

# THE OERTH JOURNAL

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# The Oerth Journal

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*Of Oerth and Altar*

# Joramy, The Raging Volcano

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## Joramy

(Maiden of Disputes, Mistress of Heat, The Furious Inferno, The Raging Volcano)

**Lesser Power of the Elemental Plane of Fire, N (NG)**

Portfolio:	Fire, volcanos, wrath, anger, quarrels
Aliases:	None
Domain:	The Elemental Plane of Fire/The
Name:	Hearth
Superior:	None
Allies:	Kurell, Pelor, Sunnis, Zaaman Rul
Foes:	Beltar, Erythnul, Imix, Ogremoch, Procan, Pyremius
Symbol:	Brass relief of a woman's face with multi-colored fiery hair & ruby eyes
Wor. Align:	N (NG)

Joramy (JUR-ah-mee) is the goddess of fire, volcanos, wrath, anger and quarrels. Her holy symbol is a brass relief of a woman's face with multi-colored fiery hair and ruby eyes. She is primarily worshipped by fire elementalists and sages interested in inner-planar affairs.

Joramy's clericy has seen a recent surge in followers as her worship expands out of the volcanic regions. These new followers are attracted to the anger and wrath aspects of Joramy's power because of the recent wars. Many people were displaced from their homes, had a personal loss of family or friends, and hold a great enmity towards those creatures that brought this time of despair upon them. These people want to regain what they lost or make the people that caused their suffering pay. Joramy's followers offer a way to accomplish what these people desire and set a good example based on what Joramy is like.

Joramy is an extremely passionate goddess. She takes her beliefs very seriously, is quick to anger and will not give up easily. She doesn't believe in holding back her emotions or using diplomacy as a tool to accomplish her goals. She has an explosive temper and will push her point (either through combat, magic or a heated debate) until she is satisfied with the outcome. And woe be the creature that crosses her in

some way as to give offense, because she will not rest until satisfaction has been achieved. She is relentless in the pursuit of her sense of "right and wrong" and doesn't care who gets in the way. She uses these qualities and directs them in a way to do the most good and strike a blow against those that would wish to harm her or her followers. She has offered Prince Zaaman Rul sanctuary in her realm while he recuperates from his terrible defeat against Imix. She also openly helps Princess Sunnis conspire against the evil tyrant Ogremoch of the Elemental Plane of Earth. Both these evil powers have angered Joramy in the past and she will see them pay for this.

Joramy's home rests on the cusp of the boundary between the Elemental Plane of Fire and the Para-Elemental Plane of Magma, where she has been seeking additional. On the Elemental Plane of Fire, Joramy has a passing relationship with Kossuth, Tyrant-King of the fire elementals. They both leave the other alone. She considers the efreet to be the greatest threat next to Imix on the Elemental Plane of Fire because of their evil attitudes and actions. Her followers keep close tabs on these evil genies and their vile City of Brass. From here the efreet, under the leadership of the Grand Sultan, enslave anyone that comes within their long grasp, even followers of Joramy. Many a poor efreet has suffered for such an outrage. Both parties keep a close eye on the other but hostilities have yet to grow in size. This could easily change if Joramy takes offense to anything the efreet do in the future.

On the Para-Elemental Plane of Magma, Joramy seeks to expand her worship. Her only rival for power is the supposed "Master of the Lava Mephits", Chilimbra. This evil tyrant cannot hold a candle to Joramy and many lava mephits and magmen are taking to worship Joramy. This conversion is drawing the attention of many other deities in the Inner Planes and could bring about a conflict at some future point.

Joramy also has some longstanding enmities with a few other deities not found on the Inner Planes. Her greatest enmity is with Pyremius, the Suel power of murder and fire, who stole his fire aspect from Joramy's ally Ranet after weakening her with poison. Pyremius has corrupted Ranet's life-giving power and uses it to further the cause of murder and mayhem

through arson and pyromania. Pyremius has also taken to sending omens and messages to followers of Joramy, enticing them to do his dirty work in Joramy's name. Erythnul started a conflict with Joramy because of his envy and hatred over Joramy's beauty and power. Erythnul has repeatedly tried to thwart Joramy's plans for expansion by setting about schemes to endanger her followers and mar her name. This has brought Joramy's wrath and anger into the situation, and she will not rest until Erythnul has paid for his interference. Beltar requires the sacrifices of numerous creatures. Since Joramy's followers live in some of the areas where Beltar's priests are, these unfortunate people have found their way onto to the sacrificial block. Joramy is extremely angry about this practice and seeks to bring the loss of her follower's lives as sacrifices to an end. These situations are ready to turn into all out wars with these clerics, and priests from either side will attack the other upon sight.

Joramy has few allies among the native Powers of Oerth. Because of the situations Joramy has with Pyremius, Erythnul & Beltar, Kurell keeps himself on Joramy's good side out of fear of her wrath and nothing else. He is biding his time to extract revenge for some personal slight he feels was made against him. Pelor, however, respects Joramy's wrath and ability to wield a strong source of heat and light to burn the forces of evil and drive out the darkness. He will sometimes aid Joramy in a cause directly related to Oerth, particularly one that will see an end to some great evil or darkness.

Joramy has a long and storied past. Some of the earliest legends about her are nearly two thousand years old, and concern her role in creating an artifact known as *Queen Ehlissa's Marvelous Nightingale*. This item is partially named after the most notorious owner of the item, Queen Ehlissa, who ruled with an iron fist for many centuries with the help of this item. Its powers are a direct link to the numerous aspects of Joramy and reflect this in its functions. The artifact has been lost for many centuries and would be a prize that any follower of Joramy would gladly kill for.

In the past, the strength of Joramy's worship has fluctuated greatly. At one time she was the most prominent deity worshiped in the Hellfurnaces and the surrounding area until the Rain of Colorless Fire (which she unjustly took some of the blame for because of her fire aspect). When the migrating Suel passed through Slerotin's tunnel, they caused much destruction in the underground areas of the Hellfurnaces and many followers were killed or forced to serve new deities. Since that time her influence in the Flanees has been slowly re-growing until recently.

Joramy's Realm, known as The Hearth, can be found on the Elemental Plane of Fire at the border of Fire and the Para-Elemental Plane of Magma. Because

of Joramy's interest in the Para-Elemental Plane of Magma, her realm can exist in both Planes at once, if she so desires it to. The Hearth's primary feature is a volcano of such enormity that no other can rival it anywhere in the Multiverse. It is long rumored that this is the birthplace of all Magma and that portals exist deep within this realm that feed all volcanos around the Prime Material Plane and its many crystal spheres. Lava is constantly flowing from the volcano's center and its uncountable vents. The smell of sulfur is so pervasive in this realm that everyone must make a save vs. death magic every turn or pass out from the overwhelming stench. The petitioners that reside here are always in a constant state of anger and will take it out on the first creature they encounter that gives them offense. This could either be a rather harsh tongue-lashing or an all out fight. This realm is truly one of the many wonders of Elemental Fire and Magma at its grandest.

#### **Joramy's Avatar (Priest 25, Fighter 18)**

Joramy appears as a beautiful human woman cloaked in a robe made of lava that swirls with the randomness of the tides of magma. Her hair is wisps of multi-colored fire (the colors depending on the intensity of the flame) that dance around her perfectly formed powder white face. Her fiery red ruby eyes glisten from the heat and flames that surround her. When she speaks, a deep booming voice erupts from her that sends shock waves to all those around her.

Joramy carries *The Flaming Hand*, a staff made of brass that is topped with a piece of pumice formed into the shape of a clenched fist. At will, she can summon forth *Blazing Wrath*, a two handed sword made of pure fire that will not only do normal sword damage, but will also cause an additional 1d10 points of heat damage. (This is in addition to Joramy's own personal body heat). She prefers to use her spells and natural abilities before resorting to the staff and sword, but she will use either with deadly force.



When Joramy wants to travel the Prime Material Plane and not be noticed she takes the form of a tall, beautiful, demure human woman in her early 20's with bright red hair. She is very soft spoken but head strong in all matters.

AC -6; MV 15; HP 140; THAC0 3; #AT 1  
 DMG: 1d8 + 4 (Staff) / 2d10 + 7 (2H Sword)  
 MR: 90% (45%); SZ M (6')  
 STR:18 DEX:19 CON:18 INT:22 WIS:18 CHA:18  
 Spells W: Any fire or earth spell; P: 11/11/10/10/9/8/4  
 Saves: PPD 4 , RSW 2 , PP 5 , BW 2 , Sp 2

**Special Att/Def:** Joramy is immune to all forms of fire and earth (spells, breath weapons, natural events, etc.). Because of the intense heat generated by the goddess, all those that stand within 30 feet of her (even those with natural immunities to fire) will receive 1d10 points of heat damage every round, no save. For the same reason, any magical weapon that hits her in combat will need to make a save vs. magical fire or be totally destroyed. Normal weapons get no save and are automatically destroyed. Magical plusses will count to the save, and *frost brands* get an additional +3 to their saves. Anything that Joramy willingly touches will burst into flames and be destroyed unless a save vs. magical fire is made. She also has it within her power to extinguish or intensify any fire source within her sight, either magical or natural.



The robe that Joramy wears, known as *Searing Mirage*, acts like a *cloak of displacement*; *The Flaming Hand* is a +2 *staff of the elements*, and *Blazing Wrath* acts like a +3 *two handed flame tongue*. She can command any fire or magma creature within 100 feet of her to unflinchingly do her bidding without having to concentrate. These fire and magma creatures are also enhanced within her presence by 2 HD for the duration of their time in Joramy's service. This increase affects THAC0, hit points, damage, size and saves.

Joramy can only be hit by +3 or better magical weapons and has access to all fire and earth based spells, be they mage or cleric. These spells cast by

Joramy's avatar receive an additional point of damage per dice. She does not have access to water or air spells of any kind.

**Special Weakness:** Being a creature of fire and heat, any water or cold based spell will have a greater effect on Joramy's avatar. These spells will cause an additional point of damage per dice rolled and her magic resistance is only 45% when dealing with these

kinds of spells. Any such spell used against Joramy, however, will bring her full attention upon the creature casting them against her.

### Other Manifestations

Joramy will sometimes take the appearance of a powerful elemental creature to survey the surrounding territory. At other times she will take the form of a large geyser of lava erupting from the ground. Joramy also sends omens of warning in the guise of minor volcanic eruptions, lava flowing in the wrong direction, strange smells associated with fire or lava or pumice turning back into lava.

On the Inner Planes, Joramy is served by numerous Fire and Magma creatures including: fire elementals, magma para-elementals, magmen, grues, ruvkova, salamanders, azer, fire bats, rogue efreet, fire giants, and fire and lava mephits.

## The Church

Clergy:	Clerics (30%), specialty priests (70%)
Alignment:	N or NG
Turn Undead:	C: Yes, at priest level -2 ; SP: Yes, at priest level -2.
Command Undead:	C: No, SP: No

All priests of Joramy receive the following bonus proficiencies free of charge: fire building and survival, desert. They are required to learn blind fighting and spellcraft without any penalties due to class. Clerics and specialty priests can turn undead as if they were 2 levels less. The clergy of Joramy is made up of humans, dwarves and gnomes.

Joramy's clerics customarily stay in areas of great heat and volcanic activity like the Hellfurnaces or deep underground caverns open to lava flows, but her worship has become more widespread over the past few decades and made its way across the Flanaess. Recently her worship has been increasing in more "unusual" areas like major cities and port towns. Most of the new areas of worship have been ravaged by the recent wars. Here, her priests are preaching the cleric dogma but stressing certain aspects of Joramy's power (anger, wrath and quarrels) to those smart enough to be enlightened by the instructing priests. These priests honor the Mistress of Fire with large bonfires that burn round the clock all year long in these "cold" areas. The strongest areas of worship, though, are still those around volcanos, lava flows and hot springs.

Natural shrines and temples are always located near a great source of heat like a lava pit, volcanic geyser or a huge bonfire. These areas are always extremely hot and uncomfortable to those not

properly protected from these severe effects. No special building is erected or unique design used to distinguish these areas as a temple. Only the great force of nature itself stands as testament to Joramy's great power. This is usually why her worship has remained in isolated areas of the Flanaess until recently.

The clerics of Joramy are responsible for the maintenance of shrines, temples and holy areas and perform all the necessary rituals in their upkeep. They give guidance and counsel to the followers of Joramy by interpreting omens and signs. They mediate disputes by becoming passionately involved and usually solve the problem through extreme measures. Because of the recent wars, many people have become receptive to Joramy's priests and the attendance and interest in the temples has grown.

Specialty priests are the ones that travel around the Flanaess and spread the word of Joramy. These representatives of the Mistress of Heat spend their days seeking out new forms of elemental fire magic and those that employ it. They then try to convert these mages to their way of thinking so as to spread the word of Joramy faster. Since these potential converts deal with elemental fire already, half the argument is already won in the minds of these priests. The specialty priests also seek out angry people and areas of great quarrels to intercede and become involved in. The potential for converts are enormous in these people and these priests are right there to spread the word.

The clergy is ordered by the following titles. These names represent the many stages and intensities that flames undergo as it progresses to becoming hotter and brighter. Titles are given at each new level achieved up to 12<sup>th</sup> Level. Novices (0-Level) of Joramy are called Kindling. Priests begin with the title of Wisps (1<sup>st</sup> Level) and continue on with Yellow Flame, Orange Flame, Red Flame, Blue Flame, Green Flame, White Flame, Flame Master, Flame Lord, Searing Lord, Illustrious Geyser and finally Grand Lava Master.

After this final title is achieved, any level advancement made by the priest beyond 12<sup>th</sup> Level, they will not receive a new title. The leader of the church (a priest of at least 12<sup>th</sup> level) is known as the Hearth Master in deference to Joramy's Realm name. There can only be one Hearth Master at any one time but many Grand Lava Masters. The Hearth Master has achieved this position either through combat, great deeds done in the Mistress's name or passionately arguing their way to the top.

**Dogma:** Fire is everything. It is the building block and ultimate destroyer of all, the end and the beginning of life. Emotions are the tides that flow with the ever-changing currents of magma. Express your anger

strongly and passionately throw yourself into any quarrel. Never let another stand in your way of what you know as right for they shall feel my wrath. When you get involved in an argument or quarrel, you do so with passion, emotion and especially anger. Heated arguments help you get closer to perfection. And if you get a little hot under the collar, heaven help the soul that stands in your way. They will get burned for their efforts.

**Day-to-day activities:** Worshipers of Joramy usually venerate the Mistress of Heat by arguing, getting angry, avenging a wrong done to them or building fires. Nothing special is usually done to celebrate her on a daily basis. The priests will bless any cooking fires and praise Joramy for the gift of heat and warm meals

**Important Ceremonies:** When a volcano erupts, a great quarrel begins between powerful parties (war, arguments between priesthoods, families or countries) or some great injustice has been avenged, the priests will perform a special ceremony honoring Joramy's power. In the natural areas of extreme heat described earlier and in the temples dedicated to Joramy, grand ceremonies are held every season when Celene and Luna are both new moons {25<sup>th</sup> Readying, 18<sup>th</sup> Flocktime, 11<sup>th</sup> Goodmonth, 4<sup>th</sup> Ready'Reat}. Sacrifices of expensive gems, valuable metals and rare stones are thrown into the heat source and impressive displays of elemental fire magic are used to intensify the natural flames and heat. This makes the ceremonies around these areas (the bonfires can be over 40-foot of burning material with the flames reaching well over 100-feet) more impressive and grand in the complete darkness. The 11<sup>th</sup> day of Goodmonth is the holiest day of the year because it is one of the hottest days of high summer. The only other days important to the faith are those honoring the anniversaries of great eruptions of volcanos in the past. .

**Major Centers of Worship:** The Hellfurnaces and the villages at their base have the largest concentration of worshipers around the Flanaess. The great volcanos, lava pits and open geysers of the mountain range serve as the numerous shrines and altars dedicated to Joramy. Here one can experience the full worship of the goddess. In the major cities around the Flanaess where the Mistress's worship has grown (Hardby, Loftwick, Greyhawk and Dyvers to name a few) there are either natural hot springs or great bonfires that the priests maintain at roaring levels. These "city temples" are enclosed in a red stone structure, (formed like an Olman-style temple or a stepped pyramid) which is heated to unbearable levels by the natural event. The roof of the building is open to the sky so that the

flames and wisps of heat escaping from the building resemble a volcano erupting, which lights up the evening sky. Recently, priests have been investigating the sites of natural forest fires that have burned hundreds of acres as other possible holy areas.

**Affiliated Orders:** Several of Joramy's temples maintain their own fighting and mage orders. The Fellowship of the Hearth consists of fire elementalists and sages that seek out or research new forms of elemental fire magic or secrets of the Elemental Plane of Fire and Para-Elemental Plane of Magma. They use this knowledge to defend the temples and followers of the Mistress as well as teaching these new skills to the faithful. Members of the Fellowship are distinguished by the red coloring of their hair by dyes or berries, even those members with natural red hair color.

The Order of the Crimson Fury is a secret society made up of rogues that make sure that the Maiden of Disputes' will is done. The Order is charged with inciting anger and quarrels in new areas of worship so that the specialty priests have receptive ears to hear the word of Joramy. The Order also keeps established areas of worship in a state of anger and heated arguments worthy of the Maiden. Members of the Order carry a small symbol of a crimson colored female face with a look of anger somewhere on their person.

The Order of Knights of the Blazing Wrath is made up of fighters and clerics. Their symbol is a two-handed sword afire, and members of this order are known to stoop to low deeds to acquire a two-handed *flaming tongue* sword. The Knights of the Blazing Wrath are charged with defending the holy areas and temples of the Raging Inferno. When an argument needs to be resolved or some injustice needs to be avenged, the Knights go forth and bring the full wrath of the Maiden upon the guilty. Sane people run in fear from these knights as they bring the scourge of Joramy upon all that get in their way. Numerous adventuring companies have also taken Joramy as a patron, chiefly those whose treks regularly bring them deep into the Hellfurnaces.

**Priestly Vestments:** Priests will never wear any armor. They wear light fitting clothes similar to a toga. These vestments are all colored white and a colored sash corresponding to their level will display each priest's title. Once beyond the color range a design is embalmed over the section of cloth near the heart. A red flame for Flame Master, a black flame with a white tip for the Flame Lord, a green flame for the Searing Lord, a column of golden flames for Illustrious Geyser and an erupting volcano for the Grand Lava Master. The Hearth Master wears a multi-colored toga

representing the many colors of flame that they are responsible to direct.

**Adventuring Garb:** Priests of the Raging Volcano may wear sturdy clothes and boots, but must wear their sash or insignia of rank at all times. They cannot wear armor of any kind (including bracers) or bear shields, but may use other protective devices (bracers, rings, cloaks, etc.). All priests will carry a blackened walking staff topped with a clenched fist, which may be used in combat or abandoned for another weapon.

