and then the Watch will hunt them down ruthlessly. The City Watch patrols described in the *DM's Booklet* are too weak to



handle a party of PCs of levels 7-11 and they know it. So beef a special patrol with a pair of 5th-level pegataurs, a pair of 8th-level gnome shaman constables, and a 3d-level sphinx (“we’ll ask the questions here, if you don’t mind!”). This should give the PCs a good run for their money. Given this opposition, the PCs will have to work very hard indeed to get anything done. They may even be forced to hijack an airplane to escape from Serraine (in which case, get ready for a dogfight)!

On the other hand, if the PCs try to get the agents of the law on their side, they won’t find it easy. If you’ve been playing this right, the PCs won’t have much evidence of anything, until they’ve actually broken into Heydrech’s home, and no concrete evidence to put before the law.

If you wish, as an optional extra plot twist you can have a corrupt nagpa scribe in the Watch office tip Heydrech off about any claims the PCs make concerning wrongdoing on his part!

If the PCs have NPC friends who occupy positions of authority and prestige in the city, then these NPCs will be sympathetic to the PCs but will adopt the “what can we do?” posture, while appearing not to be wholly convinced by the PCs arguments. For example, if they claim Miroslav is a vampire, they will be told gently that this is not actually a crime per se, even if the NPC is convinced! These friendly NPCs will also be very busy during the adventure — a visiting Thyatian deputation, civic functions, etc. The most important role for such NPCs is to spring the PCs from jail (for a fat bail) if the PCs commit some minor crime (breaking in somewhere, minor assault, etc.).

### NPC Reactions to PC Activities

The NPCs are almost certainly going to get wind of the fact that the PCs are getting involved in their business. They have informants (other nagpa, Matazumi, etc.) in Heydrech’s case, and Miroslav and Yegor will probably detect any PCs tailing them. If PCs ask Imperial staff about Miroslav and Yegor, you may decide that the staff get a double reward by going straight to the Glantrians for a second fistful of gold by ratting on the PCs.

The trigger events below, which help the adventure along, may also bring the PCs into confrontation with the NPCs, as the details for the events suggest.

How the NPCs react depends on the situation and what the PCs are doing. However, all will try to avoid violence if possible.

Miroslav is here to track down Heydrech, after discovering the nature of his activities. Heydrech has experiments to run and a revolt to plan. The other two serve their masters and try to preserve their own skins. They may react with violence to a forthright attack, but will certainly try to escape death.

One specific case of importance is a possible alliance between the PCs and the Glantrians. They’re

both spying on Heydrech, after all. Could they combine forces? Probably not — Miroslav doesn’t want his secret known. But exceptional roleplay could make this a possibility. If you permit it, you will need to strengthen Heydrech’s house with two nagpa Grey Front members to even the odds; 7th- and 9th-level nagpa are suggested (Horrobin’s profile would work for the 9th-level nagpa), plus tabi servants.

### Trigger Events

Although the general courses of NPC activity have been given, use these trigger events to hasten and guide the plot along and help the PCs with their search.

#### An Invisible Caller

Yegor’s first attempt to spy on Heydrech’s house has clued the nagpa and his crew to invisible intruders. The nagpa’s invisible guardian hellhounds, who can smell and detect even invisible intruders, sensed Yegor’s presence and warned the house.

The hellhounds are cunning and well-trained. They do not attack immediately an invisible creature comes within range. Instead, they wait for it to come close to the house and then race towards it at full speed. They always breathe first, then their attacks are randomly distributed between bite and breath weapon.

Yegor ran for dear life when attacked and didn’t return. The next day, the dogs won’t be on the grounds. Heydrech expects another intrusion. They will be inside, peering through the windows, ready to warn of intruders, making it much tougher for the PCs to surprise anyone inside the house.

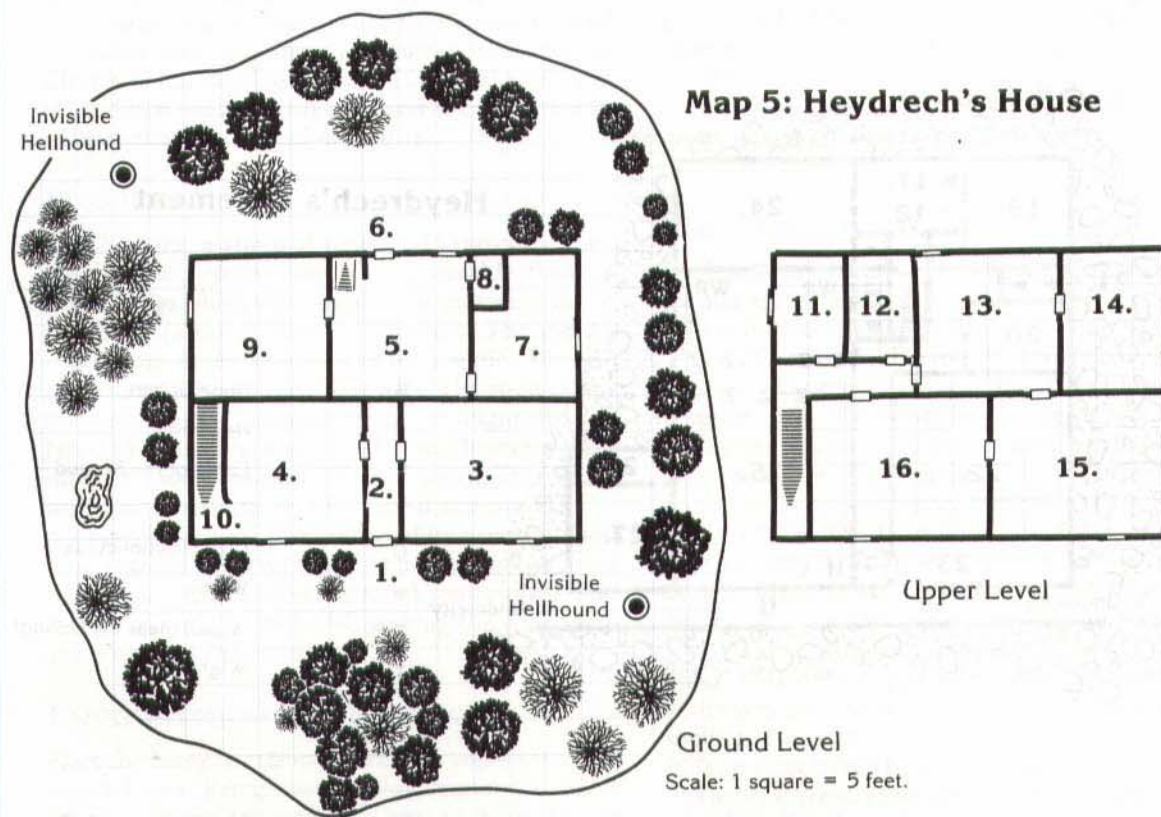
#### Special Delivery

Stompri the Cloud Giant arrives at Heydrech’s one day with a large trunk. Tarras and Heydrech drag it in. If asked politely, Stompri will tell the PCs that the trunk was a delivery from Ebenezer Firehand & Sons, a gnome merchant. If the PCs pursue this lead, they should learn that the trunk was full of human, elven, and humanoid bones imported from Ylaruam. This info might come from the careful questioning of a worker at the firm who is upset by what he has seen in the firm’s secret ledger (this worker might be found dead in a back alley the next day while old Ebenezer hires thugs to attack a few PCs!). Alternatively, a carefully planned break-in and thorough search (finding the secret ledger as opposed to the ‘official’ books) could turn up coded entries of shipments of body parts and bones to Heydrech’s general area, but not his specific address at a total cost of 15,000 gp — the letter H is used to denote the client. Thus, the book is not firm legal evidence.

#### Good Evening, Dr. Helsing

Erik Helsing takes to spying on Miroslav and Yegor, using a *polymorph self* spell (delete one of his wall of

Map 5: Heydrech's House



fire spells) to appear as an elf (choosing to be *invisible* too). He can cast all his spells in this form, of course, but if he uses a spell of 6th or higher level with visible effects (*disintegrate*, *death spell*) the PCs will know that he can't be an elf (his words and actions can also ruin his disguise).

Helsing is desperately afraid of Miroslav, but he is more terrified by ignorance of the Baron's purposes. He spies at a distance, too full of neurotic conflict to get closer. Later, as an elven guest, he takes a room at the Imperial for more direct spying.

PCs who spy on Miroslav by using a spell such as *detect invisible*, *wizard eye*, *truesight*, etc., should have a fair chance to reveal the spying 'elf'. A flying character peering through the windows of Miroslav's suite might literally bump into the elf. Following him can lead to the Onyx Tower, although scrying within Helsing's own rooms is not possible.

If the PCs corner the elf, he attempts to escape, (he has fearsome spells if forced to fight). If you think your PCs are overly-violent types, a pair of invisible stalkers accompany Helsing as bodyguards. If the PCs use a line of conversation which is creative and clever, or if they suspect the elf is from the Onyx Tower, Helsing may be prepared to parley. He may even hire them to be spies for him (guaranteeing a bumper payday if the PCs already have a Patron). As soon as Helsing knows that Miroslav and Yegor are here to spy on Heydrech, he sighs with relief and takes no further

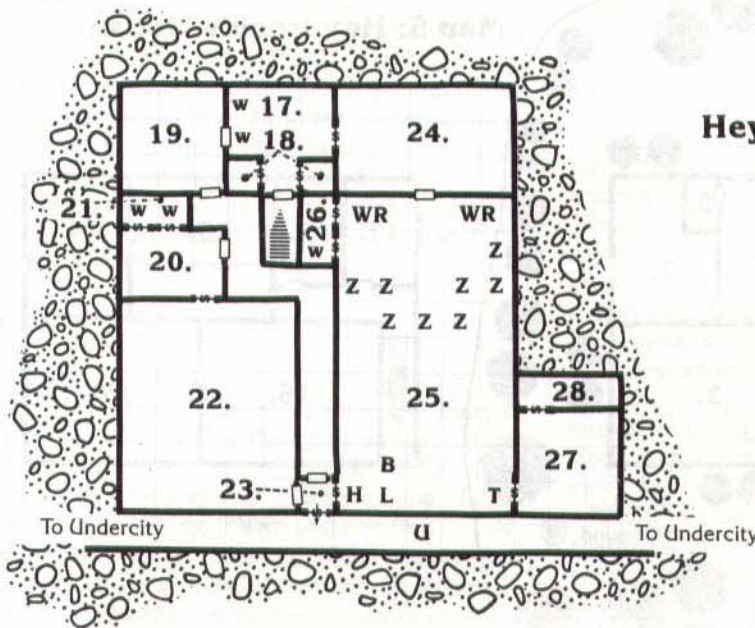
interest in them (at least that seems to be the case). He won't get involved with the PCs and Heydrech; he's too worried about being *detected* by Miroslav. Later on, he may well have jobs for the PCs if they prove trustworthy and able — rewarding the PCs with a friend in a high place.

#### The Grey Front Cabal

Eventually the PCs should have some idea of the work Heydrech must be doing in his house. They may consider an assault on Heydrech's home, or at least a break-in. Use this event to trigger the foray.

During the course of an evening, several cloaked nagpa arrive at Heydrech's, many accompanied by skeleton servants. In total, six nagpa (four 3d-level, one each of 5th and 6th level) and 12 skeletons arrive (there are also a 7th- and 8th-level nagpa inside, who have arrived via the Undercity). The PCs obviously should not attack at this stage, but should at least wait until the nagpa leave.

The PCs might tail one of the nagpa and ambush it, or go to its home, break in, and attack it. If they subdue one of these visitors, they can extract some information from it. The meeting was about the placement of new undead creatures in the Undercity — "*just as servants and guards, really!*" The lying nagpa can be forced with a little ungentle persuasion (or graphic threats of same) to tell the full truth — The undead are to be used as an attack force, but the nagpa doesn't know where and when.



### Heydrech's Basement

B	Bone Golem
H	Heydrech
L	Lamp of the Shroud
T	Tarras
U	Ulzaq Homonculus
w	Wight
WR	Wraith (near the ceiling)
Z	Wight

If the PCs go the law, the nagpa denies it all and has the PCs arrested for assault. The PCs must realize now that it's time to break into Heydrech's place.

### Heydrech's House

#### Special Properties

The entire house has two special properties which are of importance during this adventure.

(1) The house is magically protected against unauthorized entry and scrying. The house cannot be entered by spells such as *dimension door* or *teleport*, nor by *potions of ethereality*, etc. It's possible to move out of the house, or move around within it, using such spells. So far as scrying goes, divinational spells such as *wizard eye* won't pass the house's threshold; the spell effect is simply *dispelled* when attempted. *Commune* (and *divination*) won't work either if inquiries are made about events within the house. However, spells such as *wizard eye* work normally if cast *within* the house.

(2) Undead Turning is severely hampered within the house. Heydrech has managed to amplify the effects of his *lamp of the shroud* so that all undead receive a saving throw vs. Turning at Heydrech's level (with a Wisdom bonus for Heydrech, this Saving Throw is 12; penalties of -2 apply if the undead has less than 4 Hit Dice or if the cleric would normally be able to Dispel (D) that undead type. In the XP totals

below, extra XPs have been allowed per monster to allow for this extra danger.

#### Locations

Few rooms in the house have their contents detailed. Most are unimportant to the adventure anyway. Add flourishes to the decor as you wish — comfortable benches, polished mahogany chairs, a water clock or two, some bric-a-brac and the like. In addition to any listed treasures, minor valuables worth a total of 1,000 gp can be taken from each of the ground and upper floors if the PCs have the time and inclination.

Note that the drapes are closed behind the windows so PCs can't see in through them. The 'window glass' actually has the strength of steel and *cannot* be broken *quietly*.

#### Where the NPCs Are

The script here assumes that Tarras and Heydrech are down in the basement, in their experimental chamber. If they are elsewhere when the attack begins, they'll certainly retreat there as soon as possible. By one of those miserable coincidences, they are always awake when the PCs attack, no matter what the time of day.

You can always have one or both of the NPCs make a dastardly rear attack — like Tarras using his *fly* spell and *invisibility potion* to blast a shot from his wand of cold from a distance, then fly back to the basement. Tarras will have taken all appropriate precau-

tions, but will save his short-duration spells (*mirror image*, for example) for the final showdown.

### Gardens & Guardians

These are shown in Map 5, and are open — there is no fencing. There are two hellhounds here (unless withdrawn inside in which case they are in rooms #4 and #5), both invisible. Their tactics are to let PCs get close to the house, rush and breathe on them, then alternate bite and breath attacks.

**Hellhounds (2):** AC 4; HD 7; hp 31, 33; #AT 1; THAC0 13; Dmg 1-6 bite or 7d6 fire breath; MV 120' (40'); Save F7; ML 10 (trained); AL C; XPs 1,250 each.

### GROUND LEVEL

1. **Front door.** It is always locked.
2. **Narrow Hall.** PCs must move in single file here. Small oil lamps light the rooms and passages here.
3. **Study/library.** Bookcase line the walls. A few books (nothing really relevant) lie on a study desk. PCs with Knowledge skills can snaffle books relevant to their skills (history, myth, theology, etc.) to the value of 500 gp per PC here (Enc = 100). There is nothing suspicious here, but what appears to be a giant cat carved of amber, is actually an amber golem. It attacks immediately.

*Special note:* If you wish, the golem may be moved to the kitchen, guarding the stairs leading down, but this tends to give away the path to the laboratory.

**Amber Golem:** AC 6; HD 10\*; hp 44; #AT 3; THAC0 = 10; Dmg 2d6/2d6/2d10; MV 180' (60'); Save F5; ML 12; AL N; XPs 1,600. The golem is immune to *charm*, *sleep*, and *hold* spells, and to poison or gas attacks.

4. **Living Room.** The stairs here (#10) lead up.
5. **Kitchen.** The usual utensils and items are here.
6. **Back Door.** Locked, like the front door.
7. **Den.** A snug little room with comfortable armchairs, drinks, and — oddly — a nagpa-size leather flying jacket and pair of goggles.
8. **Storeroom.** Here you find foodstuffs (and the special magical mix for the hellhounds, which makes them invisible; it only works for the hellhounds, and there is enough for 14 meals here).
9. **Bedroom.** Tarras's personal room. The door is kept locked. There is a small teak coffer under his gnome-sized bed, which is locked and has two mechanical traps — a poison needle and strength draining gas which fills a 10'x10'x10' space within one round, and drains 2-5 points of Strength from victims for six Turns (1-3 points if a saving throw vs. Poison is made). The coffer contains bags with 175 gp, 113 gp, three minor jewelry items worth 150 gp, 350 gp, and 400 gp.
10. **Stair.** Elegant steps to the upper level.

### Upper Level

Coming up here is a waste of time, and if the PCs investigate more than three rooms here then they will hear a distant heavy thud from the basements. This is the sound of Heydreich managing to activate a machine which he has designed to strengthen undead. Add +1d3 hit points to all undead in the basements, and +1 to all their saving throws, for the remainder of this adventure. The PCs really should realize fast that this upper storey is deserted; it's unlit here.

11. **Small Guest Bedroom.** Clearly unused for weeks.
12. **Storage Room.**
13. **Upstairs Lounge.** Comfortable but rather musty.
14. **Bathroom.** The only regularly used room here.
15. **Empty.**
16. **Guest Bedroom.** This one seems to have been used fairly recently. The visitor has left a small book, *Corporeal Animation & Secretes of Ye Necromancie* by an unknown author. It is written in Alphatian, however, save for the title, which is inscribed on the cover page in several forms of the Common tongue.

### Basement Level

Here's where danger lives — don't pull your punches, DMs! By now your players may be itching for a decent fight, where good can triumph over evil. Rooms in this level are lit with dim *continual light* spells within the stonework of the walls, radiating a soft, gentle glow. Oil lamps are also around the place too. The door to room #17 is locked and needs to be opened with picks, or a *knock* spell, or loud smashing, etc.