### Specialty Priests (The Flaming Hand)

Requirements: Strength 15, Constitution 15, Wisdom 9

Prime Req: Strength, Constitution

Alignment: N, NG

Weapons: Any flail, hammer, mace, morningstar, pick, staff

Armor: None

Major Spheres: All, Charm, Combat, Creation, Elemental (Fire, Earth), Guardian, Protection, Sun

Minor Spheres: Divination, Healing, Necromantic, Summoning

Magical Items: Any available to priests and fire elementalists

Req. Profs: blind-fighting, spellcraft

Bonus Profs: fire-building, survival; desert

- Priests gain major access to the Animal sphere while on the Elemental Plane of Fire or Para-Elemental Plane of Magma. They can only control animals (PlaneScape Monstrous Compendium III, pg. 14-15)
- At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the priest will receive a +2 bonus to saves made vs. fire damage, a -2 vs. all cold and water related spells and is protected by a permanent *endure heat* spell
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, the priest can use an ability similar to the 1<sup>st</sup> level mage spell *taunt* (1x/day) when involved in an argument
- At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the priest can use an ability similar to the 2<sup>nd</sup> level mage spell *ESP* (1x/day) to help in a quarrel or argument
- At 7<sup>th</sup> level, the priest can use an ability similar to the 3<sup>rd</sup> level mage spell *suggestion* (1x/day) to influence a creature to become angry and quarrelsome
- At 9<sup>th</sup> level, the priest can learn and cast a mage spell of 1<sup>st</sup> thru 3<sup>rd</sup> level that deals with the element of fire or magma. These spells replace a priest spell of the corresponding level and must be prayed for by the priest before they can be added to their spell list

- At 10<sup>th</sup> level, the priest can add an additional point of damage per dice on all fire-related spells and targets receive a -1 to their saves vs. elemental fire magic cast by the priest
- At 12<sup>th</sup> level, the priest can use an ability that has the same effects as the magical item *scarab of enraged enemies* (once per week)
- At 14<sup>th</sup> level, the priest can learn and cast a mage spell of 1<sup>st</sup> thru 5<sup>th</sup> level that deals with the element of fire or magma. These spells replace a priest spell of the corresponding level and must be prayed for by the priest before they can be added to their spell list

## Joramy's Spells

### Burning Eyes (Charm)

1<sup>st</sup> Level

Range: 10 yards

Components: V, S

Duration: Special

Casting Time: 2

Area of Effect: 1 creature

Saving Throw: Neg.

This spell causes the priest's eyes to glow and look like flames. The caster must then concentrate on one creature within visual and sound range and make eye contact. Once the creature makes eye contact with the priest and hear what they say, they must make a save vs. spell, adjusted for wisdom. Those that make the save, nothing occurs and they can act normally. Those that fail the save vs. spell begin to argue with the priest. As long as the target creature can understand the language the priest is speaking in and makes eye contact, they can be affected by the spell. The creature will continue to argue with the priest until they are either attacked, can no longer see or hear the priest or the priest ends his argument. If the argument is poor or to complicated for the target creature, they receive another save vs. spell with a +4 adjustment. Once a creature makes their save, they can act normally. Creatures without sight, unable to hear, undead of any



sort, and magical constructs are unaffected by this spell.

### Rage (Charm)

2<sup>nd</sup> Level

Range: 80 yards

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 round/level

Casting Time: 5

Area of Effect: 1 creature

Saving Throw: Neg.

This spell allows the caster to cause one intelligent creature to become so enraged that they halt all other activities and attack the nearest creature with their hands or weapon, not spells. The targeted creature must make a save vs. spell (adjusted for wisdom) to avoid the effects of the spell. Those that fail their save, attack with an additional +1 "to hit" and damage for the duration of the spell. If the creature makes the initial save, any subsequent attempt to use this spell on them will afford the creature a cumulative +1 to their save vs. spell each time the priest tries to use this spell on them.

### Frenzy (Charm)

3<sup>rd</sup> Level

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 1 round/level

Casting Time: 7

Area of Effect: The caster

Saving Throw: Special

This spell allows the priest to make themselves so angry that they attack all creatures in melee with an additional +2 "to hit" and damage for the duration of the spell. They cannot cast or perform any other activities except fight in melee during the spells duration. The priest can choose to end their frenzy by making a save vs. spell, adjusted for wisdom. If they fail the save, they continue to fight. They can attempt to end the spell every round with an additional +1 to their save to return to normal. If there are no further enemies to fight and the caster is still in their frenzy, they will attack the nearest creature, even an ally, until the spell ends or they make a save vs. spell. The material component is the priest's holy symbol and a tooth from a wild or aggressive animal.

### Flaming Cloak (Protection, Elemental Fire)

3<sup>rd</sup> Level

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 1 round/level

Casting Time: 6

Area of Effect: The caster

Saving Throw: None

This spell creates a shimmering aura of flames around the spellcaster, similar to the 4<sup>th</sup> level mage spell *fire shield*. This spell creates an mirage effect that tricks the vision of any creature that is looking and attacking the caster. It appears that the caster is standing in one area when in fact they are off a few feet. This spell bestows similar effects of a *cloak of displacement*, or the spell *displace self*. The first targetted attack on the spellcaster automatically misses,

and subsequent attacks receive a -2 penalty to hit. Any targetted spell that is directed at the caster gives the caster a +2 to their saving throw. Examples of these are: touch spells, *disintegrate*, *finger of death*, etc. Area effect spells, like a *fireball*, affect the caster normally. Water or cold-based magic will cause double damage to the priest protected by this spell but it does not reduce damage from fire-based spells. Undead, blind creatures, or magical constructs of any kind are unaffected by this spell. The material components are the priest's holy symbol and a 100gp ruby.

### Antagonism

(Enchantment/Charm)

Sphere: Charm

Level: 4

Range: 10 yards

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 round/level

Casting Time: 7

Area of Effect: 30-foot radius of priest

Saving Throw: Special

This spell causes all creatures within the area of effect that fail their save vs. spell (adjusted for Wisdom) to become furious and argumentative. These creatures will stop what they are doing, including fighting in melee and spell casting, etc. and argue with the caster for the duration of the spell. The priest must continue to argue with the creatures and perform no other actions (spell casting, melee, etc.) or the targets are allowed another save vs. spell adjusted for Wisdom with a +2 bonus. Creatures that are damaged by another creature or spell effect are also granted another save vs. spell. Those that make this second save can act normally, those that fail, continue to argue until the spell ends or one of the above mentioned criteria occurs.



### Flaming Hands

(Invocation/Evocation)

Sphere: Combat, Elemental Fire

Level: 4

Range: 10 yards

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 1 round/level

Casting Time: 7

Area of Effect: One Creature

Saving Throw: 1/2

This spell allows the priest to ignite yellow flames around their hands and then direct it at any

target within range. The flames give off light equal to a torch and do not cause any damage except as noted below. Once per round the priest may aim his hands at the target and send forth a burst of flame, attacking as a fighter of three levels higher (a 9th level priest attacks as a 12th level fighter.) If successful, the burst of flame ignites any flammable items on the victim, and causes 1d4 points of damage per level of the caster (12d4 maximum), save vs. spell for half damage. The target of the spell only needs to save on the round that they are hit with the flames. Multiple attacks on multiple rounds require a saving throw each time. The casters' hands remain aflame until the duration of the spell is over. The caster may perform other activities in lieu of hurling a fire burst that round, including spell casting or combat with a weapon, though flammable objects such as scrolls and material components may catch fire.

The material component is the priest's holy symbol and a 50gp ruby, which is destroyed by the spell.

### Boiling Blood

(Alteration, Enchantment/Charm)

Sphere: Charm, Combat

Level: 5

Range: 10 yards/level

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 1 round/level

Casting Time: 8

Area of Effect: One Creature

Saving Throw: Special

This spell has two effects on the creature being targeted with the spell. The first effect is that the creature goes into a berserker rage and attacks the nearest creature to them every round, regardless of them being a friend or foe. The initial saving throw is made at a -2 penalty, adjusted for wisdom. The creature is given a saving throw each round to see if they come out of the rage. The longer the creature is under the effects of the spell, the harder it is to break out of the rage. After the first save, another -1 penalty is added each round to the saving throw.

Secondly, if the creature is under the effects of the spell for more than one round, their blood begins to heat up at a rate of one degree per round. If the creature's blood is heated up more than four degrees before the effects of the spell end, the creature is exhausted and unable to move. The creature must then spend 3 turns for each degree to recover.

Example: the creature is affected for 6 rounds. They make their save and fall exhausted and must rest for 2 and half-hours before they can do anything. If the creature's body temperature increases by eight degrees, it dies from the extreme change in body temperature.

The material components are the priest's holy symbol, a piece of hardened lava and a 100gp ruby.

### Heat Wave

(Alteration)

Sphere: Combat, Elemental Fire

Level: 5

Range: 10 yards

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 1 round/level

Casting Time: 8

Area of Effect: 40 feet wide, 20 feet high, 10 feet deep

Saving Throw: Neg.

This spell creates a wall of heat that moves away from the priest at a rate of 10 feet per round. The wave cannot be turned back towards the caster but a *cone of cold* or other similar cold-based magic will negate its effects. The wave increases the temperature of the area effected by 90 degrees + 2 degrees/level of the priest. The wave causes 2d4 + 1 point of damage per 2 levels of the priest (round down) with a save vs. spell for half damage. (A 9<sup>th</sup> level priest would cause 2d4 + 4 points of damage) Because of the intense heat, those that fail their save vs. spell also have their vision affected. Creatures become disoriented and their movement rate is reduced by one third and their "to hit" probability suffers a -2 penalty for 1d6 rounds. This spell does double damage to any cold using or regenerating creatures and no damage to fire based creatures. The material components are the priest's holy symbol, pumice, and coal.

### Magma Warriors (Abjuration, Summoning)

(Conjuration/Summoning)

Sphere: Elemental Fire, Summoning

Level: 6

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 3 rounds/level

Casting Time: 1 round

Area of Effect: 30 Feet

Saving Throw: None

This spell enables the caster to summon warriors from the Para-Elemental Plane of Magma. These warriors will protect the caster from physical harm for the duration of the spell or until they are destroyed. These special warriors fight with fire swords that inflict 1d10 points of damage, plus 2d4 points of heat damage for all those within 10ft of the warrior. Any cold using, avian, or regenerating creatures take double damage from these warriors. Any heat-using creature will only take half damage from the weapon and no heat damage. These warriors have an armor class of 2; the hit points of the priest and attack as fighters 3 levels less than the caster's level. When the

warriors are destroyed they return to the Para-



Elemental Plane of Magma. The caster can summon 1d4 magma warriors. The material component for this spell is the priest's holy symbol, sulfur, phosphorus, and a 500 gp ruby.

### Transmute Stone to Lava (Alteration, Elemental Fire & Earth)

6<sup>th</sup> Level

Range: 100 yards

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Special

Casting Time: 9

Area of Effect: 10-foot cube/level

Saving Throw: Special

The spell turns natural rock or stone into an equal volume of magma. This spell works like all other *transmute X* spells except for two major differences. Creatures caught in the area of effect suffer an automatic 2d10 + 5 points of damage each round they are in the magma. Magical items that provide protection versus fire will reduce this damage by half. All flammable items must make a save vs. magical fire or be destroyed. The only way to revert the magma back to stone is by casting a *dispel magic* on the area or by waiting 1d4 weeks for the magma to cool and harden. The material components are a piece of pumice and an open flame.

### Volcanic Geyser (Alteration / Elemental Fire)

6<sup>th</sup> Level

Range: 120 yards

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Special

Casting Time: 1 turn

Area of Effect: 60-yard radius

Saving Throw: Special

This spell causes an area of the ground to open up and vent volcanic lava for 2 rounds. All those within 30 yards of the eruption take 1d8 points of damage for every 2 levels of the caster with a save vs. breath weapon for half damage. Creatures between 31 and 60 yards take 1d8 points of damage for every 4 levels of experience of the caster, also with a save vs. breath weapon for half damage. Those creatures that fail their save vs. breath weapon must make individual saves vs. magical fire for all their personal items. Flammable items receive a -4 to their save vs. magical fire. Lava continues to flow from the epicenter for 1 turn after the initial 2 round eruption, inflicting 2d8

points of damage per round to those standing or moving through the lava, no save. All those within 10 feet of the lava take 2d6 points of heat damage and 1d6 points of damage for those within 20 feet of the lava, no save. The material component for this spell is a piece of hardened lava and a red ruby worth 1,000 gp.



### ***NOTES & REFERENCES***

Prince Zaaman Rul is the Archomental of all good Elemental Fire creatures; Imix is the Archomental of all evil Elemental Fire creatures; Princess Sunnis is the Archomental of all good Elemental Earth; Ogmoch is the Archomental of all evil Elemental Earth creatures. Archomentals are similar to Abyssal Lords and are just one step below being a "true" deity. TSR 2635 {Planescape Monstrous Compendium III, pg. 16-21)

Kossoth, Tyrant King of the Fire Elementals  
TSR 2634 (PLANESCAPE CAMPAIGN EXPANSION: THE INNER PLANES, pg. 46; and FAITHS & AVATARS, pgs. 88-90)

Pyremius is the Suel deity of Fire, Murder & Poison, TSR 11374 (THE SCARLET BROTHERHOOD, pg. 78)

*Queen Ehlissa's Marvelous Nightingale* (1<sup>st</sup> Edition DMG, pg. 160)

# Iron Enchantments

By Paul F. Schmidt  
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Before we begin....

This article was written to address several problems in fantasy gaming in general and in AD&D in particular – how do cities and fortresses survive in the magic rich environment of AD&D? Why not build underground? Why don't magic rich races dominate the world? Indeed, how do humans survive as a free species? Of what use are skills and proficiencies developed by a player character thief, paladin, fighter or ranger when a mage can do most things better than the class the skill belongs to? Why do the fairy races of literature fear iron and why can't mages cast AD&D mages cast while wearing iron armour? And how can we address all these problems without having to rewrite the whole game?

Iron abjurations and the general theory of how iron works (as presented below) solves most of these problems. Once in place this "Iron Theory" exists passively in the background, fleshing out the campaign world and helping to create the environment we recognise as High Fantasy, the fantasy of ADD complete with castles, cities and free humans. "Iron Abjurations" takes "Iron theory" a step further and leaves humans with some very good rationales for being the dominant race around, at least in a general sense.

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## Walls of Iron - Making City Walls and Castles a practicality...

In a world of elementals, *fly* spells and *earthquakes*, it's difficult to understand why most civilisations build their great cities and fortifications above ground. How do you protect a city or fortress from heavy magical attack? Clearly a fortress has advantages over a dungeon - you can see your enemies from further away, you can fire at them safely while they have to cross dangerous ground and you can deploy your troops more quickly and efficiently. You also have room to build without the danger of the roof caving in on your head!

Unfortunately, you are also subject to magical invasion from below, flying war parties, and sieges by

giants, wizards and the like. How do you protect yourself?

Well there are a group of abjurations that make cities and castles a practicality. They are not ordinary spells, rather they are *rituals* - spells which depend on resources, preparation and repetition to be effective. This group of rituals are known as *iron abjurations*, and are based on the dampening effects of iron on magic.

### Iron Theory

*Iron Theory* and indeed the theory of how iron affects magic and magical creatures in general was first described by the abjurer Borrillian of Rel Mord in his masterwork of 463 CY, "*Iron - Yea Defensif Use*". Borrillian based his work on the antipathy many magical creatures showed when confronted with cold steel. He proposed that iron did not actually hinder magic as was then widely believed, but rather it was itself highly magical - so much so that it attracted further magics in to its mass, often causing great pain to magical creatures in the process.

Borrillian noted that places rich in *lodestone*, a source of iron, were often associated with magical protections and enchantments. Druid's circles, for example, were places of power and protection and many of these were of *lodestone*.

Of most interest, Borrillian said, was the civilising effects of roads when cut with iron picks and shovels - travel is demonstrably faster over such roads and many magical creatures are known to avoid places tainted by iron tools. Indeed, many daily activities associated with iron tools were, Borrillian claimed, actually *rituals* of a low grade magical nature, inimical to fairy or magical creatures because they bound magic to specific ends, leaving it unavailable for general use. Any large mass of iron had the potential for this dampening effect, Borrillian said and hence mages could not cast in contact with large amounts of cold iron. Even the increased yield from fields turned with a steel plough was used as a proof of the magical nature of iron.

Over the years Borrillian further refined his theory, reasoning that most human settlements were free of magical creatures due to the long-term effects of iron binding magic away from general use. A peasant's harvest song, for example, not only sped up work, it

directed the magic of the environment into the peasant's tools, improving his efficiency, and starving many magical creatures of the energies they required to survive. Left unchecked, Elves, drow and other magical creatures might find it increasingly difficult to survive in such "civilised" iron-tainted regions. Magic would not completely disappear, but it become steadily less fey and more directed in its nature and application. Finally, Borrillian argued, the rise of the great human civilisations had come about because of the advantage iron had given humans over their more magically adept neighbours.

(NB: this also explains the survival of dwarfs and other races poor in magical expertise).

### ***Iron Abjurations***

Using these ideas, Borrillian designed several iron based magics specifically for human abjurers tasked with protecting human settlements or castles - no other races are said to be able to use the magics contained within his tomes, though it is suspected that dwarves may have developed weaker clerical equivalents based on Borrillian's works.

All of the rituals given below were designed to protect fortresses and cities from magical sieges, especially sieges lead by the races of the Underdark, the undead, or necromancers and summoners. Indeed, so effective are his abjurations that enchantments cast under the radiations of the Underdark, or items manufactured with the aid of those fey glimmerings, fail utterly in the presence of even the simplest of his spells. This makes the races of the Underdark wary of surface dwellers, especially those who use iron widely and of human abjurers in particular. The reason for the weakness of such races in the face of Borrillian's *iron abjurations* is said to be covered in his second major work "*Iron, Yea Deep Races*". This work also covers the relationship of the Underdark races to sunlight and the interactions of light and iron in particular. Needless to say the Abjurer of Rel Mord was also unpopular with many surface magicians as well, especially those of evil alignments or those who used conjured and summoned creatures regularly. Fortunately many of Borrillian's abjurations are episodic in nature – passive until they activated by a defender, using the time between activations to gather strength to resist a siege or encirclement. This has led to what some rulers call the adventurer syndrome: its better to employ a few specialists – adventurers – to accomplish things a larger army might not be able to.

#### *DM Notes...*

In their original form, the casting of Borrillian's *iron abjurations* took a considerable period of time. The shortest ritual to cast - *fortify*, took a week to cast; and others like *conjure sour*, could take several

months. Since the original publication of his work however, several shorter variations of Borrillian's spells have been developed. For this reason two casting times, areas of effects and costs are given for each ritual.

The first covers the full casting of an *iron abjuration* and is usually used while building a fortress, castle or city wall. The second assumes the abjurer is short of time and must defend an area quickly. When an abjurer learns the full version of each ritual, he automatically learns the shorter version as well – both versions count as but a single spell.

To fully protect a keep or castle with the abjurations listed would take an abjurer at least two year's work and consume considerable resources. While the costs might seem high, they are low compared to that of actually building and maintaining a castle or city wall.

## **The Abjurations**

All *iron abjurations* are based around the use of a specially prepared piece of iron or lodestone known as a *Key*. Theft of this *Key*, or a copy of it, may allow an invader or thief to literally steal the *Keys* to a city and bypass the wards set to protect it. Consequently most *Keys* will be well hidden and guarded. Many *iron abjurations* list other spells as components of their casting and several of these spells lie outside the scope of a specialist abjurer eg. *strength* or *wall of iron*. The spells listed are tailored versions of the normal spells, useful only while casting of an iron based ward. They are learnt as part of each ritual and do not count as separate spells for the purposes of numbers of spells learnt. If an abjurer does not wish to learn these spells (or cannot), he may use an ordinary version of the spell from a scroll or item, or have it cast by another mage.

Finally, when the long version of each ritual requires renewing, the time between renewals may be doubled by including a *limited wish* and *extension* spell as part of the original casting, or quadrupled by using a *wish*. Casting *permanency* on any *iron abjuration* always cost a point of constitution. The shortened versions of each ritual cannot be extended beyond their given durations except as noted.

### **Create Key**

(Abjuration)

Level: 5

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 3 years per level of the caster (One week per level – short version)

Casting Time: Three weeks (One turn - short version)

Area of Effect: One pound of lodestone or iron per level

Saving Throw: None

This spell is used to create a *Master Key*, a *Key* used to cast or maintain other *iron abjurations*. A specially prepared *lodestone* or iron billet is cut or cast in the shape of a *Key*. The abjurer himself need not cut the *Key*, but the work must be of high quality - at least 500 GP worth of work. The abjurer then exposes the *Key* to grounding elements while casting the spell. At least 100 GP's worth of such elements must be expended for each pound of iron or lodestone enchanted.

Typical grounding elements include lead, iron, basalt, granite, obsidian and nickel. Grounding gems are usually jet, catseyes, chrysolite, haematite, olivine and peridot. Additionally (full version only), the abjurer must cast *dispel magic*, *knock*, *wizard lock* and *wall of iron* on the *Key* during each day that the *Key* is being enchanted.

With both versions of the ritual the abjurer may make two copies of the original *Key* for each pound of iron enchanted. These copies weigh but two ounces are in the shape of an actual door key and have the same life span as the *Master Key*. Making a *Copy Key* requires the use of the *Master Key* and takes but a single round to create. If lodestone is used to create a *Master Key* instead of iron, three copies may be made for each pound of *lodestone* enchanted.

More than one abjurer may cooperate in casting this ritual. If more than one mage participates, combine the levels of the casters to discover how many pounds of iron or lodestone may be enchanted and how long the *Key* lasts.

If a *Master Key* is due to fail, re-casting the *create key* spell on the *Master* will renew the spell on the *Master* as well as on all the *copies* made from it. A *Key* may have *permanency* cast on it. A *Key* is not subject to *dispel magic*.

## Fortify

(Abjuration)

Level: 5

Range: 1 yard per level

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Three years plus special (Or two hours per level – short version)

Casting Time: One week (Or one turn – short version)

Area of effect: One 40' cube per level of the caster (or one 20' cube per level – short version)

Saving Throw: None

This spell is usually the first of the *iron abjurations* to be cast. For the full version, the spell requires a 20lb pig of iron for every 40ft cube to be protected and the services of a master mason or engineer. The shortened version requires but a single

iron billet of five pounds weight and no artisan is required.

During a full *fortify* ritual, the artisan bolts an iron pig to each section of wall or foundation to be protected while explaining to the abjurer the deficits and weaknesses of the area being fortified. A typical 30-foot high wall section might have three such pigs attached - one set in the foundation, one within the wall itself and one to protect the area atop the wall. As each pig is attached, it is touched by the abjurer with a *Master Key* or *Copy*. At the end of the casting, the abjurer casts *dispel magic*, *shield*, *wall of iron* and *strength* over the area being *fortified*. These spells are not required for the quick version of the spell.

When either version of the ritual is completed, the billet(s) merge with the stonework, increasing its resistance to damage and doubling the defensive value of the work vs. siege engines, giant boulders etc. Additionally, *fortify* enhances a wall's resistance to *disintegrate*, *passwall*, *rock to mud*, *earthquake* and other structure altering spells. The wall gains a +2 save vs. these spells or is allowed a saving throw if a saving throw is not normally allowed. If the full ritual of *fortify* is cast, it may be renewed every three years by an engineer or mason ritually tapping the surface of the wall with an active *Key* or *copy*. *Fortify* fails if this ritual is neglected. Areas repaired after combat still benefit from this spell provided at least 50% of the original structure remains.

If a *Copy* or *Key* is built into a tower, gatehouse, or similar work during either version of the ritual, the siege value of that section is tripled, the duration of the *fortify* is doubled, and *disintegrate*, *passwall* and similar magics cast against the area have their effective volumes halved in addition to the saving throw bonus. Using a *Key* or *Copy* in this fashion destroys the *Key* or *Copy* used (so *Copy Keys* are usually used).

If *permanency* is cast on a *fortify* area (full version only), no *Key* or regular maintenance is required. No more than one *fortify* spell may be in place over an area at a time - the oldest effect applies. *Fortify* is not subject to *dispel magic*.

## Wall Guard

(Abjuration)

Level: 5

Range: One yard per level

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Three years plus special (or two hours per level – short version)

Casting Time: Two weeks (or two turns – short version)

Area of effect: One 40' cube per level of the caster (or one 20' cube per level – short version)

Saving Throw: None

**Full Version:** An iron bar 2ft long and 1/2 inch in diameter is hammered into each 40ft cube to be protected by a *wall guard* ritual. A typical 30-foot high wall section might have three such bars within itself - one bar set in the foundations, one within the wall itself and one to protect the area atop the wall. The shortened version of the ritual requires but a single iron billet of five pounds weight and a diamond of at least 500 GP value (which is consumed in the casting).

When the ritual(s) are cast, nothing at first seems to happen. Over time however, each bar gains a slight magical charge from the volume it protects. This charge acts to draw magic towards itself, draining off a great deal of an attacking spell's power. For example, a *disintegrate* spell cast against a protected wall might result in only a few chips of stone coming loose. A *fireball* cast at guards atop a tower might see a *fireball* appear, but result in no actual damage.

To remain effective, each volume protected by the full version of the spell must be re-touched by an active *Key* or *Copy* once every three years. This re-touch may be performed by anybody (no mage is required) and the actual bars buried in the structure need not be touched. If the ritual is repeated regularly, each 40' volume may eventually absorb as many spell levels as the abjurer who cast the ward, plus an extra level's worth of energy for every year that passes. Every three years that pass without a re-touch results in the loss of a year's absorption ability until the dweomer fades.

**Short version:** each 20ft cube section may absorb one spell level for every two levels of the caster, rounded up.

**Conditions of Absorption:** *Wall guard* has no effect on magical items used within its volume (except those enchanted in the Underdark - these simply fail); spells cast from within the protected volume outwards, spells existing in the area prior to *wall guard* being cast, or spells cast by someone with a *Key* or *Copy*.

In the full version of the spell, removal of an iron bar dissipates the effects of the ritual in that volume only. This is sometimes done to allow the creation of secret passages.

*Wall guard* rituals are not subject to *dispel magic*, indeed *dispel magic* cast against a *wall guard* acts to re-charge the absorption capacity of the section affected, (subject to the *wall guard*'s current capacity). Importantly, *wall guard* rituals neutralise spell levels but are recharged by caster level. This means that a defender may be able to ward off more powerful magical attackers, at least for a time. If a spell like *disintegrate* is cast directly at a wall or structure protected by a *wall guard* ritual, a saving throw for the wall or structure is made first, before any charges of

*wall guard* spell are used up. If the saving throw is made, no charges are used.

No more than one *wall guard* spell may be in place at any one time and neither version may be made permanent. A *wall guard* spell may be made inactive by touching a protected area with the correct *Key* or *Copy*. This is often done to prevent accidental discharge of the spell in times other than war, and to allow a wall to regain its protective charges.

**Notes:** As little as one spell level's worth of absorption is often enough to disrupt a more powerful spell. In cases where there is less spell absorbing ability left than the level of the spell cast, the DM should adjudicate in favour of the defenders, or reduce the effect of the attack. Additionally, areas protected by this spell are inimical to creatures affected by cold iron and to the undead. Such creatures entering the area must save vs spells or suffer a -1 penalty on to hit rolls and saving throws. A typical fortress may have different sections subject to different *Keys*, with *Copies* held by different officers.

## Conjure Sour

(Abjuration)

Level: 7

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Two years plus special (or one hour per level - short version)

Casting Time: Three months (or two turns - short version)

Area of effect: 50ft radius per one hundred pounds of iron enchanted (or 10ft radius per level of caster(s) - short version)

Saving Throw: Special

**Full Version:** Large wrought iron pigs, each of at least 100 pounds weight and 500 GP value, are buried in the earth following three months of special preparations and castings. Up to 100 pounds of iron per level of the caster may be sensitized by a *conjure sour* spell. During the casting of *conjure sour*, the abjurer must cast *dispel magic*, *avoidance*, *enchant an item*, *protection from evil* and *conjure elemental* on the pigs, as well as exposing the iron to other conjuration, phantasm or summoning magics the abjurer wishes to protect against.

For example, if a pig used in *conjure sour* had *monster summoning I* cast on it as part of its attunement, or a *demi-shadow monsters* spell, it would work vs. these spells. Equally if it were not exposed to an *invisible stalker* spell it would have no effect vs. a conjured stalker.

The abjurer need only cast the *dispel magic*, *avoidance*, *protection from evil*, *enchant an item* and *conjure elemental* spells himself - other practitioners including clerics, may cast the other spells to be

“soured”. Unlike normal castings of these spells, no actual creatures are summoned and the mage is not weakened by the *enchant an item* spell.

As the final step in the ceremony the pigs are taken to their burial site and interred as a group. Burial must occur within eight hours of the end of casting of *conjure sour* or the dweomer fades. The pigs are now attuned to disturb the magics used to control elementals, conjured or summoned creatures, *shadow* and *demi-shadow monsters* and *phantasmal killers*. A *Key* or *Copy* must remain in contact with the pigs for the three months during which the full *conjure sour* ritual is being cast.

**Short Version:** A small 50gp iron statuette of each type of summoned or conjured creature to be “soured” is required e.g. an elemental, elf, orc, skeleton, human, brownie etc. Alternatively a 500 gp billet of iron marked with ruins of disruption and exclusion may be used and have the spells to be soured cast upon it as part of the ritual. The statuettes or billet must be buried and are consumed when the spell is ended or the duration expires. The spell is not mobile and issues from the point of burial.

**Effects:** *conjure sour* works by increasing the chance of an elemental or other creature escaping the control of its summoner. The round by round chance of an elemental breaking control is increased by a percentage equal to the level of the caster of the *conjure sour* spell. The chance of the summoner dismissing the same elemental is decreased by a like amount.

Other created, conjured or summoned creatures receive a save vs. paralysis at +2 to escape their controller as soon as they enter the area of effect. Creatures who escape control remain for their normal durations but are now free willed and hostile to their summoner or creator.

To maintain a full *conjure sour* casting, the ritual must be renewed every two years by exposing the pigs to the four elements. The surface of the pigs is re-exposed to the air, a bonfire is lit atop them and later extinguished by pure water. The pigs are then touched with their *Master Key* or a *Copy* and reburied. No mage is required for this ceremony. This ritual often takes place at mid-summer when the life energies of the land are at their greatest.

*Conjure sour* may also be cast on lodestone obtained from a druid’s grove. If lodestone is used instead of iron, the radius of the spell is increased by 20%, but natural animals summoned or conjured are not affected by the spell

More than one mage may participate in preparing a *conjure sour*, but if they do so all must participate in the casting for the full casting time(s) of the spell. For the full version of the ritual, multiple abjurers may enchant as many hundreds of pounds of

iron as their combined levels. In the shortened version of the ritual, add the levels of the mages together to work out the radius of effect.

Creatures saving vs. paralysis gain an additional +2 to their saving throw for every extra abjurer who helped cast the *conjure sour*, up to a maximum of +6. The chance of ruining control of a summoned elemental is that of the highest level mage participating, plus 10% for every additional abjurer.

*Conjure sour* may be made activate or inactivate by a touch of the correct *Master Key* or *Copy* to the pigs, billet or statuettes. Additionally, possession of a *Key* or *Copy* allows normal casting within the area of effect without the dangers of losing control. The radius of a *conjure sour* includes the ground deep beneath the area being protected, as well as the air above it, so turning the spell on and off may ambush an unwary caster. *Conjure sour* is unaffected by *dispel magic* and it may not have *permanency* cast on it. A fully cast *conjure sour* ritual is usually left inactive except in times of war. Removal of the buried pigs more than fifty feet from their burial point disrupts the spell as does destruction or theft of the statuettes or billet.

**Notes:** Notes in Borrillian’s work indicate that a poorly cast *conjure sour* ritual is not safe – its area of effect may change wildly, or the spell can wander along ley lines or water flows, creating magical hazards as it goes. The ritual is then said to prove dangerous even if a *Key* is in hand.

## Grounding

(Abjuration)

Level: 7

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Two years plus special (or two hours per level – short version)

Casting Time: Three months (two turns – short version)

Area of effect: A column, 50-foot radius per level of the caster (or 20-foot radius per level– short version)

Saving throw: Negates

**Full Version:** The full version of the ritual requires a vast mass of iron - at least 1,200 pounds in weight and cast in the shape of an anchor. This mass is then buried at the centre of the area to be protected usually a major fortress or city. During the casting of a *grounding* ritual, gems of an earth nature, especially haematite, beryl, chrysolite and malachite, must be crushed over the anchor. The value of the gems and iron used must total no less than 20,000 GP.

At the end of a full casting, *attraction*, *fly*, *levitation*, *enchant an item*, *anti-magic shell* and *dispel magic* are cast on the anchor.

The shortened version simply requires an iron spike of five pounds weight be driven in to the ground while a *Key* or *Copy* is held in hand.

*Grounding* has but one purpose - to prevent the use of *fly*, *feather fall*, *levitate*, *reverse gravity* and similar magics or abilities within its volume. Any non-avian that enters the area of effect is immediately subject to a *grounding* attack and each attack may neutralise one spell, spell-like effect or device - save at -6 and -30% magic resistance to negate. Apart from storing charges (see below) an area protected by a full *grounding* ritual may make twice as many attacks per day as the level of the caster(s) of the ritual.

The shortened version allows as many attacks as the caster has levels or until the duration of the spell has ended, whichever comes first.

If the full version of the ritual is used, each week that passes without the use of a *grounding* charge stores an additional free attack from the ambient magic of the area. While this may seem a great many charges, it should be remembered that a single pass of airborne attackers will neutralise many charges - an active *grounding* will attack targets round after round until they are grounded, leave the area of effect, or the ritual runs out of charges or attacks.

Any device, spell or spell like ability affected by *grounding* remains inactive for as long as it remains within the area of effect (and the *grounding* is active). Moving out of the area allows the spell, effect, ability or device to resume working.

More than one abjurer may participate in casting a *grounding* spell - add together their combined levels to work out the radius affected and number of *grounding* attacks possible. If lodestone is enchanted instead of iron, the radius of effect increases by 20% and all flying creatures not born or raised in the area of the ritual lose one class of maneuverability. This may allow defenders to ride griffons, hippogriffs and the like which are more maneuverable than those of their attackers.

A full casting of *grounding* must be renewed every two years by exposing the anchor to the air while crushing an appropriate gem of at least 500 gp value over it. Failure to maintain the spell results in a loss of *grounding* charges at the rate of one per month and no further charges are absorbed. *Grounding* may be made activate or inactivate by the touch of an appropriate *Key* and is unaffected by *dispel magic*. Possession of a *Key* or *Copy* allows the use of *fly* and related spells while a *grounding* is still active. *Grounding* may be made permanent and like *reverse gravity*, may affect creatures many thousands of feet in the air.

**Notes:** *Grounding* is usually inactive except in times of war. This not only allows charges to accumulate, but it can prove embarrassing if ones guests or messengers crash to the ground. Accidents

and the occasional reverse effect - hurling creatures in to the air - are said to occur if the full value of the spell is not paid. Borrillian is rumoured to have created two further versions of this spell, one required the participation of an alteration specialist capable of casting *reverse gravity*, the other the services of an air elemental. The first version allegedly slams an entity in to the ground at twice their normal speed and damage. The second peppers them with 6d6 bolts of lightning along with the *grounding* attacks. Both versions work with either variant of the ritual.

Some metallic dragons are said to be immune to the effects of *grounding*; iron and steel dragons have been known to pay an abjurer handsomely who can cast these spells. What they gain from these magics is unknown.

### Iron Awe

(Abjuration)

Level: 7

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Five years plus special (one turn per level - short version)

Casting Time: Three months (one turn - short version)

Area of effect: one mile radius per level from the point of forging. (one hundred yard radius per level - short version)

Saving throw: None

**Full Version:** The full version of the spell requires the preparation of a special forge, anvil and tools suitable for the use of a master craftsman. The anvil must weight at least 200 lbs. and the value of the iron and tools must exceed 1,000 gp. At the start of the ceremony, a master armorer or weaponsmith crushes a 5000 gp diamond on the anvil. The anvil is then chained or moored to the area it will be used in. The abjurer requires the presence of either of these parties (or both) for the full duration of the ritual.

Each morning during a full casting, the abjurer casts *enchant an item* and *enchanted weapon* on the anvil while the armorer or smith are at work. Unlike normal castings of *enchant an item*, the abjurer is not tired by the dweomer, but he must carry the *Master Key* or a *Copy* on him at all times. At the end of three months a *Copy Key* is welded to the anvil and the enchantment is complete.

Depending on who aided the abjurer, a master armourer or a master weapon smith, the anvil may produce one quality weapon, shield, or a dozen arrows heads per month. These weapons carry a +1 magical charge provided both they and the anvil remain within the area affected by the ritual at all times. These weapons are not permanently enchanted however, and use up this charge when actual fighting occurs. Once activated, a charge lasts five days per level of the

abjurer(s) who cast the original *iron awe* spell. At the end of this period the charge is expended and the weapon loses its bonus. For this reason weapons subject to *iron awe* are often locked in armories for use only during sieges; additionally the bonus on the weapons may grow to +2 if weapon and anvil remain within the area of the *iron awe* ritual for five years or more.

The weakness of *iron awe* is its anvil - should the anvil be stolen or moved beyond the range of the spell, all weapons forged on the anvil lose their bonuses until the anvil is recovered. If the stolen anvil is not returned to its enchantment point within one day per level of the *iron awe's* caster(s), the enchantment permanently fails and the bonuses of all weapons made likewise disappear. If the anvil is destroyed, weapons enchanted under *iron awe* lose their bonuses immediately. Weapons moved beyond the radius of the ritual also lose their bonus, even when returned to the area of effect. *Dispel magic* cast against the anvil has no effect but works normally against weapons made under the spell.

**Notes :** The area subject to *iron awe* may be increased if more than one abjurer participates in casting the ritual. *Iron awe* cannot be made permanent and only one such spell may affect an area at one time - the oldest dweomer applies. The radius of *iron awe* is usually sufficient to allow sallies from most castles or keeps.

**Short Version:** A five pound iron hammer, a *Key* or a *Copy* and a 500 gp diamond are consumed in the casting. Additionally the mage must have acquired either the armorer or weaponsmith proficiencies, or be in the presence of someone who has these skills.

The mage uses the hammer to drive an iron peg in to the ground, which serves as the centre of the spell. The mage may then enchant up two weapons per level with a +1 magical charge. The charge disappears at the end of the duration of the spell, if the weapons move beyond the spells radius, or after five rounds per level of fighting, which ever comes first.