17-18. **Guard Chambers.** Two human-size creatures clad in plate mail, bearing swords, guard the west door. After one round of melee the combat changes. The sword-fighters drop their weapons and rake at the PCs with their claws; they are actually wights in plate mail. At the middle or rear of the party, skeletons burst from the secret small chambers #18a and #18b, gaining surprise, and attacking with poisoned swords.

**Skeletons (2):** AC 7; HD 1; hp 7, 7; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1d8 + poison (lethal); MV 60' (20'); Save special; ML 12; AL C; XPs 13 each.

**Wights (2):** AC 2 (plate mail); HD 3\*; hp 13, 16; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-8 or 1-6 + 1 level energy drain; MV 60' (20'); Save special; ML 12; AL C; XPs 65 each.

19. **Cold Chamber.** This room is magically at a temperature just below zero. Hanging up on hooks are numerous carcasses. They might be pigs, or they might be something more sinister — they are headless and gutted so it is impossible to be absolutely cer-

tain. Unfortunately for the PCs, these are experiments in animating carcasses of animals. They attack the PCs one round after they enter (if they do). The carcasses avoid being Turned (if PCs think of this) on a roll of 12+ on d20, counting as ghouls for Turning rolls.

**Undead Carcasses (5):** AC 8; HD 3; hp 11, 13, 12, 8, 17; #AT 1 butt or 1 buffet; THAC0 17; Dmg 1d8; MV 60' (20'); Save F3 and special; ML 12; AL N; XPs 50 each. The carcasses are immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, and cold-based spells, also to poison, gas, and *paralysis* attacks and all illusions.

**20-21. Undead Pegataur.** Heydrech has locked one of his nastiest experiments in here, having taken the corpse of a pegataur and animated it in such a way that it cannot fly, but still has spellcasting ability. From this experiment Heydrech learned that he could animate undead and keep their spellcasting powers, a great breakthrough for him.

When the pegataur hears any sound at the door, it casts *invisibility* and then *mirror image* on itself, so all the PCs see on entering is incidental decor and the treasure chest (see below). It is aided by two wights, clad in plate mail, which burst out of the secret doors to the north and attack with surprise (use stats for wights above). The pegataur counts as a spirit for Turning roll purposes, and saves on a roll of 12+ on d20 even if the Turning attempt would normally be successful.

The treasure chest here is locked and trapped with a lethal poison needle trap. It is quite empty, placed here as a lure for greedy and foolish intruders.

**Undead Pegataur:** AC 0 (superior plate barding); HD 9; hp 46; #AT 1; THAC0 11 (8 with sword); Dmg 1d8+3 (*sword* +3); MV 90' (30'); Save special; ML 12; AL C; XPs 2,300. Spells: *magic missile*, *sleep*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*.

**22. Undead Sphimera.** Heydrech's most wicked experimental abomination is recovering from magical (and surgical) operations — an undead cross between a sphinx and a chimera (Turns as a spirit, and resists a successful Turn on a d20 roll of 12+). The creature has not recovered its full powers, which is fortunate for anyone entering here. Enraged by pain from the scars which criss-cross its body, it attacks madly, even though its wound open and ooze ichor. It looks like a sphinx with additional dragon and lion's heads. It has goat's hindquarters and dragon-like wings.

The sphimera can roar weakly once per day (a roar alerts everything in the basement level!). The roar affects all creatures within 20 feet, who must make a saving throw vs. Spells or run in fear for 2d6 rounds; if this save is failed, a second save must be made, and if this is failed the PC is stunned for 1d4 rounds (but can then get up and run away!).

**Undead Sphimera:** AC 0; HD 12\*\*\*; hp 62; #AT 2 claws + 2 heads or 1 head + 1 breath; THAC0 9;

Dmg 1-3/1-3/1d10/3d4 or 3d6 (breath cone 50' long, 10' wide at end, 3/day); MV 60' (20') (cannot leave room); Save F24 and special; ML 12; AL C; XPs 4,300. Spells: *magic missile*, *protection from evil*, *detect invisible*, *web*, *dispel magic*, *haste*. The monster is immune to *charm*, *sleep*, and *hold* spells, all spells of 1st and 2d level, and to nonmagical weapon damage.

**23. Pit Trap.** If this 5'x5' area is entered from the north or west doors, the floor will drop away; metal plates drop to each side, dump the PC down a 20' pit (2d6 damage), and water pours in filling the pit at 1' depth per round. The plates at the top immediately clang shut again, sealing the way out. If the PC has no way of water breathing, etc., he will drown unless aided. Crowbars, a *knock* spell, or the like can be used to save a PC. The pit trap does not open if the door on the east wall, or the secret one-way door to the south, are opened.

**24. Council Chamber.** This plush room has a large elliptical darkwood table with a circle of nine chairs around it. This is where members of the Grey Front meet. It is deserted unless PCs attack when the Grey Front meeting is in progress.

**25-26. Experimental Chamber.** This is the show-down. Tarras and Heydrech are here, with all suitable defensive spells precast, fully ready to wipe out the intruders. They take the sensible precaution of staying behind a phalanx of undead guards, using their distance magical and special ability attacks — spells, wands, *create fire*, *corruption*, *phantasmal force*, and the like. You may want to order out a battle plan in advance for the most likely order that these NPCs will use their attacks. They have no concern for their undead. If PCs are about to break through the line somewhere, Tarras will fire off his *wand of cold* even if it means harming the undead as well.

**Important note:** Heydrech's Ulzaq homunculus lurks just outside this room in the Undercity corridor, so that Heydrech regenerates 1 hp/rd, while he stays within 10 feet of it.

Map 6 shows the initial groups of undead that protect Heydrech and Tarras. In room #26 there are four wights in plate mail which will burst from the secret doors to attack once the PCs enter the room, probably with the benefits of surprise. In addition to the creatures here, the room has many items of equipment: wooden benches with straps, huge brass retorts, a couple of machine assemblies of weird construction with bolts, metal girding and spheres; and other similar oddities. Heydrech's *lamp of the shroud* burns on the wall behind him. Heydrech can add a further five zombies to this number at any time during combat by using the power of the *lamp*.

The guardian monsters here right now are:

**Wights (4):** AC 2 (plate mail); HD 3\*; hp 13, 7, 17, 10; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-6 + 1 level energy drain; MV 60' (20'); Save F3 or special; ML 12; AL C;

XPs 65 each. Immune to *charm/hold/sleep*, nonmagical weapons.

**Zombies (8):** AC 4 (chain mail and shields); HD 2; hp 10 each; #AT 1; THACO 18; Dmg 1d8; MV 60' (20'); Save F1 or special; ML 12; AL C; XPs 25 each. Immune to *charm/sleep/hold* spells.

**Wraiths (3):** AC 3; HD 4\*; hp 16, 23, 24; #AT 1; THACO 16; Dmg 1d6 + 1 level energy drain; MV 120' (40')/ flying 240' (80'); Save F4 or special; ML 12; AL C; XPs 175 each. Immune to *charm/sleep/hold* spells, nonmagical weapons. These wraiths hover near the ceiling, then fly to attack the rear of the PC party.

**Bone Golem:** AC 2; HD 6\*; hp 33; #AT 4 swords; THACO 14; Dmg 1d8x4; MV 120' (40'); Save F4; ML 12; AL N; XPs 500. This is Heydrech's personal bodyguard and does not leave his side.

**Raskren the Ulzaq:** AC 0; HD 3\*\*\*\*; hp 18; #AT 3; THACO 17; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1d4 + special or 1-4 + special; MV 60' (20'); Save MU21; ML 8 (12 with Heydrech); AL C; XPs 95. Raskren is immune to electrical attacks, regenerates 1 hp/rd, and can cast *detect evil*, *detect magic*, and become invisible at will, and cast *confusion* 1/day.

**Escape:** When Heydrech is clearly losing, he flees by moving to the secret door in the south-west corner and escaping to the corridor outside; using dimension door from his amulet if necessary. With Raskren, the nagpa will flee through the Undercity (which he knows a lot better than the PCs) and get away. Make sure the nagpa gets away; he has magical items which make this quite certain. Tarras, deserted by his ally, will surrender and plead for his own life in return for giving the PCs information — if he is still alive, of course. Following Heydrech's escape is detailed below.

**27. Secret Study.** Heydrech keeps his books on rare necromantic arts, and a collection of tomes on creating hybrid and mutant monsters in here. Several of the latter lie open on his desk, and they are written (and signed!) by 'Kavel Kleinszter, Mage of Shraek'. The study contains other books on arcane topics — no spellbooks, unfortunately — but the value of books here is 10,000 gp. There are also books in sealed desk drawers, trapped with poison needle traps and paralyzing gas, which detail the activities of the Grey Front. These unequivocally indict Heydrech as an enemy of Serraine, and name many of his friends too. The authorities will forgive almost anything if this information is handed over to them.

**28. Treasure Chamber.** Heydrech stashes his treasure here, including magic items of little or no use to him. There are two locked chests, both trapped with lethal poison needle traps and paralyzing gas (lasts 1d6 turns). The first chest contains sacks with 4,400 sp, 2,050 gp, 815 pp, and pouches with gems worth 8,000 gp in total. The second chest contains a sword

+2, a shield +1, a jewelled ornamental shield worth 3,000 gp, a lance +3, dagger +3, a mace +3 of Lawful alignment which casts *cure light wounds*, *cure serious wounds*, and *cure critical wounds* 1/day each if used by a Lawful cleric, and a forgotten wand of lightning bolts wrapped in red calico, with 4 charges.