## Iron Demesne

(Abjuration)

Level: 7

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Duration: special

Casting Time: One month

Area of effect: One mile radius per level of caster from the point of forging

Saving throw: None

This spell is also known as *oath of iron*, and there is no short version. A ceremonial sword (or other weapon) of at least 5,000 gp value must be forged on an anvil subject to a full *iron awe* ritual. This sword

represents the fealty that will be given to a city, castle or keep by the garrison protecting it. The area covered by the ritual is called an *iron demesne* and weapon created is called a *demesne sword*.

The *demesne sword* is prepared by casting *shield*, *protection from evil 10' radius*, *detect invisibility*, *detect evil*, *emotion* (Courage and Hope), *enchant an item*, and *strength* on the weapon. Additionally the abjurer must maintain a constant litany to the weapon of the importance of honor, duty and obedience in a Lawful alignment tongue. A *Copy Key* is then soldered or welded to the sword to complete the full ritual.

To gain the benefits of *iron demesne*, a member of a garrison must swear fealty to the sword's owner (or a *Key* or *Copy* holder like a castellan or seneschal). A garrison member is defined as anyone who spends at least nine months of the year serving at a particular location in a military capacity. If the oath is accepted, the oath taker gains the following benefits within the area of the demesne.

- +1 on any saving throw or damage roll for as many times per season as years they have given oath.
- +1 to morale
- +1 to movement within the area of effect.
- +1 or +5% to detecting intruders within the area of effect, including invisible intruders.

An oath given under an *iron demesne* is not necessarily an oath kept, hence spies can benefit from this spell provided they form part of the garrison. Additional benefits apply however, to garrison members who keep the spirit of their oath.

**Additional Benefits:** If a faithful oath giver bleeds defending the ground covered by his *iron demesne*, a mystical bond forms between the *demesne* and the oath giver - he may then permanently gain one hit point. No more than one hit point may be acquired in this fashion in any one year and no more than four hit points in total.

If an oath giver keeps the spirit of their oath for seven years, they gain the benefit of a *protection from evil* or *shield* spell once per season within the range of the *iron demesne*.

Unlike other weapons forged under *iron awe*, a *demesne sword* does not automatically lose its dweomer if the anvil it was forged on is destroyed, or sword or anvil leave the area of effect - a *demesne sword* may leave its *iron demesne* for up to six months before the *iron demesne* fails.

A *demesne sword* may also have *permanency* cast upon it and if made permanent, it acts to maintain the *iron demesne* regardless of the existence or location of the anvil, or the location of the *demesne sword*. It is not uncommon for a ruler to set his *demesne sword* in stone (to prevent theft), to incorporate it in his throne, or to wear it on him at all times. Only one *demesne*

*sword* may be forged from any anvil and multiple *iron demesnes* may not exist in the same area - the oldest active dweomer applies.

This may result in attempts by usurpers to steal or destroy the sword of a rightful Demesne holder or to locate a lost or mythical weapon.

A *demesne sword* has other benefits. The weapon now acts as a *Master Key* and may be used to make as many *Copy Keys* as the original *Key* simply by touch. In any contest between *Master Keys* the sword has primacy, as do *Copy Keys* made from the *demesne sword*.

*Iron demesne* is not subject to *dispel magic* - the *demesne sword* must be beyond the demesne for at least six months (or destroyed if the weapon has *permanency* cast upon it) before the ritual will fail. For this reason many nobles are reluctant to provide services outside their demesne for more than a few months at a time. A fee called scutage is often paid instead of armed service.

**Notes:** In a commentary on Borrillian's works, it is claimed that very old *demesne swords* acquire peculiar properties, bonding to particular bloodlines, increasing in area of effect, acquiring permanent magical abilities and in some cases coming to truly represent the land they have dominion over. It is said that if a druid participates in casting an *iron demesne*, the very land herself will aid the sword's wielder, if they are defending the land from harm.

## Tower of Iron Will

(Abjuration)

Level: 8

Range: touch

Casting Time: Six months (two hours – short version)

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Ten years plus special (one day per level – short version)

Area of effect: One structure 10ft on a side per level

Saving Throw: None

**Full version:** This spell is cast on a structure previously subject to both *fortify* and *wall guard* rituals and requires the aid of a master engineer. It is extremely expensive to cast and consumes four *Copy Keys*, ten tons of iron and four diamonds of at least 5,000 gp value each. During casting, the iron and *Keys* are bolted to the structure and the diamonds crushed and sprinkled over the mass. All are consumed when the ritual is completed.

As part of the ritual, the abjurer casts *wall of iron*, *mind blank*, *shield*, *wall of force*, *protection from evil*, *avoidance*, *strength*, *globe of invulnerability*, *emotion* (hope and courage), and *anti-magic shell* over the structure to be protected. *Tower of iron will* also requires the blood of a psionic entity or that a psionist be present during the casting.

On completion, the defensive value of the structure vs. siege engines and giant boulders etc. increases by six times. *Tower of iron will* also enhances a structure's resistance to *disintegrate*, *passwall*, *earthquake* and similar spells. The structure gains a +6 save vs these spells and from any other attack that might breach the building's integrity. "Attack" includes scrying, attempts to penetrate or damage the structure by elementals, xorn and other creatures capable of moving through the earth; *teleport*, *dimension door*, *plane shift*, *phase door* and similar spells or effects; and the use of natural spell-like abilities like innate *light* or *darkness*, to overload the *tower's* spell absorption capability.

If an entity fails to successfully attack a tower by a natural ability, it cannot try to re-enter or attack the tower by the same method for at least two hours per level of the caster(s) of the *tower of iron will*. Possession of a correct *Key* or *Copy* always allows entry.

**Other benefits:** Creatures within the *tower* gain a +4 save vs all effects that influence the mind and that originate from outside the *tower*. If creatures subject to *charm*, *possession*, *domination* or similar effects enter the *tower*, they immediately gain a free saving throw, even if they have failed all previous attempts to free themselves.

The capacity of the *wall guard* spell within the structure is also enhanced. The *tower* may absorb twice as many spell levels per day as the combined levels of abjurer(s) who cast the original spell. This daily capacity increases by an additional two points for every year that goes by without the *tower* being subject to magical or mental attack

Maintenance of a *tower of iron will* spell must occur every ten years and requires an inspection of the structure by a master engineer carrying an active *Key* or *Copy*. Any faults or damage found by the engineer must be fully repaired during the season the inspection takes place and all repair work must be directed by the engineer bearing the *Copy*. Failure to maintain the spell results in the structure weakening at the rate of one extra level of structural strength per year. Bonuses vs. spells or intrusion fade at the same rate, as does the weekly spell absorption ability.

A full casting of *tower of iron will* may be made permanent, but this requires two separate castings of *permanency* - one for each pair of *Keys* used in the construction. If the ritual is made permanent, the spell absorbing capacity of the *tower* is fixed at the level when the ritual was first cast. Areas of a *tower of iron will* damaged in combat may be repaired provided at least 50% of the structure remains, but require the repair work be overseen by a master mason or engineer bearing a *Key* or *Copy*.

*Tower of iron will* has no effect on magical items used within its structure (except those from the Underdark – these simply fail), spells cast within the *tower*, spells exiting the *tower*, spells existing prior to the *tower of iron will* being present, or any other *iron abjuration*.

*Tower of iron will* is not subject to *dispel magic*. A *dispel magic*, *wall of iron*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *globe of invulnerability* or *anti-magic shell* spell cast against a *tower of iron will* acts to re-charge the *tower's* spell absorption ability. Like *wall guard*, *tower of iron will* neutralises spell levels but is recharged by caster level. This means that a caster inside a *tower* may be able to ward off more powerful magical attackers, at least for a time.

No more than one *tower of iron will* may exist within the area of an *iron demesne*, unless the *tower* existed prior to the creation of the *iron demesne*, or the same *Copy* or *Master Key* as the *demesne* is used in its construction.

Like all other *iron abjurations*, the *tower's* benefits may be made active or inactive by the touch of the correct *Key* or *Copy*. Except in time of war a *tower* is often left 'inactive' to allow its *wall guard* spell to absorb energy without interruption, and to allow those living in the *tower* to use other magics more easily e.g. teleporting and scrying without needing a *Key*.

**Short Version:** The short version consumes a diamond of at least 5,000 gp value, requires four iron statuettes of a humanoid on guard and consumes a *copy key*.

A shortened ritual of *tower of iron will* increases the defensive value of a structure by three times, allows a volume to absorb up to twice the caster's level in spells per day and provides an automatic +2 saving throw vs all charm, domination or similar effects, even if such an effect is not normally allowed. The protected structure is resistant to all attempts at intrusion by magical means or ability – a save vs. spells at –2 is required. Failure denies entry via the same method for one hour per level of the caster. For the reduced version of the ritual, only a *dispel magic*, *wall of iron*, or *minor globe of invulnerability*, acts to re-charge the *tower's* spell absorption ability.

## Torus of Disjunction

(Abjuration)

Level: 8

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Two years plus special (one hour per level – short version)

Casting Time: Five months (three turns – short version)

Area of effect: 40ft radius volume per level of the caster(s) (10ft radius volume per level - short version)

Saving Throw: Special

**Full version:** Two great rings of iron are cast and mounted opposite each other in the floor and ceiling or a castle or keep. Both rings must be extensively carved with runes relating to conjuration, summoning, pursuit, movement, banishment and other planes of existence. The rings must be at least twenty feet in diameter, at least one foot in thickness and cost a minimum of 30,000 gp each.

The following spells form part of the full ritual used in casting a *torus of disjunction*: *banishment*, *duo-dimension*, *shadow door*, *dispel magic*, *polymorph other*, *sequester*, *repulsion*, *plane shift*, *shadow walk*, *prismatic wall*, *protection from evil*, *10' radius*, *teleport without error*, *dimension door*, *distance distortion*, and *maze*. The spells are cast at different rings on alternate weeks and then repeated in reverse order. The costs of the individual spells used in casting a *torus of disjunction* are paid for as part of the forging costs of the rings.

*Torus of disjunction* exists to twist and distort the boundaries where the Prime Material touches other planes, making materialisation difficult or dangerous. To materialise in an area protected by a *torus* requires a save vs. spells at –4, with failure meaning the creature stays in its own plane of existence.

If entry is via *plane shift*, *shadow door*, *shadow walking*, *teleport*, *teleport without error*, *astral travel*, *dimension door* or similar spells or abilities, failure also leaves the victim stunned and helpless in the Astral or Ethereal planes. Each additional abjurer who helps cast the *torus of disjunction* results in a further -1 penalty on this saving throw, to a maximum of -6. Creatures do not receive magic resistance checks to avoid the effects of a *torus of disjunction*, because the actual environment the creature is crossing is warped, it is not an attack on the entity per se. In addition to stunning, failure to save vs. Spells means the creature must wait at least a week before another entry attempt can be made.

Successfully materialising may be even more dangerous than rejection. Entities find their arrival point warped and moving in a random direction by a number of yards equal to the level(s) of the abjurer(s) who cast the *torus*. A being entering an area subject to a *torus of disjunction*, can quite literally appear in a ceiling and be killed instantly; or find themselves flung in to a wall at bone breaking speed. Damage to a creature flung about by *torus of disjunction* is at least 12d6 and may be higher. Roll % dice and consult the *teleport* table to see if an arrival is high or low.

*Torus of disjunction* also exerts magical pressure on *polymorphed* creatures as they enter its

area of effect. A spinning *torus of disjunction* may twist a creature back to its true form, but this form may be elongated or warped by the distortion of space around them. If a save vs. *polymorph* at -4 isn't made, assume that *torus of disjunction* warps the entity for d6 points of damage per level of the most powerful abjurer who helped create the *torus*. If more than one abjurer helped cast the *torus*, a -1 penalty applies to the save, up to a maximum of -6. If the saving throw is failed by more than 4, the creature must save once again vs. *polymorph* or be afflicted with a major deformity, with one in ten deformities being instantly fatal. Once again magic resistance doesn't apply, as it's the space the creature is trying to occupy that is being twisted - this is not an attack on the entity per se.

*Torus of disjunction* is also effective against users of *gaseous form*, *shadow form*, *statue*, *duo-dimension*, *enlarge*, *shrink* and similar magics or abilities that alter shape or form - use the same rules as for a *polymorph* spell to see what the effects are.

Like other iron abjurations, *torus of disjunction* may be activated or deactivated by the correct *Key* or *Copy*. A *torus* may be activate for twice as many days per year as the highest level abjurer who helped cast the spell. Additionally, for every season that goes by without use, an additional free day's spinning is allowed. These free days are used like charges and can only be replaced during periods of inactivity.

A *torus* is maintained by regular polishing of the rings with substances inimical to extra planar creatures e.g. silver or iron, with substances difficult to penetrate e.g. lead; and with copper, amber and other charge inducing materials. Typically the lower ring will be rubbed with one substance while the upper ring is rubbed with its opposite. Maintaining a *torus of disjunction* costs about 200gp per year - a *torus of disjunction* that is not maintained loses two days of spinning for every year that goes by. When all charges are gone the *dweomer* fades.

A *Key* or *copy* allows safe arrival in an area protected by an active *torus of disjunction* with the *Key* holder appears in the eye of the *torus*. A *Key* is not required for a quick escape.

**Short version:** The shorter version of this ritual requires a spinning iron top marked with gemmed runes of exclusion, repulsion and denial and of at least 1000gp value. As long as the top is spinning, the effect will remain until the duration of the spell ends. Unlike the full version of the ritual, creatures denied entry are not left stunned in the Astral or Ethereal, they maintain their wits and may attempt re-entry an hour or so later. Equally the distortion on entry is less severe, being only 1 foot per level of the caster. Damage is also reduced to 6d6 if impact with a surface occurs (but the *teleport* table still needs

consulting and may result in death). The shortened version of the ritual still affects *polymorphed* creatures, but without the saving throw penalties. It has no affect on those subject to *enlarge* or *shrink* spells.

**Borrillian's Notes:** I have found this spell to be despised by necromancers, those who make use of undead troops, creatures from other planes and the intelligent undead. A side effect of the warping process is to interfere with the undead's connection to the Negative Material Plane. This can result in their weakening until they are slain or forced from the Prime Material - lesser undead like skeletons and zombies lose 1 HP per day until destroyed and greater undead like Vampires may lose up to half their hit points and their powers are weakened - all saving throws vs their powers. are at +2. Other extra-planar creatures may be similarly affected.

I have also found that an alternative to a building a *torus* is to use an druid's *lodestone* circle. While this is often cheaper, the results are not always what is intended - creatures may be drawn to this plane instead of being excluded from it.

It should be remembered that *bags of holding* and *portable holes* tend to malfunction near an active *torus of disjunction* and creatures with *gating* abilities may find them difficult or dangerous to use. Lycanthropes and creatures with more than one form often fall ill and become sickly in the presence of a working *torus*, as do elves, humanoids and all Underdark races (similar claims are made for *conjure sour*). Conversely, dwarves, halflings, gnomes and humans often claim to feel invigorated in the presence of a spinning *torus*. I believe the reason for this elvish reaction is the thinness of their blood and their known aversion to iron. I have seen both drow and duergar fall vomiting to the floor as soon as a *torus* was activated in their presence. The radius protected by a *torus* includes the ground under the structure. It is not subject to *dispel magic*.

This ritual is used to mold an existing *iron abjuration* in to a form suitable to protect a city or large complex.

### Mold Iron Abjuration

(Abjuration)

Level: 9

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Duration: special

Casting Time: special (four hours - short version)

Area of effect: special

Saving Throw: None

**Full version:** This spell is used to mold an existing *iron abjuration* in to a form suitable to protect

a city wall or large defensive complex. *Mold iron abjuration* requires the use of a *Master Key* or *Copy*, a Master Surveyor, a Master Engineer, and a fighter, ranger or paladin of at least 9th level. The abjurer, surveyor, fighter and engineer must each walk a *Key* or *Copy* around the area to be protected, tracing out the line the spell will follow. Every one hundred feet or so, an iron billet of ten pounds weight and tipped with a 500GP gemstone is buried in the ground. If a *demesne sword* is used to trace out the protected area, the volume of metal used in the spell may be halved or the distance between billets doubled. If an area of water like a harbour is to be protected by this spell, it may be crossed by boat and the billets moored in place or the billet touched with a key and lowered over the side.

*Mold iron abjuration* can take several years to cast but doesn't require the concentration of the other spells - provided the abjurer spends two or three days per week at the project, the casting will be completed in five or six years. Additionally the abjurer may delegate portions of the ritual to ordinary mages, provided they are of at least 12th level. With this approach, a dedicated abjurer and a team of four to six mages can protect a city in as little as six months.

**Effects:** An existing *iron abjuration* may be extended by *mold iron abjuration*, to include a volume as far out as twelve times the original radius of the spell. This means a *conjure sour* spell with a 700 foot radius, could be extended to follow a line of city walls within about a mile and a half of the spells centre. *Mold iron abjuration* does not require upkeep, but the rituals being molded still require their normal maintenance (if any). *Mold iron abjuration* may be used to alter more than one *iron abjuration* at a time and may mold *conjure sour*, *torus of disjunction*, *fortify*, *wall guard* and *grounding*. It does not work with *create key*, or *tower of iron will*.

A variant of *mold iron abjuration* is used with *iron awe* and *iron demesne* and will only work if both rituals are present. Large iron stele of 500-lbs. weight must be erected every two miles around the area to be claimed and marked with runes of protection, guardianship and ruling. The border must then be ridden, walked or rowed with the *demesne sword* in hands of its current owner. The abjurer and ruler of the *demesne* then ride to the centre of the *demesne*, where the ruler ritually cuts him or herself with the *demesne sword*. This blood is then dabbed on each of the stele. If the ruler is a follower of a fertility or druidic power, or of good alignment they may mark the stele with wine or grain as an alternative to the use of blood. The marking of the stele must occur at the height of Summer or on the first day of Spring, times when oaths and fealty are traditionally renewed. At the completion of the rituals the iron rusts away as the magic is absorbed by the land. An abjurer who casts this version

of *mold iron abjuration* spell may cast no more magic for at least a season and is aged five years. It is said that ley lines can sometimes result from this spell.

Molded *iron awe* and *iron demesne* rituals must have a minimum width or breadth of at least one mile.

**Short version:** The shorter version of this spell acts as a temporary *extension* spell, increasing the duration and radius of the other rituals by 50%. The material components are a drop of the caster's blood, an emerald of at least 500 gp value and an iron billet cast in the form of a ring.

## Other Iron Abjurations

Other iron abjurations attributed to Borrillian include: *blood, iron and war*, a spell used by human defenders to enhance siege weapons within an *iron demesne*; *create quan (heart) iron*, iron with a moral charge used to make swords of good alignments; *create true iron*, an iron said to be harder than adamantium and lethal to demons (Borrillian is alleged to have made a silver variant for devils); *milestone*, an abjuration that helps preserve roads; *bands of steel*, an imprisonment spell; *monopole*, a defensive spell vs. siege missiles and giant boulders; *irony of war*, which hardens ground, making tunnelling difficult without a *Key* and improving the foundations of castles or keeps; *iron legion*, an iron-based ritual for human armies on the march or those who require protection from humanoid; and *nail*, a small non-mage ritual said to have been invented for peasants to stop the entry of spirits.

The whereabouts of Borrillian of Rel Mord are unknown as he disappeared over one hundred years ago. It is said that an iron golem answering to his name currently guards the entrance to the Church of Rao in Greyhawk city.

# Repair of the Keep on the Borderlands

By Russ Taylor (rtaylor@cmc.net)

## Objectives

- ◆ Fit Kendall Keep and the surrounding areas into an appropriate setting and history for the Flanaess.
- ◆ Convert all references to non-Greyhawk places and personages to appropriate canon material, or new material where necessary
- ◆ Return the module to a level of danger more appropriate for novice characters
- ◆ Cut down on the somewhat excessive magical treasure

Additional or revised text for the Dungeon Master is boxed; material to be read to the players is boxed and shaded.

## General Notes

### Useful Links:

From the Ashes powers:

<http://www.tsrinc.com/Greyhawk/FtAPowers.rtf>

### Priest writeups:

Erishkigal:

<http://www.cmc.net/~rtaylor/greyhawk/gods/erishkigal.html>

Hruggek:

<http://www.cmc.net/~rtaylor/greyhawk/gods/hruggek.html>

Nerull:

<http://www.cmc.net/~rtaylor/greyhawk/gods/nerull.html>

Rudd:

<http://www.cmc.net/~rtaylor/greyhawk/gods/rudd.html>

If you don't use my variant gods, the [From the Ashes](#) link provides TSR's official Nerull writeup. Rudd was detailed in Dragon Magazine #265, pgs. 59-60. Hruggek can be found in the Monster Mythology softcover, unfortunately now out of print. Erishkigal isn't in print anywhere, so you're on your own with her.

## General Changes

### The Chapel of Evil Chaos (a.k.a. the Hidden Temple)

Nergal and Erishkigal do not exist as such in the religions of Oerth. Replace Nergal with Nerull, and change Erishkigal to a demon queen rather than a goddess (see Monster Manual II, page 35 -- although she should have been listed as female).

Erishkigal, a demon queen of small influence in the Flanaess, has recently been granted influence

over undeath by Nerull. Depending on your campaign, this is either a ploy to supplant Orcus, or an effort take advantage of the void left by Orcus's death (and Tenebrous's defeat). Nerull's priests are aiding in spreading the worship of Erishkigal, in order to provide greater power to one of Nerull's few demonic allies. The caves near Kendall Keep are one of the many seeding points for the Cult of Chaos; although Erishkigal was worshipped in the region before, it was in her previous aspect of the Lady of Chaos, rather than a power of Undeath.

### Map Scale

I recommend doubling the outdoor map scale, as it doesn't provide much separation between areas as is (1 inch = 1000 yards, instead of 500). This places Kendall Keep 4000 yards (2.2 miles) from the lizard man lair, and 7000 yards (4 miles) from the Caves of Chaos.

## Timeline

**559** Kendall Keep founded by Macsen Wledig

**562** Caves of Chaos discovered

**569** Keep's construction completed

**571** Caves of Chaos cleared of monsters

**577** Thomas and Holga flee Lendore Isle

**581** Nerull empowers Erishkigal

**582** Greyhawk Wars begin

**583** Macsen falls in battle against giants in the northern Yeomanry

**584** War ends, survivors of Macsen's company return to Kendall Keep

**586** Shrine of Evil Chaos reclaimed and reestablished by Nerullites.

Mendel flees the Hold of the Sea Princes

**587** Medal arrives at the Keep

**589** Thomas and Holga arrive in Canisius (Ket)

**591** Current year

## Events after the party first explores the Caves of Chaos

**Upon return:** Mendel the Slaver arrives

**2 weeks:** Mendel arrives in town again, without Chantel

The Black Knight is recruited by the Chapel

**3 weeks:** Chantel is slain and animated as a zombie

**4 weeks:** The Huntress is recruited by the chapel

**6 weeks:** The Black Knight and the Huntress wipe out the bugbear tribe

**8 weeks:** The troll and goblins are exterminated

**9 weeks:** Kobolds driven into the labyrinth

During their second foray, Sir Robin arrives, between their second and third, Thomas and Holga arrive. These events have variable starting dates, based on how slow or fast the party is.

## Bounties

Castellan Devereau is offering rewards for those adventures brave enough to explore the Cave of Chaos, and wipe out the forces of evil gathering therein. Notices to this effect are posting in the tavern (#14), the inn (#15), and the Common (#21). Interested adventures are directed to apply to the chaplain Abercrombie (#17) or Jadale (#26). Deaths must be established, typically by bringing the head of said creature:

<b>Humanoids:</b>	10 gp each
<b>Bandit, dead:</b>	20 gp each (Devereau wants them eliminated once and for all)
<b>Bandit, alive:</b>	50 gp (one time only, for interrogation)
<b>Bandit leader:</b>	100 gp dead, 200 gp alive (one time only for the second)

If the party manages to kill a major monster, such as the troll or some of the minotaurs, the Castellan will provide a major reward if possible, such as a potion or minor scroll. In addition, if they destroy the Chapel of Evil Chaos, Devereau will proclaim a day of celebration in their honor, and offer them his aid should they have need in the future, and should the request be within his power to grant.

All rewards must come from the stock of gold in room 25, which is far from limitless (given time, this reserve will grow, especially as the party tames the area). They will be dispensed by the Castellan personally. If the Castellan is unable to pay a reward, he will offer them lodging, equipment, and other favors, and will try and enlist them to his cause for reasons other than monetary reward.

Suggested magical treasures (these should be in the Castellan's possession already): *potion of healing*, *potion of diminution*, 4 *arrows +1*, scroll of *forget* and *charm person*, scroll of *bless* and *sanctuary* (borrowed from Abercrombie, room 17).

## The Keep

The existing location of the keep is probably inappropriate -- the mountainous western side of the Yeomanry would be the most endangered (by giants) during the Wars, and there's unlikely to be any merchant trade routes leading from the Sea of Dust -- returning ore shipments, yes, but not the sort of merchants described in the module. Also, the Yeomanry is not a "lordless" land, but rather a loose democracy, with the vote being granted to men and women who bear (or have borne) arms.

*Additional text; page 7*

Kendall Keep is in fact located in the south-eastern Yeomanry, in Hex E5/1: just north of the Tors, and west of the Javan River. The Keep is near trade routes to the Hold of the Sea Princes and Keoland, but near enough to threats from the Hool Marshes and the Tors to make it mostly undesirable land. The Little Hills, to the north, are fairly safe even post-Wars -- the redoubtable dwarves of said hills being more than a match for any threat. It is reasonably close to the contested lands of the Sea Princes -- but the Brotherhood is too busy trying to hold their lands to threaten the Yeomanry. Refuges from the strife in to the South are an ongoing problem. Because of this, the border south of Kendall Keep is heavily patrolled. These patrols have provided a recent and welcome source of trade for the locals.

The people of the Kendall Keep are fairly typical folk of the Yeomanry -- a Suel/Oerid mix, with a strong undercurrent of Flan. All hair and eye colors abound, but the folk tends towards darker skin tones (even the purer Suel folk are tanned by a life working in the fields). Most of the natives speak Keolandish (the Yeomanry dialect of it) by preference amongst themselves, but by necessity all speak at least some Common as well (often with a thick accent).

## History of the Keep (page 7)

The Yeomanry doesn't have a standing army as such. Instead, every man (and many women) of appropriate age is expected to train and bear arms in the defense of their realm. Accordingly, remove all references to the standing army and the professional garrison -- the Keep has always been defended by its populace, one of the marks of pride of the Yeomanry.

During the Wars, Macsen led a large body of Yeomanry warriors north to aid against the giant threat from the Jotens. Unfortunately, this hardy band was destroyed nearly to a man by a detachment of frost giants from the Crystalmists, leaving Devereau as the popularly-elected Lord of the region. Devereau refuses the title of Lord, however, preferring to remain "the Castellan". Ownership of the keep and lord's lands has

reverted to the people following Macsen's death and the lack of apparent heirs, as is the tradition in the Yeomanry.

## Population and Placement

### Area 7c (page 10)

As d'Amberville is a famous fantasy family, d'Ambreville's name should be changed to Dubricus d'Adversa.

Dubricus d'Adversa is a native of central Keoland, from a lesser noble family near Niolo Dra. See the notes under Potential Henchmen and Allies.

### Area 11 (page 12)

Halflings (of the stout variety) dwell in the Yeomanry, although not in numbers. Mouse is a typical stout, an immigrant from a halfling village in the Little Hills.

### Area 14 (page 14)

Maruda is of course not a goddess of Oerth -- see the notes under Potential Henchmen and Allies.

### Area 18 (pages 14-15)

Since the Yeomanry doesn't keep a standing army, the "converted" barracks should be assumed to never have been barracks at all.

## Potential Henchmen and Allies

### Third (page 18)

Delete all references to Third's homeland, since it doesn't exist on Oerth. The goddess Maruda also doesn't exist, and should be removed.

Third's name to the people of Kendall Keep is actually "Three" ("thri" for "three", or "third class" is the only Suel word she's gotten across to the Keep natives). She is a traveller from the Lerara, the lost tribe of the Suel in Slerotonin's Tunnel (see Dragon #241 for notes on PC/NPC Lerara). She dresses in a loose, flowing tunic and cloak, with a long skirt and a smokey veil (not a mask) -- this strange apparel is actually a protective measure, as Three is an albino (like all of the Lerara). She as -1 to hit and a +1 to AC in sunlight with this veil, instead of the potential -4/+4 penalties (she is not yet acclimatized to sunlight). Without her protective garb, she risks severe (possibly fatal) sunburn, as described in Dragon #241.

Three is a member of the "third class" of the Lerara: a commoner, not a member of the nobility or the tenders of the Mother. Since leaving her people, she's adopted civilized weaponry and personal habits, although she still prefers to use spears, a favored weapon of her people. Beneath the veil, she has the typical wide-eyed and slightly exotic appearance of the

Lerara -- and the chalk white skin and red irises of an albino. She left the Lerara after a vision she believes was from The Mother, directing her to roam amongst the surface dwellers for a tenspan of years. She has been on the surface for four years now, and fully plans to return with the knowledge thus gained -- her faith in the Mother remains unshaken. Three has not bothered to learn to speak the languages of the surface dwellers (though she does in fact understand a fair amount of common), though she does speak Leraran Suloise (50% comprehensible to surface Suel speakers) and the Drow variant of the elven tongue. She has already learned that it is best not to speak the Drow tongue to surface elves.

Three's war-cry is in fact "Murma" (mother), usually said (in Suel) as "for the Mother" -- "Murma-shal". Her name in Suel roughly translates to "Gatherer of Worms", as she was a hunter. She hasn't been eager to spread that name after learning more of the surface, so "Three" suits her just fine. Three's charisma should be reduced to 10, to reflect her lack of knowledge of the surface ways.

### Brother Martin (page 18)

St. Erkenwald is not a Greyhawk deity. Replace all reference to St. Erkenwald with Rao, god of Peace, Reason, and Serenity.

Brother Martin does not wear armor (as he does not have magical chain mail), and prefers to avoid combat. He normally does not bother with priestly garb, favoring brown over the traditional white (although he does keep a set of white robes set aside for ceremonies). Brother Martin is able to use the *friends* spell once per day, as per the specialty priests of Rao. He does not have power over the undead, as priests of Rao do not gain that ability until 5th level.

(source: From the Ashes: Atlas of the Flanaess, p. 85)

**Brother Martin** (1st level priest of Rao): AC 10 (no armor); MV 12; hp 6, THACO 20, #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (quarterstaff); SD spells; SZ M (5'7"); ML elite (13); AL LG; XP 35. Str 11, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 16, Chr 15.

### Spells (3):

**1st** -- *bless*, *cure light wounds* (x2)

**Special Abilities:** *Friends* (1/day, as the 1st level wizard spell)

### Opal (page 18)

Since the only moon god of the Flanaess is Pholtus, Opal's current choice of deity is wanting.

Opal is a priestess of Rudd, the rarely-worshipped goddess of good luck and chance. She does not shift alignments as described in the text, although she is somewhat flighty and immature. She is very reliable in combat, and wields a rather large (though not out of proportion) battle axe. Out of combat, she's more irreverent, a possible cause for alarm if the party is serious-minded.

**Opal** (1st-level priestess of Rudd): AC 6 (ring mail and shield); MV 12; hp 6, THACO 19, # AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle axe); SD spells; SZ M (5'5"); ML Steady (12); AL NG; XP 35; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 15, Chr 12.

**Spells** (2):

**1st** -- *cure light wounds, sanctuary*

**Special Abilities:** *Bless* (1/day)

**Dubricus d'Ambreville** (page 18)

As noted above, d'Ambreville's name should be changed to Dubricus d'Adversa.

Dubricus is a native of Keoland, but has come to the Yeomanry in search of adventure -- he will probably eventually head to the beleaguered Hold of the Sea Princes. If he comes to a bad end, his family in Keoland will investigate his fate -- if the disappearance can be tracked to the PC's, they will have earned the enmity of a family known for powerful wizards -- hailing from his home city of Amber (keeping the X2: Castle Amber reference intact), in hex U4/114.

**Aseneth** (pages 18-19)

Aseneth is a native of the Wild Coast. Her former master isn't particularly interested in her fate.

**Mouse** (page 19)

As noted earlier, Mouse comes from a halfling village in the Little Hills.

## Adventures in Town

**Mendel the Slaver** (pages 19-20)

Mendel is a refugee (and former slave trader) from the Hold of the Sea Princes. He is now earning his keep shipping sacrificial victims to the Shrine of Evil Chaos.

Mendel was a collaborator during the Greyhawk wars, aiding the Scarlet Brotherhood in identifying potential threats and traitors. As the situation in the Hold deteriorated, Mendel began to fear reprisal, and fled the area in CY 586. A year later, he settled in the Kendall Keep area, under his current cover of a wealthy merchant. Mendel is fearful of

meeting other survivors from the Hold, and avoids contact with such at any cost.

**The Assassin's Challenge** (pages 20-21)

Thomas's alignment (per module L2) is a Chaotic Evil, not Lawful Evil. Holga was Lawful Evil in module L2, but circumstance has shifted her to a more Neutral Evil outlook. Modifying Thomas' behavior as appropriate for this change. Cathos City is a location in Mystara, replace it with Canisius, a city in central Ket.

Thomas and Holga are the first level assassin and mage first encountered in the Garrotten's assassin's guild (Module L2: The Assassin's Knot, page 21). After fleeing Lendore Isle, they travelled across the Flanaess, acting as mercenaries and hired killers along the way (thus the shift in Holga's ethical outlook -- she is far more pragmatic than she once was). After many years of wandering, they found an appealing city in Canisius (hex K5-94), a mostly lawless enclave in central Ket.

Unfortunately, Canisius already had a well-established assassins guild and the Kettites, with their strong Baklunish blood, did not appreciate competition from a pair of pale-skinned eastern Suel. Thomas has hatched a plan to wrest a seat in the guild by demonstrating his (to his mind) peerless mastery of the art of assassination, and has travelled to Kendall Keep to do so. He plans (as detailed in the module) to depopulate the entire keep, and return to Canisius with proof of his merit.

**Sir Robin** (page 21)

Sir Robin is from Loftwick (the capital of the Yeomanry), and is well-loved by the common folk. His untimely demise will not do the party's reputation any good.

## The Wilderness

**The Bandits** (page 23)

The human bandits are described as "townsfolk who prefer thieving to work", not as thief characters. As not all bandits are thieves, and not all NPCs in Oerth should be members of a class, the four normal bandits should be replaced with standard bandits (Monstrous Manual, pp. 196-197). Their hit points and THACO remain unchanged, their dex should be reduced to high normal human range (11-13), giving them an AC of 8, and their thieving skills should be removed. The halflings, as an elite band, can remain as true thieves, as can the bandit leader. The same changes apply to any other 1st level thief bandits the party may encounter.

The halflings (who are stouts) are a particular despicable bunch -- eight sons of a long-since murdered halfling dam and an unscrupulous halfling merchant who deserted her. Hesselwhite is the eldest and toughest son, the others will defer to him in negotiations.

If a paladin in the party attempts to *detect evil*, the halflings will glow like veritable beacons. The halfling brothers are well-known to the folk of Kendall Keep, and a reward of 50 gp each will be offered for their deaths. Additionally, if word of their demise reaches their home village, the party members will be welcome guests, and the toast of the town for as long as they care to stay.

### Bulette (page 24)

A bulette, even blinded, is far too powerful for a low level party to overcome -- it can easily dispatch of any character it closes with in a single attack sequence, and low-level PCs may not acknowledge the danger. Accordingly, it should be replaced with a more fitting post-wars monster, a tyrg (found in the Greyhawk Monstrous Compendium).

The tyrg, a female, was one of many brought to the Hold of the Sea Princes during the Greyhawk Wars. As the Scarlet Brotherhood's grip on the region weakened, many of the tyrg packs escaped into the wild, reverting to feral behavior. She was badly wounded by a mage's *fireball*, and was left behind as her packmates fled. She has since travelled north, surviving on what game she can, blinded and badly scarred. The tyrg will only be encountered in the stretches of the road near the forest -- if she smells a party, she will wait for nightfall, then track them (by scent) to their campgrounds, and try to pick off a party member or two. This tactic has served her well with merchant caravans.

She is treated as though she has the blind fighting proficiency, due to her experience with blindness and her superior senses. It may be possible for a character with speak with animals or animal empathy to reason with her, especially if treatment for her blindness is promised (probably difficult to communicate with just animal empathy). Tyrgs look very similar to large, gaunt wolves, with a touch of the feline to their faces.

**Tyrg:** AC 5 (7 due to blindness); MV 18; HD 6; hp 29; THACO 14 (16 due to blindness); # AT 1; Dmg 1d12 (bite); SA Stunning howl, paw rake; SZ L (7' long); SD stealth, difficult to surprise; ML Steady (11) -- lower than normal for a tyrg; Int Low (7); AL CN; XP 270 (reduced one category due to blindness).

If she is detected while attacking, she emits a fierce howl, causing a +2 penalty to her foe's initiative and a -2 penalty to attack rolls for the next three rounds (no saving throw). This does use her attack for the round. If she manages to overbear a foe -- or attacks a sleeping target -- she can rake with her forepaws for 1d4 points of damage each (normal to hit roll required for each paw). Tyrgs move silently with a 75% success rate, and are surprised only on a roll of 1.

### Leucrotta (page 26)

Similar to the bulette, a leucrotta is probably too difficult an encounter for low-level parties. She should be replaced with a pair of young kech (found in the Greyhawk Monstrous Compendium), tree-dwelling hunters with similar voice-mimicry abilities.

The two kech are a young mated pair, who have just recently arrived in the area. They have so far made only two kills, and will most likely move on in a few weeks (after the first encounter with them) after making two to three more. These kech do not yet have any young. Kech are human-sized creatures, monkey-like in appearance. Their skin is green, and leaf-like in texture, providing good natural camouflage (-5 penalty to opponent's surprise roll in woodland settings, and they have but a 50% chance of being heard by a character listening for them).

**Kech:** AC 4; MV 15 (6 climbing); HD 4 (not quite mature); hp 21, 16; THACO 16; # AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d6 (claw damaged reduced); SZ M (6' tall); SA: Snares, mimicry; SD Camouflage, silent movement; ML Steady (11); Int Average(9); AL NE; XP 420 (reduced one category due to age).