### Pursuing Heydrech

Tarras sobs that Heydrech is headed for the 'Veel' cloud-clippers of the Emergency Service (location 33 on the fold-out map). If the PCs pursue him through the Undercity they can't keep up with him, and collide with five cowering kobolds, escapees from kitchen duty at the Imperial. The cunning nagpa gets to the planes first and forces the gnome pilot to take off . . .

If the PCs head back through the house, having lost the nagpa in the Undercity, they stumble on an unfortunate scene just outside: Erik Helsing is trading spells with Miroslav, while Yegor rolls around helplessly (hit by a *power word: stun*). Helsing has all defensive spells precast, and calls on the PCs to help him destroy "*this vampiric murderer*." The PCs can help Helsing (and get a civic commendation for it), help Miroslav (and get a Glantrian medal, plus eternal banishment from Serraine) or do what may be the best thing, run off and leave them to it. The idea here is to create utter mayhem and havoc.

If the PCs don't realize where the nagpa may have fled (maybe they killed Tarras or didn't find the flying jacket), then drop the following *unsubtle* hint: a cloud clipper flies by overhead, heading away and down, with the cackle of maniacal nagpa-type laughter trailing off in the wind. A query of almost any intelligent creature will enable the PCs to learn the city's current location; above Blackheart and Shraek. Now they must find an airplane and a pilot, fast (if one of them is a pilot, they could hijack a plane).

Wherever the PCs head for a plane (location #33 is nearest), they manage to find Richter von Manthofen on the spot, carrying out some inspection. Let them plead, whine, beg, grovel, orate about an enemy of Serraine, or impress upon Richter the urgency of the situation. After much toadying, have Richter agree, spit out his gum, break out a new stick, and lead them to a cloud clipper. He tells them to load up the crossbows and break the windows so they can shoot back. The PCs should pile in and pull on their Bumber-Chutes. Richter revs the engines and lurches skyward in pursuit of Heydrech.

As the airplane descends towards Blackheart, a large flying shape looms ahead and to the right, at the same altitude and heading for the airplane. *It's a red dragon*. Merely curious about the airplane, it won't attack so long as the PCs don't attack it. However, it will fly right by the plane, so ask the PCs what they are going to do as it approaches. Note that a humble *ESP* spell will inform a PC within spell range of the dragon's intent. If the PCs attack, the dragon

## Heart of Darkness

breathes and attacks. It flies off if reduced to one-quarter of its hp total or below. This dragon cannot cast spells.

**Red Dragon:** AC -1; HD 10\*\*; hp 54; #AT 3; THAC0 10; Dmg 1d8/1d8/4d8; MV 90' (30')/flying 240' (80'); Save F10; ML 10; AL C; XPs 2,300.

Of course, if you really want some fun, let the dragon be a mere distraction. While attention is focused on the monster, a stolen Pflanger-Skyratchet Mk VII Fighter-Bomber (no bombs) drops in line directly behind the PCs' plane. The nagpas, Schamman (the pilot) and Baraith (the gunner) attempt to shoot our heroes out of the sky (somehow, Heydrech warned them). Give the nagpa the first shot, but remember that Richter von Manthofen's skills will actually give the PCs a slight advantage over the combat plane. Flying PCs could bail out to improve the clipper's speed.

Flying low over Blackheart towards Shraek, the PCs will be able to see Heydrech's plane, which has partly crash-landed. Richter can set down his plane beside it. The gnome pilot is unconscious inside, his skull bashed in. Richter looks grim and says that he will keep his plane here until the PCs return; however, if any monsters come along — Blackheart has a terrible reputation — he will leave and return at four-hour intervals for the next 24 hours. That is, if the PCs want to find Heydrech . . .

Assuming the PCs want to find the nagpa, they can see a clear trail leading north. They are headed for Kavel Kleinszter's home and laboratory, and they'll be in for some nasty surprises when they get there. Of course, one or two nasty surprises wait enroute, too.

### Into Blackheart

It takes two hours to traverse four miles of dense woodland (with thick undergrowth) in pursuit of the nagpa (who can evade attacks with his remaining *dimension door* and *fly* spells from his amulet, if he is forced to use these). Every 15 minutes, roll for a random encounter with a wizard-created mutant monster. An encounter occurs on a roll of 1 or 2 on 1d6. No more than two such encounters occur. Monsters here are always hostile: they are often malformed, in pain, or were created to be vicious, evil creatures — Blackheart is well-named.

**Pig-Headed Hydra:** This has the body of a hydra, and the heads of tusked wild boars. AC 5; HD 7; hp 56; #AT 7; THAC0 13; Dmg 2d6 x7; MV 120' (40'); Save F7; ML 11; AL C; XPs 450.

**Two-headed Crocotroll:** It has the body and claws of a huge troll, but covered in heavy, armoring scales, with twin crocodile heads. It has the special abilities of an common troll (regenerate 3hp/rd, fire or acid to kill, body parts reassemble, etc.).

AC 2; HD 8+8\*; hp 47; #AT 4; THAC0 11; Dmg

2d6/2d6/1d6/1d6; MV 120' (40'); Save F8; ML 10 (8); AL C; XPs 1,200.

Omit these encounters if they would significantly weaken the PCs. Better still, substitute an encounter with a horribly mutated monster too malformed to attack effectively, but which still spits hatred at the PCs as its own wounds cause it evident agony. Make it clear to the PCs that the mages in this land are appallingly evil folk.

The woods themselves seem twisted, evil and brooding. *Detect evil* registers a faint but definite evil everywhere in this infernal land. Visibility is never better than 40 feet or so, while rain and humidity make the place quite uncomfortable. Nevertheless, the PCs will reach their destination.

### The Black Tower

Sheer, smooth, windowless, this stark building of glassy obsidian almost radiates pure evil. A deadly electrified fence of iron surrounds it. Heavy iron poles support a criss-cross grid of heavy wire. Below each pole, deep underground, is a large tank of electric eels which generates the electric charge. The 12-foot-tall fence (with no gate!) causes 2d6 points of damage each round to anyone touching it. Heydrech's trail in the wet vegetation ends by the fence and reappears on the other side of it (Kavel *levitated* him inside). Kavel doesn't like visitors, so he leaves his creations to roam outside. When he wants to exit or enter he uses spells (*fly*, *dimension door*, etc.). The PCs will need similar spells to get over the fence, or a *wall* spell to flatten it, etc. Otherwise, causing 30 hp damage to the fence (by magical weapon blows against AC 3, *magic missile* spells, etc.) will bust a hole large enough to sneak through. Unsurprisingly, the fence is immune to electrical attacks.

#### Kavel Kleinszter

##### *Mage of the Obsidian Tower*

**History:** Kavel is an experimenter who dabbles with animating flesh and mutating and cross-breeding monsters. He knows Heydrech from carefully cultivated links with the Grey Front. Heydrech has been useful with help on animating undead, and Kavel has passed on knowledge about mutating monsters.

**Appearance:** Kavel is 6' 5", very tall and very thin, almost skeletal. He has black hair, abundant over his body, and sunken, dark brown eyes.

**Personality:** Kavel sees nothing wrong in his work! It's science, and of course, nothing must be allowed to interfere with scientific research, progress, and the accumulation of knowledge. In short, he is a vicious, unfeeling psychopath!

**DMing Notes:** When Kavel is warned of the PCs' intrusion, he begins to cast spells in the fol-

lowing order: (1) *animate dead* to create zombies from the corpses on the laboratory benches, (2) *haste* (including his bodyguards), (3) *invisibility*, (4) *mirror image*, (5) *protection from evil*, (6) *shield* (not for AC but for protection from *magic missile* spells), (7) *protection from normal missiles*, (8) *fly*, (9) *detect invisibility*, (10) *projected image*.

Kavel doesn't pull punches. When he hears the PCs in the corridor (see Basement Level notes below), he uses *create normal monsters* to produce a gang of four ogre bodyguards. Then he uses the big guns — *power word: stun* on a magic-user, *disintegrate* on a fighter, and finally the disabling spells (*feeblemind*, *hold*, *polymorph*). If sore pressed, he uses *dimension door* to escape to his bedroom and uses the *potions of super-healing* there. Once healed, he returns. He's going to fight for all he's worth. Treasure and experience gained here will be well earned!

**Combat Notes:** 16th-level Magic-user; AC -2 (*magical quarterstaff* (see below), *ring of protection* +3); HD 9d4+7; hp 51; #AT 1; THAC0 13 (melee)/11 (missiles); Dmg by weapon type; MV 120' (40'); Save MU16; ML 11; AL C; S 9, I 17, W 13, D 17, C 16, Ch 6; XPs 6,250.

**Spells:** (other than mentioned in DMing Notes above) *charm person*, *magic missile* (4d6+4) (x2), *protection from evil*, *detect invisible*, *ESP*, *mirror image*, *web*, *dispel magic*, *hold person*, *protection from normal missiles*, *dimension door*, *polymorph other* (x2), *hold monster*.