The kech have set snares near the forest area they are encountered in. They will use their mimicry ability to call out (in common, which they speak) in voices similar to the Yeomanish accent, crying out for assistance. Any party members travelling in the direction of the voices runs a risk of being snared -- a base 75% chance of stepping into a snare, in which case they must make a dexterity check (at 1/2 the normal chance if they aren't moving cautiously), or be drawn up into the air on a strong vine cord. The vine rope is AC 6 (but -4 to be hit by a dangling character -- who may well have lost his or her weaponry), and takes 8 points of damage to sever. The kech have set two such snares, each may only be triggered once, regardless of whether or not the dexterity check succeeds.

Kech are also extremely difficult to track -- if they flee into the forest (which they will if met with strong resistance), there is only a 50% chance of a ranger being able to track them at all. This chance is reduced by 25% for each hour that passes without the trail being followed.

The kech's nest, which can only be found through tracking or sheer luck (the nest is 90% camouflaged from the ground). There are no young in the nest, although there is an attractive amethyst (150 gp value) from a previous victim, lodged in between two branches. The nest will be within 500 yards of the first encounter with the kech, in a random direction in the forest (roll 1d4+1 for the distance in 100s of yards, 1d8 for the compass direction starting with North. Disregard any rolls that aren't in the deep forest).

### **Pilgrims** (pages 26-27)

Bhuts are a Mystara monster, and the bhut here should be replaced with a more normal creature. Also, the pilgrims are a bit too odd to be played for anything but comic relief. Accordingly, here's a more serious version:

The pilgrims are peaceful followers of Rao, journeying to help found a new shrine for him in Keoland. Unbeknownst to them, one of their party has been murdered by a jackalwere, who has assumed his identity. The jackalwere has since murdered 8 of the rather terrified pilgrims, though they still trust in Rao to preserve them. Their leader (not a heretic at all, just a pious man) will hint that they need assistance to any party member speaking with him. Any corpses found will be partially eaten, not picked clean.

**Jackalwere:** AC 4; MV 12; HD 4; hp 23; THACO 16; # AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SZ M (6' tall) or S (3' tall in jackal form); SA: Gaze causes sleep; SD Hit only by iron or +1 or better magical weapons; ML Steady (12); Int Very (11); AL CE; XP 270.

The jackalwere is a cautious opponent, and will not be easily exposed by party members (barring, of course, the proper use of spells or magical abilities). If the party joins the pilgrims, the jackalwere will try and lull them to sleep with his gaze (he will also cause the pilgrims to doze off), and then tear them to shreds.

### **Shambling Mound** (page 28)

Any druid of 3rd level or higher will be able to identify the shambling mound on sight. The GM should take care to avoid having the party fight the shambling mound, as it can easily kill multiple party members. Its general non-hostility makes it a tolerable encounter, however.

### **The Shy Tower** (pages 28-29)

This is another encounter that stands good odds of annihilating a low-level party.

If the party is still low level (no 3rd level members), it is best to have the tower simply be absent the first time they visit the area -- with no chance of a body being present (the mimic would have eaten it), but the usual bones scattered around the area. To avoid annihilating a party, reduce the mimic's combat abilities to that of a normal (non-killer) mimic despite its great size: a THACO of 13, and damage of 3-12. The great size of the mimic is partially negated by a corresponding reduction of coordination, after all.

The XP value of 20,000 is still appropriate if the party actually manages to kill it -- however, the mimic has improved combat abilities against those fighting it from outside: a THACO of 5 (not quite as high as a normal 30 HD creature), and the damage of 4d6 listed in the module. It is also quite invulnerable to normal missile fire, due to its unusually thick hide, although magical missile weapons and heavy crossbows may still damage it. The notes in the module for firing missile weapons in rainy weather still apply -- also, any non-metallic bowstring used in the rain for more than one shot has a 10% chance (cumulative, up to a maximum of 25%) of snapping. Most light crossbows and all heavy crossbows use a metal cord.

### **Will o'Wisp** (page 30)

This encounter is also very likely to kill low-level parties. It can be replaced with a boggart, the immature form of the will o'wisp (found in the Monster Manual 2, pages 19-20).

The boggart is capable of assuming three forms -- that of a normal will-o-wisp (though slightly smaller and brighter than is typical), that of a young halfling (other boggarts may appear as different humanoids), and that of a kobold (again, this varies by the particular boggart). Each form may be held for no more than 10-12 rounds, at which point the boggart will inadvertently shift to one of its two other forms (randomly determined). It will try to lure the party into the swamp, as the original encounter describes. Once the party is near the swamp, it will shift to halfling form (stuck in the mire), and beg for rescuing -- and will attack once the party is in a vulnerable position. If possible, the wisp will begin with its confusion attack, although it will only try this is half (or more) of the party is immobilized in the swamp. In a losing battle (reduced to 5 hp or less), the boggart will shift to wisp form (if possible), turn invisible, and flee at full speed into the swamp. Although boggarts are usually found in packs, this is the only one present in this area.

**Boggart:** AC -6; MV 18 (flying, MC A) or 6 (as halfling or kobold); HD 6; HP 28; THACO 14; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6 (electrical); SA *energy bolt, confusion*; SD immune to spells as for adult wisp, *invisibility*; SW kept at bay by *protection from evil*; SZ S (2' wide or tall); ML Elite (14); Int Exceptional (16); AL CE; XP 650).

The boggart may make a ranged attack (instead of its normal attack) every other round, with a range of 10 feet and the usual 2d6 damage (in this case, a save vs. spells for half damage applies). It may also make a yelling and screaming attack (a strange, incoherent babble made of all manner of noises, vocal and otherwise) for two consecutive rounds. All within a 30 foot radius who can hear this noise (merely covering the ears will not block it out) are *confused* (as the spell) for 7-12 (1d6+6) rounds unless they save vs. spell. The boggart may be interrupted in the process by a successful melee attack in the first two rounds -- once the sound is heard, it is too late for those who fail their saving throws. Boggarts may also become invisible for up to 12 rounds at a time (they must wait for 12 additional rounds after this time expires), and can perform their noise attack while invisible. Boggarts can converse with any intelligent creature while in demi-human or humanoid form, thanks to a limited form of *ESP* -- their speech is always blocky and hesitant, a possible clue to their false nature. They may pass through solid, non-living objects of up to 2 feet of thickness when in wisp form, although this will not allow them to cross magical barriers or items. Boggarts possess infravision (60 foot range) in humanoid and demi-human form, and the strange dark-vision of the wisp in that form.

The boggart may seek revenge if it is severely harmed by a party. It will shadow their movements while they remain near the swamp, and use trickery (including its other forms) to try and draw other monsters to attack the party. Double the change of random encounters (to 2 in 6) in the swamp while the boggart is following the party.

## The Caves of Chaos

The minotaur caverns are a bit over-the-top, which magical secret doors placed with disturbing frequency. The secret doors are actually normal mechanical stone constructs. In each door is a seemingly natural depression, about a foot across. If a small hand axe of a specific shape and size (the double-headed hand axe that the kobolds have) is pressed against this depression, a hidden slot will recess, and when the axe is twisted, the door will open. See the minotaur area (Cave I) for more details.

### Cave A: Kobolds (pages 32-35)

The papier-mache constructs are actually a reed-and-mud concoction (the kobolds don't have access to large supplies of paper).

#### A1. Entrance (page 32)

8 rot grubs are in the corpse. 1-4 will leap out each time the corpse is touch, or if any character stays in close proximity to the corpse for longer than one round. A rot grub may be burned out by application of a torch, causing 1-6 damage per grub burned -- careful torch work can reduce this damage, if this is done roll 2 dice, taking the lowest result.

#### A4. Priceless Hoard? (pages 34-35)

If the Dungeon Master is discomfited by the thought of his or players keeping the egg, consider having it fail to hatch (why would kobolds know how to care for a dragon egg?).

#### A5. Court of the Kobold King (page 35)

The runes are written in misspelled Common (KURTULMUK), possibly giving clever players a clue as to the ruse.

#### A6. Kobold Lair (page 35)

Of course, the secret door can only be found wedged open if the kobolds escaped -- keep this in mind. One of the fleeing kobolds has an axe of the proper shape and size for the secret door -- this will only be found if the players can prevent the kobolds in this room from fleeing.

See the notes at the beginning of the Caves of Chaos for information on opening the secret door.

The gold paint is being made from iron pyrite deposits in the rock, not from actual gold.

### Cave B: Bandit Lair (pages 35-39)

See the notes in the Bandit encounter above for changes to the 1st level bandit thieves, and additional text on the eight halflings.

#### B2. Guard Post (page 36)

The card box automatically orders any cards put into it (grouped in card order by suit), the ultimate source of the magical aura on cards placed inside it. The aura lasts for one full day after the cards are removed from the box, and may be difficult to explain if a gambling partner detects the magic.

#### B7. Catbird, Nore, and Orm the Worm (pages 37-38)

Rapiers are not known in the current age of Oerth. Replace Catbird's rapier with a *scimitar +1*.

**Cave C: Former Orc Lair** (pages 39-40)**C5. Secret Room** (page 40)

The blue ink dye trap is a bit "cutesy" for a serious campaign. Replace it with a similar trap that sprays skunk oil -- the character will be unable to use stealth and at -2 to hit and AC from revulsion (any within 10' with a sense of smell will be at -1 to their armor class and "to hit" rolls), until 4-5 days pass or the character finds a way to remove the skunk oil. Double all chances of random encounters during this period.

See the notes at the beginning of the Caves of Chaos for information on opening the secret door.

**Cave D: Goblin Lair** (pages 40-43)

The occupied rooms are lit by torches, one per 20' of wall. "Bree-yark" translates to "Hey Rube" in the goblin tongue.

**D3. Eastern Guard Post** (page 41)

The barrel of 60 spears is a bit excessive. 20 spears are in the barrel. Also, the spears of the goblins tugging rope are on the floor next to them, not thrust through belts.

If the goblins are taken unawares, the one nearest the barrel will tip it over, sweeping amber liquid over the feet of the party members. He'll then grab a lit torch from the wall next to him, and wave it threateningly at the liquid. If the party calls his bluff, he'll throw the torch at the (harmless) ale, then run like hell for the stairs.

**D6. Goblin Commons** (page 42)

As with room D3, the barrel here contains only 20 spears.

**Cave E: Troll Cave** (pages 43-44)**E1. Mud Pit** (page 43-44)

If the party tries to pass the ogre's head off as their own kill, Devereau will see through the ruse, and will refuse to pay for any of the current bounties due to the party. They will have to make a fairly heroic effort (a captured bandit leader, the troll if he is not already deceased, the minotaur, or the destruction of the Chapel) to regain his favor.

*Playing notes: I had great fun with this troll. When the party walked in on him, he snorted, rolled over, and then grabbed a half-eaten halfling from next to his bed. He chewed on the halfling for a bit, then stood up, scratched himself, and reached casually for the party's paladin (of Al'Akbar) for a fresher snack.*

**Cave F: Former Hobgoblin Lair** (pages 44-47)**F4. Zombire's Chambers** (pages 45-46)

The treasure in this room is more than a bit rich, especially for a low level party. Discard the *sheet of smallness* and the *manual of golems*, as well as the *pouch of accessibility*. The skeltar's ring is a *ring of protection +1, +2 to saves against enchantments, charms, and illusions* (no bonuses to other saving throws) -- modify her armor class to 5 accordingly.

The *robe of useful items* has the following patches remaining: dagger, lantern, 10' pole, rope, large sack (2), 24' wooden ladder, 10' open pit, 2' x 4' window (up to 2' deep), potion of extra healing, and a special patch -- it produces a 4' x 6' dinner table with settings for four, including good wine (one goblet each), lit candles, and a tasty chicken and vegetable dinner.

See the notes at the beginning of the Caves of Chaos for information on opening the secret door.

**Cave G: Fungus Cave** (pages 47-49)**G2. Source of the Goblinwater** (pages 47-48)

An 8 HD otyugh, particularly one that is hostile and attacks by surprise, may be a bit overwhelming for an inexperienced party. Reduce the otyugh to a more modest sized one (despite the food source), of 6 HD and 45 hp, and its THACO to 14.

**G4. Green Slime** (page 48)

Green slime is instant death without 3rd level spells or very quick reactions. The slime that falls on the party is actually not green slime at all -- it is muck dislodged from the ceiling, which appears to all intents and purposes just like green slime. The DM should take care to emphasize that the slime is burning to the touch (it is moderately caustic, but not damaging), and sit back and watch the antics. If nothing else, it will prove an interesting object lesson to careless players.

**G5. More Fungus** (pages 49-50)

Violet fungi are even more deadly than green slime -- without magic, a party member may well wind up permanently deprived of a limb. Replace the violet fungi with four more shriekers, of the hit points listed for the violet fungi.

**G6. Rats!** (page 50)

The double-headed axe in the wererat's treasure is indeed of the proper size and shape to be inserted into the labyrinth's secret doors. The door here, as with the others, is opened by pressing the axe (blade first) into an innocuous-seeming crack in the door, and then twisting it once the blade is fully inserted.

**Cave H: Beleaguered Bugbears** (pages 49-52)

The module designer failed to mention that all bugbear males (save the elderly shaman) receive a +2 bonus to damage with melee weapons.

**H1. A Call to Arms** (page 49)

The notice is written in the crude runes of what passes for the bugbear language. It is close enough to goblin and hobgoblin to be understood by them, but not by orcs, ogres or troll. Any character who can read (not just speak) one of the three goblinoid languages will be able to decipher the message.

**H8. Slaves** (pages 51-52)

Note that these bandits are 0-level humans, not 1st-level thieves. See the notes for the wilderness bandits for more details.

The priest is a priest of Nerull, not Nergal, as follows:

**Duranki** (Acolyte of Nerull, 1st level cleric): AC 10; MV 12; hp 4; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon (none at present); SA control undead; SD none; SW obvious spell casting; SZ M (5'9"); ML elite (14); Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Chr 10; AL CE; XP 15 (without spells) or 35 (with spells). He has no spells memorized at the current time.

**Cave I: The Labyrinth** (pages 52-54)

As noted at the beginning of the Caves of Chaos, the secret doors are mechanical in nature, not magical. From the far side, they can be opened by pressing the blade end of an appropriately sized double-bitted hand axe against a crack, which then recesses to admit the blade. The axe is then turned to release the door. On the inner sides, the secret doors are difficult to spot (as concealed doors, not secret), but may be opened by pushing on a palm-sized (for a minotaur) piece of rock on each door.

The doors were constructed by a captured dwarf, once enslaved by the minotaurs (see the notes for room I2).

Five minotaurs are certainly more than a match for any low-level party, but more than one does make the complex more exciting. Accordingly, two minotaur brothers now occupy the complex -- hit points 42 and 28. In addition to their great axe, both carry a smaller throwing axe of the sort used to open the secret doors.

**I1. Bethany** (pages 52-53)

Hispis and Apep are not gods known in this region of Oerth. Bethany is in fact a former Velunese priestess of Ehlonna, converted by her snake amulet to the worship of Tlaloc, the Olman god of rain and

serpents. The amulet is emblazoned with the symbol of Tlaloc (a stylized deer's head, detailed in the Scarlet Brotherhood supplement). It converts those who wear it to dedicated worship of Tlaloc, changing their alignment to lawful evil. It is formerly a relic of the cursed city of Alocotla, and found its way to the Flanaess through the traders of the Sea Princes.

As a priestess of Tlaloc, Bethany gains the use of *create water* once per day, in addition to the spell selection listed in the module. To bring her weapons in line with the priests of Tlaloc, she wields a dagger in place of the flail listed in the module, and also has a pair of javelins (1d6 damage). Remove the ankh from her inventory, as the snake amulet is her holy symbol. Bethany dresses in black garb (not white) and is obsessive about personal cleanliness, as noted in the module. Fortunately, her priestly powers make fresh water easy to come by.

Bethany has sought out the cave as a safe and peaceful way to place to worship Tlaloc, after several failed efforts to covert villagers in the surrounding area. She has realized that it is best to honor Tlaloc in private, and live to pray another day. Bethany wears the snake amulet around her neck, and will happily engage any who ask about it in a warm sermon about the joys of Tlaloc, bringer of rains and the protector of the harvest (although evil, Tlaloc is generally a placid god, one to be placated rather than feared).

**I2. Empty room** (pages 53-54)

The skeleton in this room is that of the dwarven stoneworker, murdered once he had completed the secret doors in the labyrinth. He has been dead in excess of 4 years, so a *speak with dead* spell is unlikely to be of any use. His equipment has been long since disposed of.

**I3. Medusa** (page 54)

The medusa is a fine and interesting encounter, and can be left intact (the original module had a medusa, after all). The treasure needs to be toned down a touch.

The minotaur's secret treasury (which is opened like the other mechanical secret doors, the medusa has one of the hand axes in her chest) contains 4524 cp, 2183 sp, 1509 ep, and 310 gp, in 9 man-high jars. Remove the elven chain mail, as such a suit is too rich a find for novice adventurers. Replace the *two-handed sword* +3 with a similar bronze two-handed sword, of such quality that it is +2 to damage on all hits. However, if used against opponents in steel armors, the sword will quickly dull. After each week of such use, the sword will lose 1 point of damaging ability, until it is rendered blunt and useless after 4 weeks of use. It can be restored to normal damage through care and sharpening, but only a master

bronzesmith (if one can be found) can restore the +2 bonus again.

### Cave J: Former Gnome Lair (pages 55-57)

#### J3. Unsleeping Sentinels (pages 55-56)

Instead of maximum hit points, the undead are rerolled with d4+4 hit points per die (there's no accurate way to make sure your undead creations have maximum hit points). The skeletons are hp 7, 7, 6, the zombies are hp 14, 14, 13.

#### J4. Research Subjects (page 56)

Chantel (see Mendel the Slaver in the module) will be one of the prisoners if it is more than 2 week (but less than three!) since the party first explored the Caves of Chaos.

#### J5. Necromancer's Library (page 56)

Arpad is just generic mage, not a necromancer -- not all apprentices of a necromancer need become one themselves. Her current memorized spell is *read magic*, her spellbook still contains *chill touch* in addition to the other spells.

There are supposed to be twelve skulls, only ten are listed. The skulls are as follows:

Shelf	Skull	School
I	Halfling	Universal Magic
II	Glabrezu demon	Abjuration
III	Dwarf	Alteration
IV	Elf	Enchantment/Charm
V	Goblin	Conjuration/Summoning
VI	Kobold	Divination
VII	Gnome	Illusion
VIII	Orc	Invocation/Evocation
IX	Lizard man	Necromancy (shelf 1)
X	Human	Necromancy (shelf 2; includes Arpad's spellbook)
XI	Hobgoblin	Necromancy (shelf 3)
XII	Bugbear	Clerical magic

The clerical notes include information on Nerull, rather than Nergal. The *Book of Dead Smiles* should probably not have "every necromancy and enchantment/charm spell" that you wish to occur in your campaign -- make up a suitable selection of spells, and follow the suggestion on "incomplete" spells in the module as well. Spells of higher than fourth level are most likely not appropriate.

Here's a proposed list of spells, from spells contained in the Wizard's Spell Compendiums. It includes several spells that share the Necromancy and Enchantment/Charm schools.