**Languages:** Alphatian, Chaotic, Common, Sky-common.

**Skills:** Alchemy, Alternate Magics, Anatomy +1, Magical Engineering +1, Monster Anatomy +1 (all I).

**Notes:** *Quarterstaff* +2 (+2 hit and damage rolls, +2 to saves, gives base AC3 to unarmored cleric or magic-user), *wand of magic missiles* (16 charges), *potion of freedom*, *scroll of three spells: dimension door, dispel magic, lightning bolt*.

## In the Tower

All locations are lit with gentle continual light spells, and details of decor are left for the DM to fill in. For PCs who want to systematically loot every last copper piece in sight, minor bric-a-brac treasures to the value of 1,000 gp can be distributed among minor locations in addition to listed treasures.

The script below assumes that the PCs quickly get on with hunting their quarry — if they dawdle about on the Upper Level trying to loot petty treasures, Kavel and his guards (and maybe Heydrech too) will ambush them with full magical precautions in effect!

## Ground Level

The entrance door is unlocked, oddly enough. Kavel, arguing with Heydrech, didn't shut it behind him. He has few visitors, and no one wants to attack him in his lair (save our intrepid heroes), so he tends to forget about locking doors and the like.

When the PCs enter area #1, a hallway, make a judgement about the shape they're in. If they are somewhat weakened and below par (which they should be by now), then there is a definite scream and an echoing blast from below ground. Starting now, count the rounds. Kavel has just blasted Heydrech with a *lightning bolt* from his scroll for leading the PCs here — one enemy is out of action. He now begins his defensive spellcasting as noted above. If the PCs can get to him fast enough he may not finish the sequence. Only have Heydrech aid Kavel if the PCs are in good shape, or have the magic items from Heydrech's home, or have a number of spells left, etc.

1. **Entry Hall.**
2. **Cloak Room.** Here are some spare cloaks, boots, two heavy bullwhips, and woolly scarfs.
3. **Large Lounge.** Tacky decorations.
4. **Holding Cell.** Massive wall manacles. It's empty now, but smells strongly of decomposing flesh.
5. **Waiting Room.** Contains benches, chairs, and some out of date popular news scrolls.
6. **Stone Spiral Stair.** It leads both up and down.

## Upper Level

7. **A Bare Landing.**
8. **Bathroom.**
9. **Experimental Chamber.** Has fire-blasted walls, magical pentagrams on the walls and smells powerfully of sulfur and brimstone.
10. **Alchemical Research Room.** Contains various glassware, bronze and brass flasks, and vials, retorts, and the like. There are no completed potions here, but a two-round search will turn up a row of four flasks of acid each of which will do 2d4 points of damage hit on a successful hit.
11. **Kavel's Bedroom.** Has a door that is *wizard locked* (at 16th level of magic use) and thus will require a *knock* spell or equivalent to open. Kavel will flee here to heal himself if badly injured in combat. The bedroom is well appointed, and Kavel's small redwood coffer of magics is hidden away at the back of the wardrobe top (PCs must say they're looking there to find it). The coffer contains three *potions of super-healing*, and a *scroll of spells: dispel magic, remove curse, stone to flesh*.

## Basement Level

Setting foot on any of the last three stone steps here triggers an alarm — ringing bells can be heard in the distance. If Kavel hasn't been fighting Heydrech,



then this will be the first signal to Kavel that the PCs have arrived. Kavel now begins his defensive spells.

**12. Guard Chamber.** Four subjects of Kavel's mutation experiments act as guards here: four-armed ogres, their additional arms stitched to their torsos in an obvious manner. These ogres also have giant lizard heads, but are not capable of biting attacks yet. Penalties to their hit and damage rolls (due to weakness — they're still recovering from their creation) are incorporated in their stats. Keep track of Kavel's spellcasting and durations, if necessary, as this fight progresses.

**Mutant Ogres (4):** AC 5; HD 4+1\*; hp 25, 15, 16, 21; #AT 2 clubs; THAC0 16; Dmg 1d8+1 (any hit does at least 1 point of damage); MV 60' (20'); Save F4; ML 11; AL C; XPs 200 each.

**13. Long Corridor.** Festooned with wall-mounted animal, humanoid, and monster heads, and a number of Kavel's less successful and smaller experiments stuffed and mounted in glass cases along the walls. Cobra-headed weasels, lizard-headed pigs with reptile tails, crab-clawed phanatons, and similar horrifying experiments can be seen in these cases. There is also a strong charnel smell, and one of chemicals and electricity, from the room at the end of the corridor.

If Kavel has attacked Heydrech, he will be screaming a final insult at the nagpa, "**YOU FOOL! You led them here?**" in between spellcasting.

**14. Kavel's Laboratory.** Contains a mass of operating tables, alchemical equipment, restraints, chains and manacles, cruel surgical equipment, and wall charts showing the anatomy of various monsters. There is a guard by the door — an obsidian golem — which will fight PCs trying to force their way in. Heydrech will be lying in a crumpled heap in one corner of the room (unless you have decided to have him fight on Kavel's side). Four normal ogres stand in a protective semicircle as shown on Map 7, but the cunning Kavel will have his *projected image* behind them — he's actually on the other side of the room altogether, invisible (trying to draw off PC spells with his *projected image*). There are undead in the room — seven zombies. These seem to be lifeless humanoid corpses on tables and slabs. They only get up to attack the PCs when the PCs head for where Kavel is actually standing (he becomes visible when he casts an offensive spell, of course). They do not automatically lose initiative on this round and they may even gain surprise; they attack with heavy cleavers and surgical implements. The round in which they delay the PCs, allows Kavel to get another spell off and lets the ogres regroup and attack. These zombies resist a Turning attempt on a roll of 10+ on 1d20 while Kavel lives.

**Obsidian Golem:** AC 3; HD 6; hp 23; #AT 1; THAC0 14; Dmg 2d4; Save F3; ML 12; AL N; XPs 275.

**Ogres (4):** AC 5; HD 4+1; hp 18, 17, 21, 11; #AT 1 club; THAC0 = 15; Dmg 1d8+2; MV 90' (30'); Save F4; ML 12 (as summoned creatures); AL C; XPs 125 each.

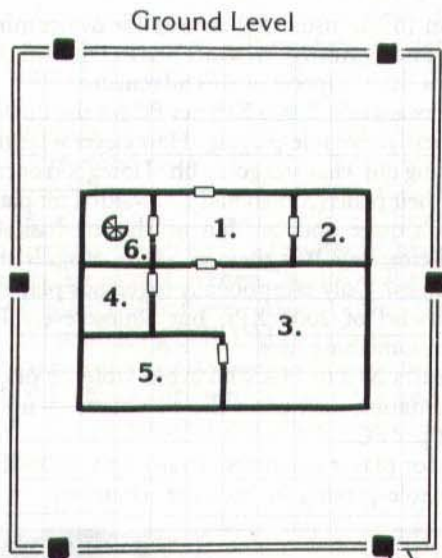
**Zombies (7):** AC 8; HD 2; hp 12 (x4), 10 (x3); #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg 2d4; MV 60' (20'); Save F2; ML 12; AL C; XPs 25 each. Immune to *charm/sleep/hold* spells.

There is one final element of the combat here. When the PCs enter, the machinery in this experimental chamber begins to hum and throb, and spectacular — but disgusting — effects begin to take place over the next 10 rounds. Liquids bubble, arcs of electricity snap and crackle, and the corpses of humanoids, reptiles and other creatures — plus the torsos and body parts liberally dispersed about the place — begin to jump and kick in a very disturbing manner. Kavel smiles evilly at this development, which the PCs can only stop by either killing Kavel within this period or else inflicting 100 hp of magical damage on the apparatus about the room (very hard to do since they're trying to fend off ogres, zombies, and a golem, plus Kavel's spells). If the PCs can't stop the machinery, they are attacked by what is essentially an animated mass of undead bodies and body parts, un-Turnable by virtue of its bizarre animation, and also immune to *charm, sleep or hold* spells, all *illusions*, and also gas attacks and poisons. The mass claws, buffets, bites at PCs.

**Undead Mass:** AC 7; HD n/a; hp 111; #AT up to 12 (max. 2 per PC); THAC0 = 15; Dmg 1d6 (bite, buffet, etc.) + 1d4 electrical damage (save vs. Spells for half damage); MV 30' (10'); Save MU16; ML 12; AL N; XPs 3,000.

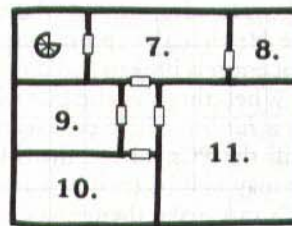
**Ending the Combat** For dramatic purposes, either the PCs or Kavel are going to die here. Hopefully, the PCs will win; if they do, then Heydrech will not be dead, simply unconscious and clearly injured (treat as having 1hp). He's not in a fit state to be moved back to the airplane without a *potion of healing, cure light wounds spell*, etc. This may annoy the PCs but if they want to take a live prisoner back to Serraine they'll have to give the nagpa something.