**1st level** -- *charm person, chill touch, corpselight, detect undead, Detho's Delirium, empathic, empathy seizure, hypnotism, ray of fatigue, seduction, spectral eyes, spoil holy water*

**2nd level** -- *choke, embalm, empathic control, forget, scare, seal mouth, speak with dead, undead mount*

**3rd level** -- *death sight, delay death, dire charm, empathic link, mental block, skull watch, suggestion, vampiric touch*

**4th level** -- *emotion, lesser geas, mask of death, summon spirit*

#### J6. Tarlech's Chambers (pages 56-57)

Tarlech is most likely too powerful for a low level party; here's a less-magically equipped version:

**Tarlech the Necromancer** (4th level Specialty Wizard): AC 7 (bracers of defense AC 7); MV 12; hp 13; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SA spells; SD spells; SW cannot cast illusions or enchantment/charm spells; SZ M (6'0" but very lean); ML elite (13); Str 11; Dex 12; Con 13; Int 17; Wis 16; Chr 10; AL NE; XP 2,000.

#### Spells (5/4):

**1st** -- *chill touch, magic missile, shocking grasp, spider climb, unseen servant*

**2nd** -- *levitate, pyrotechnics, spectral hand, web*

**Special Equipment:** *bracers of defense AC 7, ring of magical aptitude* (allows +1 spell of each level of to level 4, subject to a minimum intelligence of 13 for first level spells, 15 for second level spells, 17 for third level spells, and 18 for fourth level spells), scroll with *minor globe of invulnerability, protection from normal missiles*.

Note that the spells on the scroll have a chance of spell failure -- 15% for the *minor globe*, 5% for the *protection from normal missiles* spell. 95% of failure results will be simple failure, 5% will be reversed or harmful effect (probably missile attraction and inability to cast 1st through 3rd level spells).

Chantel remains a 16 hp zombie -- she will not be present if less than 3 weeks has passed since the party began exploring the Caves of Chaos.

The mummy-cat is actually a lesser mummy, as follows:

**Mummy-Cat:** AC 5; MV 18; HD 3+3; HP 23; THACO 16; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-2 (claw/claw/bite); SA terror (anyone seeing the mummy cat must save vs. spell at +2 or be paralyzed with fright for 1-4 rounds); SD half damage from non-magical weapons (round

down), usual undead immunities; SW holy water (3d4 points of damage per vial), may be turned; SZ T (2' long); ML fanatic (18); Int low (7) but cunning; AL CE; XP 420

The mummy-cat is no longer vulnerable to fire, but also lacks the fire protection collar (it does have a platinum collar worth 50 gp). It takes more damage than normal from holy water attacks.

Tarlech's spell book contains all the 1st and 2nd level spells it would be expected to, including *burning hands* and *Melf's acid arrow* (removed from his spell list). It does not contain any third level spells.

Tarlech's undead were animated by Shamhat of the Chapel of Evil Chaos.

### **Cave K: The Hidden Temple** (pages 57-54)

Replace all references to Nergal with Nerull, the Flannae god of the dead. All priests have been altered to make them fit with a proper Nerull the Reaper format. Many of their items have been altered or removed entirely.

Note that in this writeup, Nerull's priests have 6-sided hit dice, and fight as thieves. Also, their spell casting is more obvious than usual -- Nerull's magic generates a noticeable feeling of dread, detectable up to 100' away.

#### **K1. Entrance to the Underworld** (page 58)

Remove the lurker above, a 10 HD monster is too much for most low-level parties.

#### **K3. The Pious Dead** (page 58)

The illusion isn't quite as powerful as the text makes it seem: any party member who fails their save may be brought around by prodding and convincing, give them an additional save for each turn that the party tries to talk them out of their trance.

#### **K4. The Unquiet Dead** (page 58)

Only 10 zombies are in this area.

#### **K6. Shrine of Nerull** (page 59)

The story is a representation of Erishkigal's encounter with a powerful paladin lord, who successfully fought through her lair in the Abyss in order to confront her. Erishkigal seduced him and turned him to darkness, and he now dwells in her Abyssal realm as her consort. The story will probably not be recognizable to any player characters who have not delved into demonology, although priests and paladins of Saint Cuthbert may know about it (he was a warrior of Saint Cuthbert).

The cursed items shift the alignment to Erishkigal's alignment (CE); men will be converted to worship of Nerull, women to Erishkigal.

**Hanigalbat** (Acolyte of Nerull, 1st level cleric): AC 3 (plate mail beneath rust red robes); MV 12; hp 6; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (sickle); SA spells, control undead; SD spells; SW obvious spell casting; SZ M (6'); ML elite (13); Str 15, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 13, Chr 9; AL CE; XP 65.

#### **Spells** (2):

**1st** -- *command, sanctuary*

**Special Abilities:** control undead as a 2nd level cleric; charm undead (as *charm person*, but usable on undead only, 1/day)

Hanigalbat can command any of the undead within the Chapel of Evil Chaos, as can the other priests and priestesses of Nerull and Erishkigal.

#### **K7. Adept's Chambers** (pages 59-60)

The tablets are engraved clay, written in a secret language (though not actual cuneiform writing). They tell of three episodes in the history of Erishkigal. The first tablet describes her rise to power in the Abyss, the second tells the story presented above in area K6, of her union with her consort (named only as the dark baron, Saint Cuthbert is alluded to but not named). The third tablet, showing less age than the others, tells of Nerull's bargain with Erishkigal.

The red book has the stated note, but deals with the writing of a new poem to the glory of Nerull, for new rituals being crafted to honor the Reaper.

**Wer** (3rd level priestess of Erishkigal): AC 4 (*chain mail* +1 beneath black robes); MV 12; hp 15; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (iron mace); SA spells, control undead; SD spells; SZ M (5'0"); ML elite (13); Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 15, Chr 16; AL CE; XP 175.

#### **Spells** (4/2):

**1st** -- *bless, cause fear, combine, cure light wounds*

**2nd** -- *hold person, silence 15' radius*

She still possesses a *candle of invocation* (CE alignment) and +1 *chain mail* (instead of +2), but *no phylactery of faithfulness*. Wer carries 173 gp and 84 sp, as well as the jewelry mentioned in the module.

**Nesir** (2nd level priest of Nerull): AC 3 (plate mail

beneath rust red robes); MV 12; hp 9; THACO 20 (17 with *sickle +1*, his weapon of choice); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+3; SA spells, control undead; SD spells; SW obvious spell casting; SZ M (5'6"); ML champion (16); S 17; D 7; Con 12; Int 10; Wis 14; Chr 13; AL CE; XP 120.

**Spells (4):**

**1st** -- *command, cure light wounds, darkness, protection from good*

**Special Abilities:** control undead as a 3rd level cleric; *charm undead* (as *charm person*, but usable on undead only, 1/day)

Nesir has a *sickle +1*, 3 jars of *Keoghtom's ointment*, and a *ring of flying* (actually a *ring of delusion*). He has 287 gp and 154 sp, and the copper bracelet and ring listed on page 60.

**K8. Vestibule** (page 60)

Jude is a priest of Pelor. His branch of the faith does not approve of the recent shift of Pelor to a more militant aspect, and teaches non-violence as the true source of strength. Their views do not reflect the views of the majority of Pelor's church. Jude wears yellow robes.

**Jude the Healer** (1st level priest of Pelor, pacifist): AC 10; MV 12; hp 6; THACO N/A (will not attack); #AT N/A; Dmg N/A; SD spells, turn undead; SW refuses to take violent acts; SZ M (6'); ML champion (16); Str 9, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 13, Chr 13; AL NG; XP 0 (35 xp for evil parties).

**Spells (2):**

**1st** -- *cure light wounds* (x2)

**Special Abilities:** *Cure light wounds* spells heal 5-8 hp (5 points on a 1 roll of 1 through 5); turn undead as a 2nd level cleric

**K9. The Hidden Temple of Erishkigal** (page 60)

The mosaic presents Erishkigal and Nerull as stated, but they are not consorts. Replace the text as follows:

The back of each throne is decorated with a mosaic: one of a beautiful seductive woman in black, the other of a tall, skeletal figure carrying a rune-covered scythe.

There are only 15 zombies and 15 skeletons.

**K12. A Game of Chess** (pages 61-62)

The two acolytes are just playing normal chess, not strip chess. They are indeed in a euphoric state, but from incense burning in braziers, rather than from any enchantment on the chessboard. They receive the listed save to try and throw off their euphoric state.

**Tishpak** (2nd level priest of Nerull): AC 10 (currently wearing rust red robes) or 3 (plate mail when encountered outside this room); MV 12; hp 9; THACO 20 (19 with scythe, weapon of choice); #At 1; Dmg 1d4+1; SA spells, control undead; SD spells; SW obvious spell casting, currently in euphoric state; SZ M (5'11"); ML champion (16); Str 14, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Chr 13; AL CE; XP 120.

**Spells (4):**

**1st** -- *bless, cause light wounds, command, protection from good*

**Special Abilities:** control undead as a 3rd level cleric; *charm undead* (as *charm person*, but usable on undead only, 1/day)

Tishpak has his listed treasure, but no magical weapon.

**Ninurta** (2nd level priestess of Erishkigal): AC 10 (currently wearing black robes) or 5 (chain mail when encountered outside this room); MV 12; hp 9; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (flail); SA spells, control undead; SD spells; SW currently in euphoric state; SZ M (5'10"); ML elite (13); Str 9, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Chr 16; AL CE; XP 120.

**Spells (4):**

**1st** -- *command, cure light wounds, curse, sanctuary*

Ninurta has a *brooch of shielding* with 20 points of absorption remaining.

**K13. Acolytes** (page 62)

**Ishara** (1st level priestess of Erishkigal): AC 10 (currently sleeping) or 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 3; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (mace); SA spells, control undead; SD spells; SW currently sleeping; SZ M (5'3"); ML average (8); Str 10, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 13, Chr 14; AL CE; XP 65.

**Spells (2):**

**1st** -- *command, sanctuary*

**K14. The Black Knight, Huntress** (pages 62-63)

Their recruits, if any, will live in the bandit cave (or camped in the woods nearby if the cave has been cleared out). They will attract 1-2 henchmen each per week after their arrival, usually 1st level fighters. The Black Knight arrives two weeks after the party first explores the Caves, the Huntress after four weeks.

The Black Knight is a rather arrogant (given his title) former paladin of Heironeous. He lusted for death over battle, and fell from the fold when he could not control his murderous impulses. He still believes in the knightly code despite his lust for suffering, and secretly wishes he had not failed Heironeous.

**The Black Knight** (4th level fighter: AC 1 (black plate mail, *medium shield* +1); MV 12; hp 36; THACO 17 (14 with sword, as he is a specialist and has high strength); #At 3/2; Dmg 2d4+4; SA *sword of bitterness*; SW sense of honor, self-loathing; SZ M (6'7"); ML champion (16); Str 17, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 14, Chr 17; AL LE; XP 420.

The Black Knight wields the *sword of bitterness*, a +1 *broad sword* created by a half-elf turned to darkness. It radiates a noticeable aura of evil, and inflicts painful, biting wounds on those of good alignment -- they must save versus death magic, or lose an additional 1-4 hit points and gain a cumulative -1 to hit for each wound they receive. It is worth 2000 experience points if destroyed by a good-aligned priest or paladin. He has become a specialist in the use of the broadsword since his fall (technically against the rules, but he is a dedicated student).

He also possesses a *stone horse* of the courser variety (24 movement rate, AC 3, 18 hit points, THACO 18, 1-6/1-6/1-3 attacks), but no other magical items.

**Kira the Huntress** (3rd level fighter): AC 5 (studded leather armor, dex bonus); MV 12; hp 18; THACO 18 (see weapon notes); #At varies; Dmg varies; SA two-weapon fighting style (as a ranger); SD stealth (see below); SW foolishly ruthless; SZ M (5'11"); ML fanatic (18); Str 16, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 11 (formerly 14), Chr 14; AL CE; Xp 270.

Kira uses the follow weapons: long bow, 12 +1 sheath arrows: THACO 16, #At 2, Dmg 1-8+1 long sword and hand axe: THACO 18 and 17, #At 2, Dmg 1-8+1/1-6+2

Kira has thief-like abilities, from her career as a ranger (she also retains the ranger's two-weapon combat abilities). She has a 15% chance to hide shadows and a 21% chance to move silently, these abilities operate at the same level outdoors and indoors, due to her training since becoming a "fighter" at level 2.

She does not have the magical arrows or *portable hole* listed in the module.

The Black Knight has the listed monetary treasure, Kira has 271 gp, 148 sp and 72 cp, but not the knight's platinum (platinum coins aren't the same size and shape as silver). She has her listed jewelry and other valuables.

**K15. The Honored Dead** (page 63)

The gamemaster may wish to give foreshadowing of this encounter (a dread presence, coldness in the air, etc.) if the party is not powerful enough to fight five shadows.

**K16. Shamhat & Nabu-Nisir** (pages 63-64)

The book on the lectern contains notes about the demonology of Erishkigal, with the sections at the back detailing her assumption of powers over undeath. It includes extensive notes on the nature and powers of succubi. There is no mention of gods other than Nerull, who is mentioned in a (recently written) chapter at the end.

The listed rules about consort matches can be ignored -- though it's more likely that Shamhat, should she survive an attack, will seduce the ranking priest of Nerull for practical reasons.

The two priests can keep their listed non-weapon proficiencies, although their skill in cuneiform is actually knowledge of glyphs and runes, not clay-tablet writing.

**Shamhat, priestess of Erishkigal** (5th level priestess): AC 3 (*banded mail* +1); MV 12; hp 30; THACO 18 (17 with *mace of life disruption*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 and special; SA spells, control undead; SD spells; SZ M (5'8"); ML elite (13); Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 16, Chr 17; AL CE; XP 2000.

**Spells** (5/5/1):

**1st** -- *bless, combine, command, cure light wounds, fear*

**2nd** -- *aid, chill metal, enthrall, hold person, silence, 15' radius*

**3rd** -- *animate dead*

Her mace is a +1 weapon of black magic, that inflicts double damage against good targets on any "to hit" roll that succeeds by four or more. It can do this but 7 more times. She also has a *philtre of love* and *oil of etherealness*, but her other magic items are not present (she has been succeeding through force of personality, not magic). She has a ruby pendant worth 5000 gold, but no *amulet of life saving* or *gem of insight*.

**Nabu-Nisir, priest of Nerull** (4th level priest): AC 3 (black *plate mail of fear +1* [2 charges, as the maximum item charges are only 4], dexterity penalty); MV 12; hp 24; THACO 18 (15 with *scythe +2*, his weapon of choice); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4; SA spells, control undead; SD spell; SW obvious casting; SZ M (6'2"); ML champion (16); Str 16, Dex 6, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 15, Chr 15; AL NE; XP 1400.

**Spells** (5/4):

**1st** -- *cause light wounds, command, cure light wounds, darkness, protection from good*

**2nd** -- *hold person, know alignment, resist fire, silence, 15' radius*

**Special Abilities:** *control undead* as a 5th level cleric (9th level if using karma); *charm undead* (as *charm person*, but usable on undead only, 1/day)

Nabu-Nisir is a special envoy from the cult of Nerull in Greyhawk City, and has been equipped well by his masters. He is also the only Nerullite who is faithful to Nerull first, the Cult of Evil Chaos second (hence his alignment). He has been given a *scythe +2* to better fit the image and power of the Reaper, and two special magic items: a *necklace of prayer beads* containing *beads of blessing, curing, and karma* (allowing him to function as an 8th level priest in terms of casting level and granted powers, for 2-8 rounds per day), and a skull-carved *trumpet of doom*. The *trumpet of doom* is similar to a *horn of Valhalla*, but summons 2d4+4 zombies. He also carries a *potion of extra-healing*.

The *necklace of prayer beads* is usable by any priest, druid, ranger or paladin who follows a god of the Flannae pantheon.

--

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CMC Tech Support Manager

"Astronomers say the universe is finite, which is a comforting thought for those people who can't remember where they leave things."

10-31-99

rtaylor

Russ Taylor (<http://www.cmc.net/~rtaylor/>)

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*With Boccob's Blessing*

# The Crystal Skulls of Nerull

by Kenneth Newquist

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## PRELUDE

*The Blackrazor Guild's elite took the corner at a hard run, stopping just in time to catch sight of the necromancer Nefar. The ghastly-looking mage held an emerald skull in his hands, and as the Blackrazors watched, he held it high. The skull's eyes flashed sickly green, instantly staggering the guild's frontline warriors and slaying their red-shirted spear carriers outright.*

*The mage's rising cackle was cut short though when two blades wielded by the wily—and formerly invisible—elf Malacypse plunged through his back. Mal retreated slightly, laughing his own evil laugh, and watched the necromancer crumble. As the mad Nerullite did so, the skull dropped from his faltering hands, and landed hard against the floor....*

The crystal skulls of Nerull are powerful artifacts of the God of Death, created by his followers for use in their holy rituals. These artifacts differ in power, design and construction, but their basic principals and use remain the same.

The skulls are carved from some sort of crystal – the most mundane from quartz or exceptionally pure forms of glass, the most exceptional from emeralds, diamonds and rubies. Although one was found in the lair of a now-forgotten lich, most of these artifacts are used by cults worshiping Nerull. Only fragments of these skulls – most notably slivers from the *Emerald Skull of Narsceen* -- have ever recovered.

Little is known about the powers of these skulls because so few have seen them and lived. Based on the maniacal boastings of those who have wielded them – and on rumors from those who have seen them – the skulls are fearsome and deadly.

Each appears to have innate abilities varying in scope and intensity based on the source material. Diamond and quartz skulls seem to enhance mental abilities, while the ruby ones reportedly provide pyrotechnic or blood-stealing ones. Emerald ones apparently allow powerful noxious magic to be cast, while the black ones invoke necromantic forces.

The skulls allegedly have some sort of sentience, although how extensive this is has yet to be

seen. There are reports of the skulls rising into the air and lashing out at opponents with blasts of lightning or worse, but it's possible those reporting them are confusing them with the legends of creatures known as demi-liches.

## Creation

The directions for creating a skull are not widely known, and what tomes do document the process are carefully guarded by the death god's fanatical followers. The steps outlined below are rarely fully documented in any book. It's possible that critically important steps – like the blessing of the skull by a priest of Nerull – will be left out of any books that are found.

**Step 1:** The first step is to find an uncut crystal worth at least 30,000 gold pieces. The skull can be any sort of crystal from the most common quartz to the most perfect emerald. It must then be carved by a master artisan into the shape of a skull. As mentioned in the overview, certain kinds of crystals are more effective for trapping spells than others. Clear crystals, like quartz or diamond, are useful for skulls with mind-affecting powers. Rubies are the preferred choice for fire-based abilities, while black diamonds are best used for necromantic spells. In any case, the more expensive and unique the crystal, the more powerful the final skull will be.

**Step 2:** The skull must be consecrated by a priest of Nerull with a *bless* spell, followed by *protection from good*, 10' foot radius.

**Step 3:** With the skull properly prepared, the most dangerous step begins: trapping a non-corporal undead within the skull by a mage using a *trap the soul* spell. The final powers of the skull are determined as much as the nature of the undead trapped inside as it is by its crystalline construction. The more powerful the undead, the more powerful the skull. In addition, the willingness of the subject is also a factor – willing undead greatly add to the power of the skull.

**Step 4:** With the spirit trapped, the necromancer casts *enchant an item* on the skull. At this point the mage – or mages – begin casting spells into the skull to give it its final abilities.