**15. Treasure Room/Library/Study.** There is a fine collection of volumes on necromancy and anatomy (total value 12,000 gp). Kavel also keeps a treasure chest here with money and valuables, which he rarely needs, and odd, bulky or spare magic items. In total, there are 1200 gp and 250 pp here in bags, and a cas-



Electrified Metal Fence  
Electric Eel Tanks (below ground)

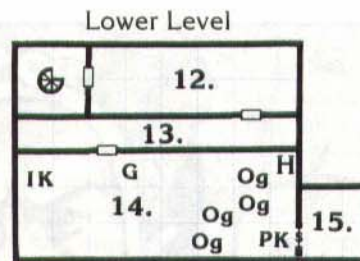
- H Heydrech
- IK Invisible Kavel
- PK Projected Image
- Og Ogre
- G Obsidian Golem



Upper Level

### The Obsidian Tower

Scale: 1 square = 5 feet.



Lower Level

ket with gems and jewelry worth a total of 9,000 gp. Hidden in a false bottom of the chest is a fine emerald and ruby neck pendant, crafted in platinum, worth 8,000 gp. Magical items include: a *sword* +2 which can cast *fly* on its user 1/day for up to 12 Turns; a *crystal ball*; a *warhammer* +1 which causes double damage when a natural 20 is rolled, triple damage if its user is a dwarf or gnome; a *featherchime* (*harmonic song* and *song of will and iron*); 4 jars of *ointment of healing*; a *lance of piercing* and a huge spellbook, containing all Kavel's listed spells, plus an extra 1-3 each of levels 1 through 7 (DM's selection, or random choice).

### ENDING THE ADVENTURE & FOLLOW-UP ADVENTURES

It is best not to use any monster encounters on the way back to the landing site. Richter will be ready to take the PCs away, having taken off, fully refueled, and landed again in the interim. The PCs are whisked back to Serraine — if they want to go, but being stuck in the middle of Blackheart is an incredibly bad alternative.

Back in Serraine, how the PCs are treated by the authorities depends on how they have behaved in general. If they bring Heydrech back alive, then the authorities will be pleased. If the PCs have not gone around town breaking laws and attacking NPCs, residents, and the law, etc., then they will be treated

warmly and awarded suitable civilian decorations by Mayor Santarian Keltander, who hosts a small civic reception for them. This is a good way for the PCs to meet distinguished folk about the city.

This is also a golden opportunity for a PC to join the 1st Squadron under Richter von Manthofen (the PC will need to have an open skill slot in order to learn Piloting, if he doesn't know it already).

If the PCs didn't join the battle between Helsing and Miroslav, you must determine what happened there. Did one side vanquish the other and if so, who won? Did the loser die or escape? Did the winner flee too?

Consider how the PCs behaved with respect to the two incognito NPCs — Erik Helsing and Boris Vasiliev. Helsing will dog the PCs' footsteps if they didn't help him, or actively helped his enemy Vasiliev. He won't attack the PCs himself. Instead, he'll hire thugs to attack the PCs, preferably one at a time; arrange for little accidents to happen (like snapped sky-chair brakes); spread slanderous rumors; etc. Finding the cause of these attacks and slanders could become a unpleasant source of bother.

Boris/Miroslav is an important figure if the PCs have been helpful to him, or at least not attacked him. If they have discredited Heydrech, trashed his home, and exposed his accomplices, then Miroslav will be particularly grateful. An invitation to a holiday on his estates in glorious Boldavia could be winging its way to the PCs very shortly, an excellent way of

getting them to adventure in Glantri.

Despite Heydrech's capture, the Grey Front network is not entirely broken and the survivors will soon regroup. When they do, the PCs will be right at the top of their *hit list*. These evil creatures will do their best to kill the PCs (or use them for experiments). Horrobin may well be their new leader!

The PCs can make themselves a useful contact if they know of Matazumi's agreement with Heydrech. Heydrech won't reveal this during interrogation. Matazumi will grudgingly grant free access to the library in exchange for the PCs' silence. You can place all kinds of interesting books and maps in the secret collections as hooks for future adventures.

These still only scrape the surface of the what can be done. More adventures can be dreamed up in the fabulous Flying City than this book can hint at. Your own imagination is the only limit!

### A Note on Experience Points

In addition to the usual XP awards for overcoming monsters and gaining treasure, XPs should be awarded for other aspects of this adventure.

Give an award of 0-2,000 XPs per PC for the quality of their investigative role-playing. How clever were the PCs at finding out what was going on? How good or creative were their plans (XPs should be awarded for plans which didn't quite work out but which were basically sound and creative)? Was there good use of skills and special abilities? Only exceptionally ingenious play deserves an award of 2000 XPs, but almost every PC should earn something here.

Award extra XPs to PCs who avoid violence or direct confrontation early on in the adventure — up to 1,000 XPs per PC.

Finally, for player creatures, award up to 500 XPs per PC for role-playing in 'creature' character.



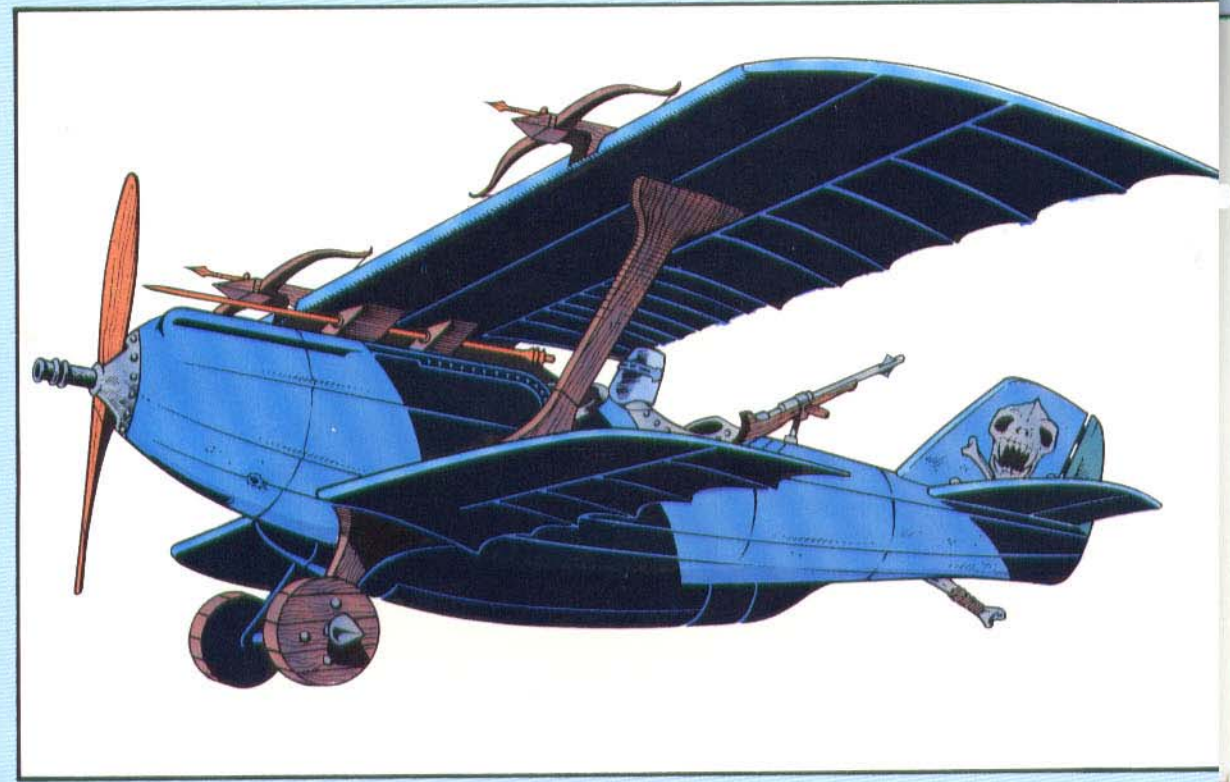
### Pflanger-Skyratchet Mk VII Fighter-Bomber

Type: Two-seater Biplane

**Weaponry (typical)**  
 Top Wing: Synchronized Crossbows  
 Gunner's Cockpit: Snooze Gun  
 Gunner's Cockpit: Lightning Gun  
 Propeller: Caltrop Cannon  
 Bomb bay (below gunner): holds up to six bombs, released by lever in gunner's cockpit

#### Performance Specifications

**Armor Class: 4**  
 Forward Airspeed: 360/round (without bomb load)  
 Maneuverability Factor: MF1 (with bomb Enc over 250 cn)  
 MF2 (with bomb Enc less than 250 cn)  
 Bomb bay capacity: up to six bombs (150 cn each)  
 Tank capacity: 360,000 feet  
 Hit Points: 110



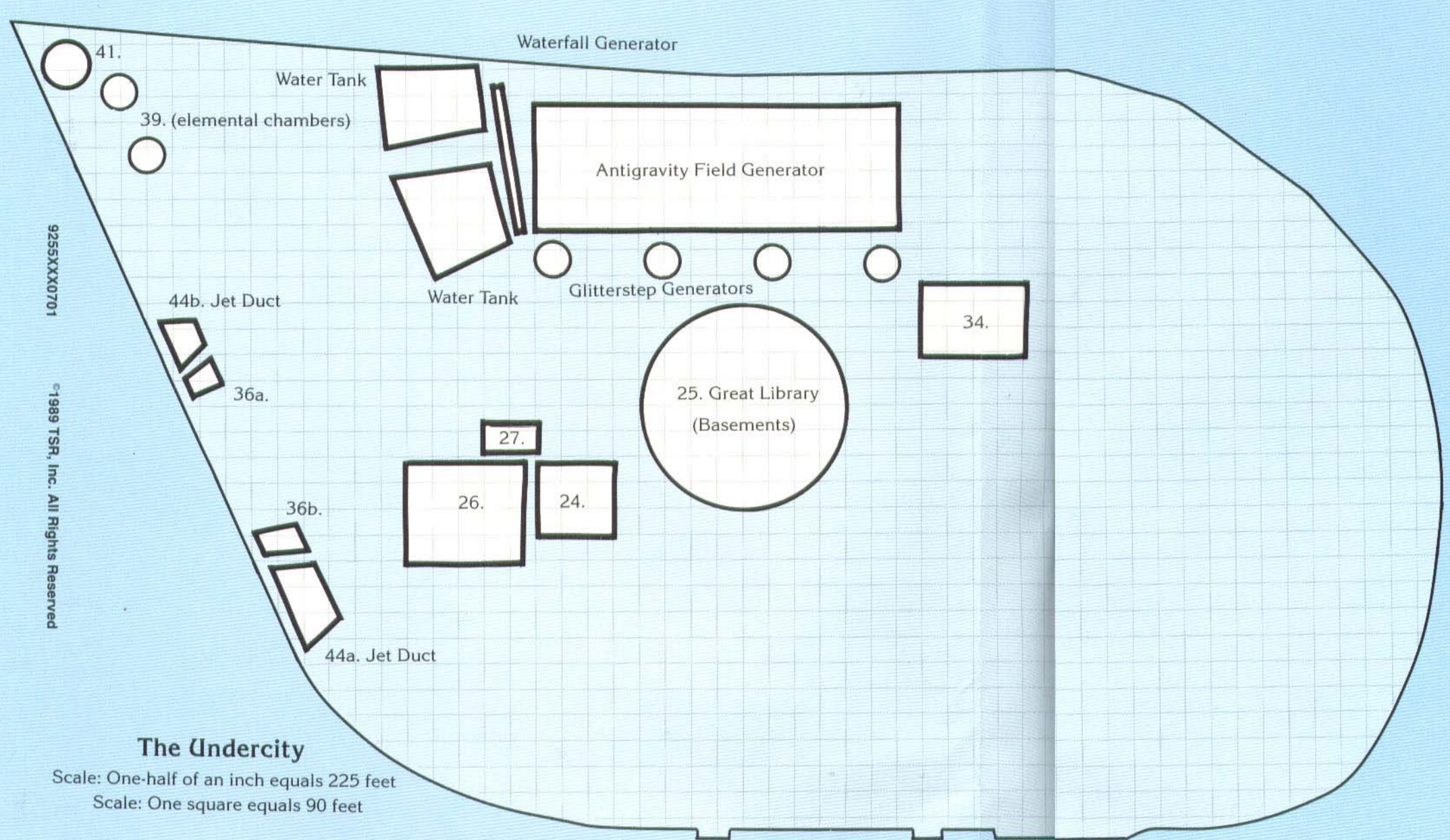
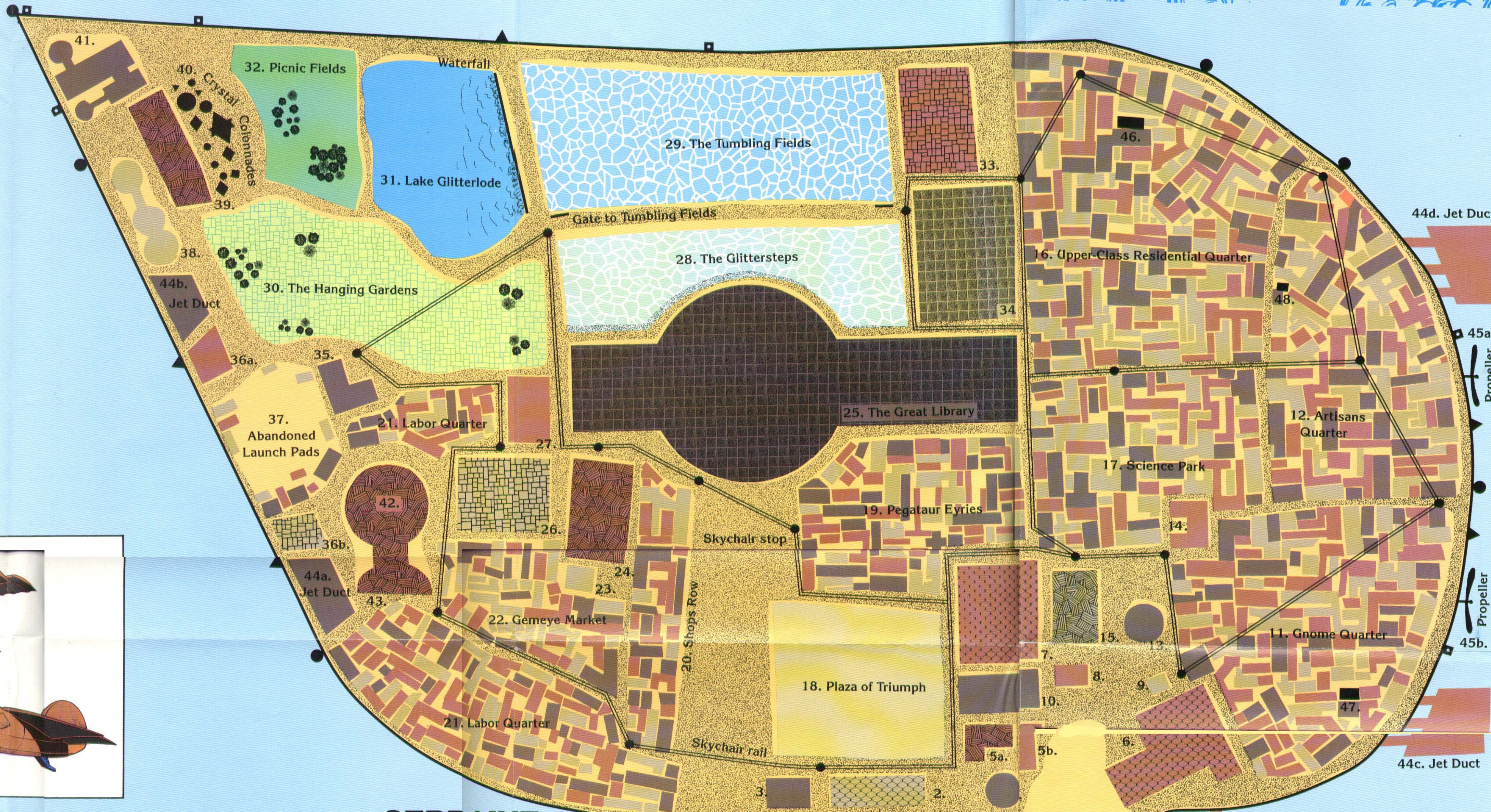
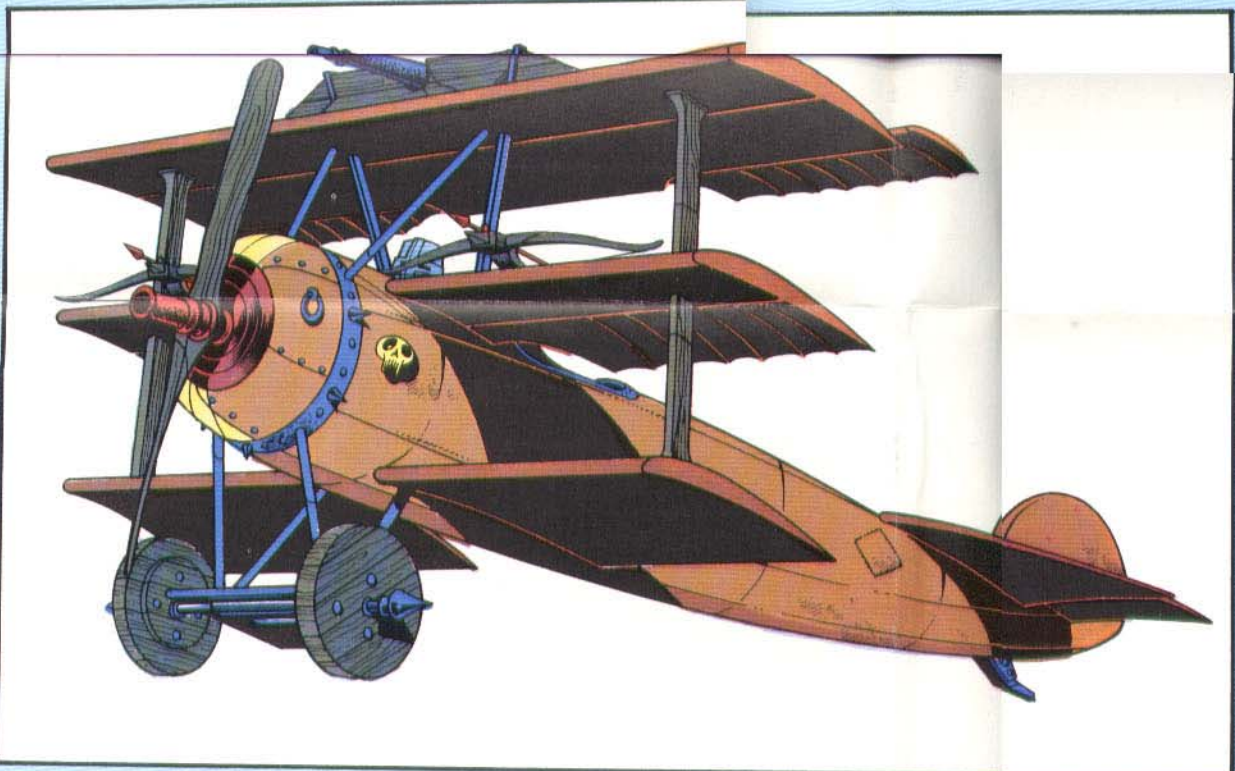
### Mk VI Polecat

Type: Triplane

**Weaponry (typical)**  
 Top Wing: Fireball Gun  
 Middle Wings: Synchronized Crossbows  
 Propeller: Caltrop Cannon

#### Performance Specifications

**Armor Class: 2**  
 Forward Airspeed: 480/round  
 Maneuverability Factor: MF3  
 Bomb bay capacity: none  
 Tank capacity: 190,000 feet  
 Hit Points: 85



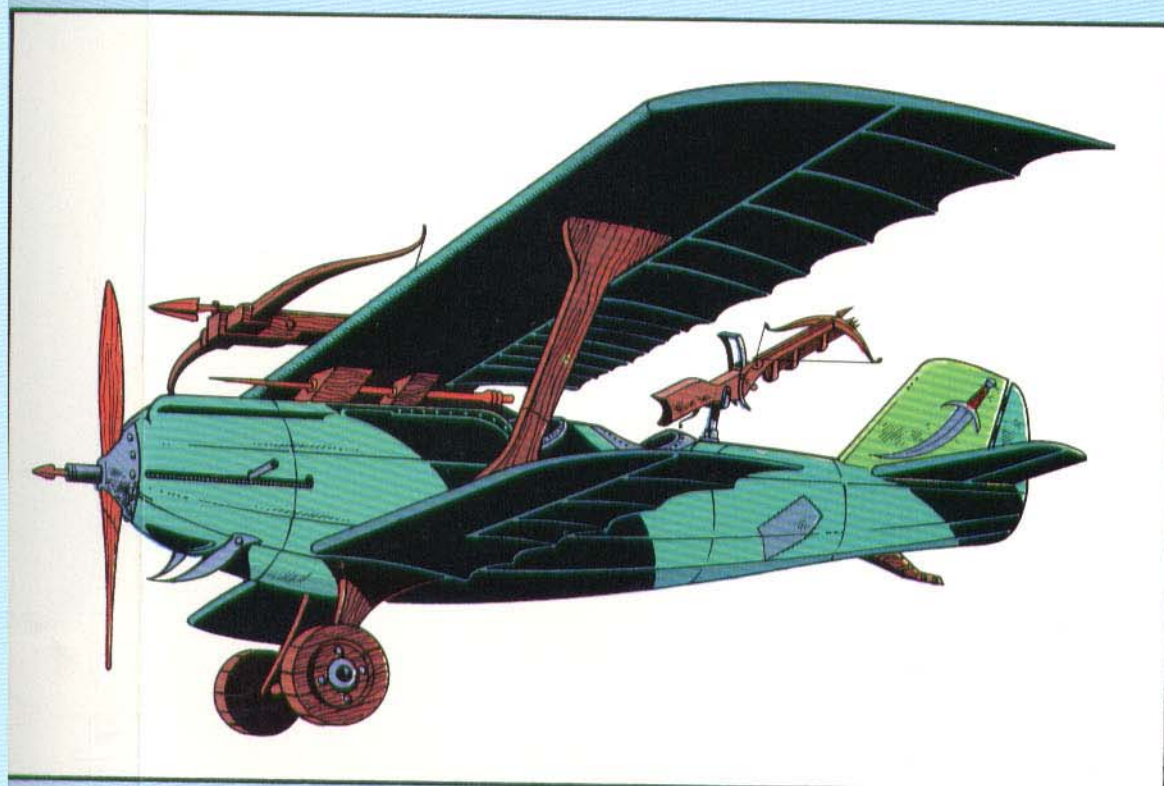
### Mk IIa Tomcat

Type: Two-seater Biplane

**Weaponry (typical)**  
 Top Wing: Heavy Ballista  
 Gunner's Cockpit: Lightning Gun  
 Gunner's Cockpit: Auxiliary Heavy Crossbow  
 Propeller: Spike Gun

#### Performance Specifications

**Armor Class: 3**  
 Forward Airspeed: 450/round  
 Maneuverability Factor: MF2  
 Bomb bay capacity: none  
 Tank capacity: 220,000 feet  
 Hit Points: 105



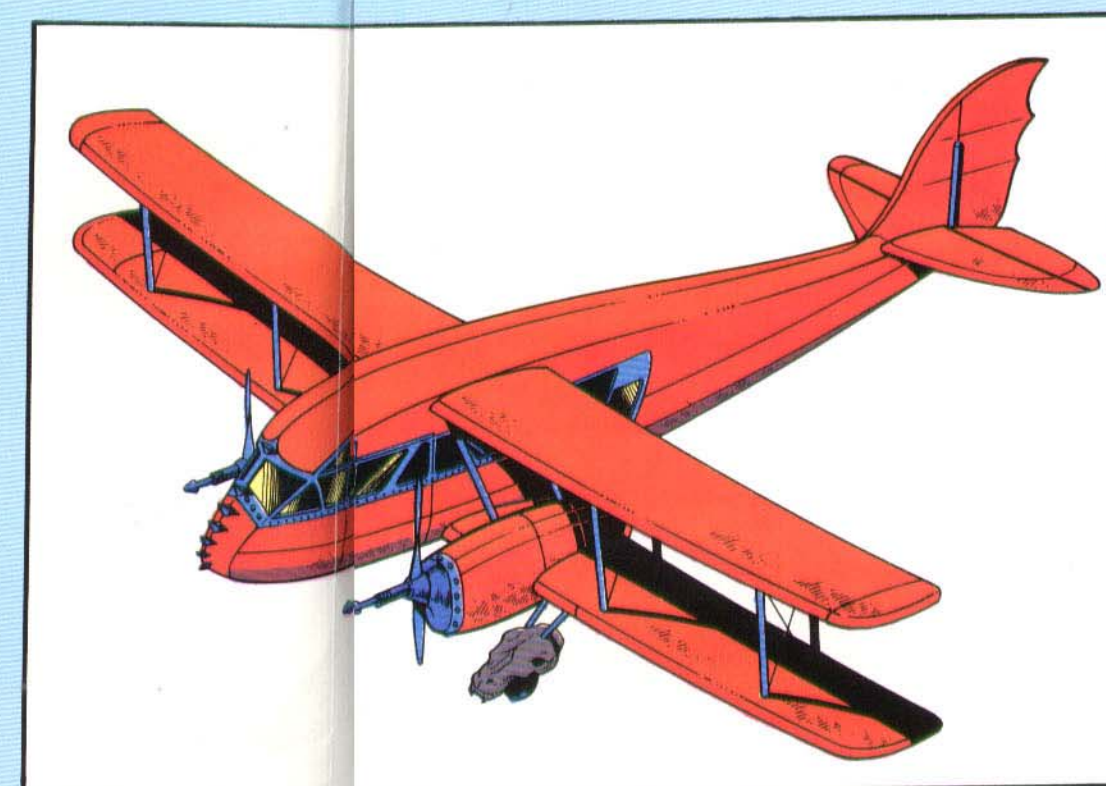
### Smurfri-Lodestar F3F Cloud-Clipper

Type: Eleven-seat Biplane (enclosed cabin)

**Weaponry (Typical)**  
 Synchronized twin-propeller spike guns  
 Crossbow box (16 crossbows & bolts for passenger usage — locked in cabinet near pilot's seat)  
 No Bomb bay

#### Performance Specifications

**Armor Class: 4**  
 Forward Airspeed: 400/round (unloaded — reduce by 5/round per passenger)  
 Maneuverability Factor: MF1  
 Bomb bay capacity: none  
 Tank capacity: 500,000 feet  
 Hit Points: 135





# Top Ballista

by Carl Sargent

SCANNED BY: JACK D. KNIGHT

*Blue Fox, scramble . . . Red Dragon at 5 o'clock!*

The Realms of the Sky belongs to Serraine, the incredible Flying City of the gnomes. They know no borders, and fear no monsters. From the far reaches of Alphatia to the mysterious lands of Arypt, their neverending quest is for the magical fuel...that will keep them flying!

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