**Step 5:** When all of spells are cast and a final *permanence* spell is uttered to seal them, Nerull must deliver his final unholy blessing upon the item. This is reflected by a percentage roll based on the following factors:

Each 10,000 gp value of the gem:	5%
Unwilling undead victim:	10%
Willing undead victim:	20%
Each HD of the victim:	5%
Each spell level cast into the skull*	-5%
DM's discretion:	varies

\* *These spell levels do not include the spells used in preparing, consecrating and finalizing the skull – it is only for spells used as templates for abilities.*

If the roll succeeds, a new unholy skull has been created. If it fails, the gemstone cracks and is ruined. Everyone within 30 feet of the skull must immediately make a saving throw versus death magic at –4 or die.

The finished magic item will be either a lesser or greater skull, based on the percentage chance of success. Those with a chance of less than 70 percent are considered lesser skulls, and have only 50 charges. The undead trapped in these skulls retain none of the awareness, and fall into an undying sleep.

Those with 70 percent or higher are greater skulls. These skulls can hold up to 100 charges, and the undead trapped inside are fully aware of their surroundings and situation.

## Powers and Abilities

All skulls continuously radiate *protection from good*, 10 foot radius. Lesser skulls have no other innate abilities, and the slumbering undead trapped inside them are unaware of the outside world. The wielder is able to use any of the skull's abilities without fear of awakening the spirit inside.

Greater skulls are much different. A greater skull is fully sentient and aware, and can use any of its powers at will – with or without the consistent of its wielders. The skull maintains a telepathic bond with its wielder, and constantly whispers orders and directions to them. Those who refuse to follow these orders may find themselves under attack by the skull.

Undead with special abilities – such as a ghost's aging effect or a specter's level drain – who are trapped in a skull can use them as a gaze-based attack. The cone of effect is 10 feet wide at its base and

emanates for 60 feet. This special attack form is useable once per day. Other special abilities, such as a ghost's *magic jar* attack, can be used normally. In the case of *magic jar*, the skull itself serves as the needed container. Finally, all greater skulls of Nerull can *fly* at will. The movement rate, however, is at 6" per round rather than the normal 18".

Each skull has a set number of charges, and using its spell abilities drains these charges, using one charge per level of the spell. The skulls can be recharged, but not through magical means. Those seeking to replenish the skull's unholy stores must sacrifice intelligent beings to Nerull in the skull's presence. The skull receives one charge per level of the creature sacrificed, with common (0-level) folk counting as ¼ charge per individual sacrificed.

## Destruction

While the skulls of Nerull can be powerful, they are not artifacts and can be destroyed by mundane means. Crushing blows can smash the crystal and blows from swords can shatter them. The skulls save based on the materials they are made from and all receive the standard saving throw bonuses versus attacks from good-aligned creatures thanks to their permanent *protection from good* ability.

Destroying a skull is not without risk since shattering the crystal frees the non-corporal undead inside. Many brave adventurers have fallen to the icy touch of a wraith after defeating the skull's wielder and foolishly thinking the skull was defenseless.

In addition, while shattering the skull frees the spirit, the spirit is *not* automatically forced from the shards. It can choose to linger in, or even return to, the shards if it desires.

The only true way to destroy a skull – and to insure that the spirit inside is banished -- is to destroy the crystal completely via a *disintegration* spell or some equally powerful magic.

## Existing skulls

### *The Diamond Skull of Malern*

The necromancer Malern was a powerful member of the Followers of the Skeletal Way who accepted eternal imprisonment to create one of the most powerful crystal skulls ever known.

The Followers of the Skeletal Way are the fanatical believers of Nerull who serve as the Cult of the Shriven Sickle's vaunted honor guard. Malern helped create the skull, and placed the initial enchantments upon it. Then, at the pinnacle of his personal power, he sacrificed himself to Nerull as part of a complex and dark ritual. After his suicide he rose in undeath as a ghost, and allowed himself to be drawn into the depths of the diamond skull.

**One charge:** *Choke (CWH), hovering skull (CWH), charm person (PHB)*

**Two charges:** *Throbbing bones (CWH), ESP (PHB)*

**Three charges:** *Magic jar (PHB), mind blank (PHB)*

Marlern is full sentient inside the crystal, and remains one of the Skeletal Way's most powerful weapons. As with all greater crystal skulls of Nerull, the *Diamond Skull of Malern* can hold 100 charges. It can be recharged.

### ***The Black Skull of Alz-Sharie***

The black diamond surface of the *Skull of Alz-Sharie* is older than nations, and in some ways, more powerful than the kings that rule them. In the dark centuries after the fall of the Baklunish Empire, there arose a powerful necromancer named Alz-Sharie, whose command over the forces of darkness was unrivaled. The court of the Caliph, fearing the mage, ordered its best sorcerers to destroy him. They attacked his citadel—an ancient fortress buried deep in the Dry Steppes—and succeeded in breaching its defenses. However while they were able to defeat Alz-Sharie's undead minions, they could not slay the necromancer.

The mage fled across the Barrier Peaks, eventually settling in the lands that would become Ket. Once there he set out to learn of the new gods residing in these fertile countries and in doing so was exposed to the cold evil of Nerull. Alz-Sharie threw himself into worship of his new master and attracted a small group of followers known as the Cult of the Black Scythe. He founded another fortress, this time on the eastward side of the Barrier Peaks, and became plotting his revenge against his former ruler. He crafted the *Black Skull* as his ultimate tool, and succeeded in trapping the mind of a powerful vampire in the black diamond's depths.

The skull is a bastion of negative energy, and its powers help in the creation of truly horrifying forms of undead. Its even great powers, however, involve the draining of life energy from its victims. In the years that followed, he launched raid upon raid into Baklunish and other nearby good-aligned lands, sending undead minions marauding through field and hills.

Alz-Sharie and his cult were allegedly destroyed by a band of Baklunish heroes, but the skull was never found. Since then the skull has been reported in hands of several different necromancers and death cults, but time and again it has escaped destruction at the hands of good. It is whispered that Alz-Sharie sent his soul into the black skull before his death, but this has never been confirmed.

The *Black Skull of Alz-Sharie* has the following abilities:

**One charge:** *Choke (CBN), vampiric touch (PHB)*

**Two charges:** *Wall of bone (CWH), animate dead (PHB)*

**Three charges:** *Transmute bone to steel (CBN), dead man's eyes (CWB)*

As with all greater crystal skulls of Nerull, the *Black Skull of Alz-Sharie* can hold 100 charges. It can be recharged.

### ***The Red Skull of Mazur the Mad***

Crafted from a brilliant ruby streaked gold veins, the *Red Skull of Mazur the Mad* is a rarity: a crystal skull dedicated to pyrotechnic magic. The skull, also known as the *Burning Skull*, was created by the mage Mazur, a pyromancer and insane follower of Nerull.

Mazur was a chaotic but good-intentioned pyromancer when he accidentally slaughtered his friends. His adventuring band had been exploring a lost keep in the Hellfurnaces in CY 293 when they stumbled across the lair of a lich. Mazur overreacted, and unleashed a blaze that killed his friends and merely annoyed the lich. The pyromancer's mind broke in that instant, and he became the willing slave of the undead creature. He gave himself over to the worship of Nerull and the study of death by fire.

The pinnacle of this study was the creation of the *Burning Skull*. In a highly unorthodox move, he bound an efreeti to the depths of the skull. His lich patron, pleased but threatened by Mazur's power, murdered his prodigy and took the crystal.

Decades later the lich was destroyed by a group of adventurers, who took the skull. The cult of Nerull has recovered and lost the skull a half dozen times since then.

The powers of the skull are as follows:

**One charge:** *Burning hands (PHB), flaming sphere (PHB)*

**Two charges:** *Fireball (PHB), fire charm (PHB)*

**Three charges:** *Wall of fire (PHB), summon elemental (PHB)*

The item is considered a lesser skull and has 50 charges. It can be recharged.

### **Destroyed skulls**

#### ***The Emerald Skull of Narsceen***

The *Emerald Skull of Narsceen* was found in the Cairn Hills in CY 332 in the lair of the lich by the same name by a group Greyhawk adventurers known as the Stormriders. The lich used the skull to generate terrible, poisonous magic that sickened the bodies and minds of his opponents, but even the skull was not

enough to save him. The adventurers defeated the lich, destroyed his remains, and seized the skull as treasure.

The group was en route to Greyhawk when one of their members was suddenly turned on them, slaying three party members before the others could escape to the city. The individual – a mage of some power – fled to the south. Within months news arrived in Greyhawk that he had taken over one of the Star Cairns and had begun building a new cult.

The Stormriders speculated that the lich had somehow managed to transfer his life force into the skull, and used a mental attack to capture their colleague's mind. The surviving Stormriders recruited mercenaries to augment their devastated ranks, and launched an expedition to hunt down their friend.

After a terrible battle in the Star Cairn the Stormriders defeated the newborn cult and their friend. They smashed the skull, hoping that would finally slay the fiend, and free their friend. It seemed to work and the exhausted friends headed back to the Greyhawk. After returning to Greyhawk they sold their story to the then-head librarian of the Great Library in return for a favor – the raising of one of their dead friends. They then left the city and passed into history.

A later expedition to the Star Cairn by the Guild of Wizardry recovered the fragments of the skull in hopes of learning the secrets of its creation. Weeks after returning to Greyhawk the expedition's most powerful mage went insane and killed five guild members before he was slain. A later investigation revealed that a powerful non-corporal undead – perhaps a ghost – had remained in the shards of the skull, and dominated the mage with a *magic jar* spell. The shards were disintegrated during the final battle with the mage, and this act seemed to lay the creature to rest. The later of these two tales is a carefully guarded guild secret, and is only revealed at the discretion of the guildmaster.

### ***The Quartz Skull of Xanax***

This minor skull was controlled by the Cult of the Shriven Sickle until its untimely destruction by the infamous Blackrazor Guild. The skull, made of white quartz, was located in a cairn beneath a desecrated shrine of Celestian in the Cairn Hills outside of Greyhawk.

The name of that shrine was the Pinnacle of Stars and the Blackrazors were intrigued by the reports of undead marauding around it. The Blackrazors scouted out the cairn, found the Shriven Sickle lair, and attacked it. After the fighting the Blackrazors looted the treasure, and then accidentally caused the collapse of the entire complex.

A year later they returned at the behest of the Order of Celestian -- whose attempts to deconsecrate their above-ground shrine had been ruined by repeated

attacks by life-draining, wraith-like undead. Armed with knowledge of the *Emerald Skull of Narceen*, they guessed that a ghost of some kind had been trapped in the skull. The Blackrazors returned to the Pinnacle of Stars and began exploring the collapse cairn beneath it with *elemental movement* spells. They found the shattered remains of the skull and defeated the ghost guardian lurking around them. They then returned to Greyhawk, and turned over the now harmless (they hoped) shards to the Order of Celestian.

### **POSTLUDE**

*Nefar's blood—tainted black by years of unholy worship—pooled around the base of the crystal skull. Before anyone could stop him, the Blackrazor's resident barbarian, Ragnar Blackmane, hefted his mace and charged the crystalline abomination. The barbarian's immense strength drove the enchanted head of the mace into the emerald, smashing it easily. But as the shards exploded across the room. A change came over Ragnar. He stood, straightening as he did so, and let the mace fall to the floor. The Blackrazors looked on in horror as a sickly green light danced in Ragnar's eyes.*

*The fight was far from over.*

### **Sources**

*Player's Handbook (PHB)*

*The Complete Wizard's Handbook (CWH)*

*The Complete Book of Necromancers (CBN)*

*Tome of Magic (TOM)*

*The Good Oerth*

# The Fading Lands

## Lands of the Great Kingdom

By Jim Temple

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Steeped in the history of this once-great empire, the Lands located in old Aerdy are each vastly different. The best-known Fading Land is among these, as is (arguably) the most mysterious.

Except as noted below, one can only speculate on the Overkings' knowledge of these demiplanes. While it is certain that senior members of the priesthood of Hextor are aware of the Blood Obelisk, the various Houses of Aerdy nobles may have remained completely ignorant. It is generally believed that some elves of the Adri Forest are/were aware of the Plains of Imix, but they undoubtedly kept this secret carefully guarded from their Oeridian neighbors. The same can be said of the Crypts of Iron Souls, which is ingrained in the legends of the Glorioles dwarves.

### The Blood Obelisk of Aerdy

Located deep within the Gull Cliffs, this is a location consecrated to the evil god Hextor. Though none know the purpose of this location or the frequency of its use by the Hounds of Hell, it is undeniable that it radiates a palpable evil. The magical effects noted are certainly malevolent, and many of these are often associated with Hextor's priests. The huge obelisk for which this Land is named is undoubtedly a tool of the Scourge of Battle, and the denizens reported are certainly no strangers to combat.

Note that rumors state that some of Ivid's powers have come from this Fading Land. While this is certainly possible, the implications of having some of Ivid's abilities completely under the control of this priesthood makes this seem unlikely, given the paranoid nature of the last(?) Overking.

### Rumors

- ❖ With the recent fall of the Great Kingdom, the priesthood of Hextor has been quite busy within the Land, creating artifacts of great power and evil so that they may secure their positions.
- ❖ The Sea Barons have noted an increase in the numbers and successes of sahuagin raids over the last couple of years. Some speculate that these

lawful creatures are being influenced by the Hounds of Hell.

- ❖ Gnomes of the Gull Cliffs have reported recent raids by trolls, which are not typically found in the area in such numbers. More disturbing still, a few reports have described the trolls as multi-armed beasts.
- ❖ Followers of Hextor have recently begun searching the Cliffs. Some say they seek hidden magic from Ur-Flan mages and necromancers, others say they seek an ancient temple of Tharizdun.
- ❖ A fanatical group of Heironeous' followers recently entered the demiplane, but they did not return.
- ❖ From distant Eastfair, Grace Grenell seeks to secure his powerbase through the support of the priesthood in the Land.

### Groups Interested in the Land

- ❖ The Five of Roland have recently taken a renewed interest in the Obelisk. Whether they seek control or alliance is unknown, but the forces of good in the Lone Heath and the Grandwood would do well to prevent either course from bearing fruit.
- ❖ Obviously, any group able to provide details of the demiplane to the churches of Heironeous, Pholtus, or even Zilchus would forever earn their gratitude.
- ❖ Earth elementalists and necromancers have occasionally hired adventurers to retrieve samples of the iron-coated bones said to lie within, as would any lich across the Flanaess (who would also be interested in discovering the ability to add arms to their form).
- ❖ Word of the Blood Obelisk has reached the ears of a minor noble in the house of Naelax, in Delaric. Blackmail, murder, and other typical Aerdy plots may be the result as he tries to take advantage of this knowledge. This may also be the result as the Priesthood attempts to keep the knowledge from reaching their enemies.
- ❖ Minor evil priesthoods are jealous of this power base, and seek the knowledge to duplicate (or control) the magic here. These could include Pyremius, Beltar, Kyuss, and possibly even

Erythnul (what else should one expect from a chaotic evil “ally”?).

- ❖ Many wizards, specifically enchanters, would be interested in notes on the magical constructs of the Land, such as the golems and juggernauts.

## Reaching the Land

The entrance to this Fading Land is found within a vast cavern system within the Gull Cliffs. While the region is generally hospitable, this labyrinthine system will take great courage and care to traverse. Infested with rust monsters, puddings, oozes, slimes, molds, fungi, parasites, rot grubs, ghouls, & carrion crawlers, reaching the entrance to the vast plain will be difficult.

Of specific note is a group of 10 heucuva which dwell within the system. The other inhabitants of the caverns seem to avoid them, even the unintelligent forms. The caves in which they dwell are decorated in decayed and grotesque fashion. While no symbols or specific evidence can be found, those familiar with the church of Heironeous (any character with the appropriate Religion NWP) will get a strong feeling that the decor is intended to be a mockery of an abbey for his clerics. As is usual for these undead, they viciously attack intruders and focus on attacking priests attempting to turn them. What interaction or relation this unholy pack has with the priesthood of Hextor is unknown.

The most famous of the inhabitants of the system is the great behir, Schluzzaire. Having formed a firm alliance ages ago, the great reptile guards the very entrance to the Land. In exchange, the priests bring her treasure (see below, as determined by the DM), live victims (for sport), and news of the outside world. Unlike most dragonkind, Schluzzaire is not vain, and obvious attempts to play on such a weakness will put her on guard for further treachery. Her weakness is her ambition and lust for power. Extremely intelligent for a behir (average Intelligence, rather than low), her secret desire is to be a true dragon, for she dreads interaction with her dense kindred. To make up for her lesser abilities, she collects magical items she can use (such as potions, wands, staves, and rods, but not including scrolls, weapons, or worn items (cloaks, rings, etc.)). She may be bribed with useable magic, but not with coins or gems. Note that such an arrangement will only ensure safe passage into the demiplane, and she will always betray characters on their return trips.

The actual entrance to the Fading Land is a section of wall in Schluzzaire’s territory. The cave wall appears as a double exposure, with an overlapping view of a barren plain. Stepping into the wall allows entry to the Blood Obelisk Plain.

## Geography

The demiplane is a featureless, barren plain with no landmarks appearing on the horizon, save the Obelisk. The sky above is a dark void where no clouds are visible, and no stars or other heavenly bodies appear. The ground everywhere appears as a blasted, rocky region, similar to a crater left by a fallen meteor. The rocks are banded with a blood-red glow, which throbs with a pulse-like rhythm.

No water exists anywhere upon the plain. Indeed the iron-rich dust which covers everything here dehydrates living tissue, forcing the consumption of twice the usual amount of water. Those failing (or unable) to do this daily will succumb to the effects of dehydration, as determined by the DM (see the Wilderness Survival Guide, pg. 52 for one system).

Explorers must also beware of seemingly random magical effects of the plain. Apparently based upon numerous *contingency* spells, these effects include *fireball*, *wave of carnage* (see Hextor entry in OJ10), *ray of enfeeblement*, *fear* (always resulting in a sprint toward the demiplane’s exit), and others.

## Flora and Fauna

Unlike most life on the plain, which is summoned or created, a mutant race of iron-skinned trolls inhabit the Land. While they still possess the regeneration ability of their green-skinned relatives, the metallic skin of these humanoid adds an immunity to fire and blunt weapons, though they are still affected by acid. Fortunately, fire applied directly to a fresh wound (i.e., the round after it is inflicted) will stop regeneration before the fire-proof skin has a chance to regrow. Aside from this, these trolls appear as normal, including their limited intelligence.

The only other “life” found here consists of magical constructs, including iron golems, metal-covered stone golems, iron juggernauts, the rarely encountered metal-covered stone guardians, and a few metallic necrophidius.

## Magical Effects

In addition to those effects generated by the DM’s Origin Theory (see OJ 9), the lands of the Blood Obelisk prevent the function of magic which would protect agents of good (such as *negative plane protection*, *protection from evil*, *dispel evil*, etc.). Also, healing magic used here has minimal effect (1 hp for *cure light wounds*, 3 hp for *cure serious wounds*, etc.).

Creatures or characters *raised* or *resurrected* here will actually arise as undead, with the type and strength determined by the DM. It is suggested that the type reflect the character’s class, personality, and alignment. For example, a priest could become a heucuva, or a thief might rise as a shadow, while a

lawful good character could become a vampire, or a fancy dresser may transform into a mummy. Use whatever would best perverts the player's favorite trait(s) about their character.

One last effect is of note, concerning undead. Any turning attempts made in the Land allow the creature to make a saving throw versus spell to negate the turning. If this save fails, then the turning is made as normal. Luckily, undead are rare upon the Plain.

## The Obelisk

The namesake of this Fading Land is a stone obelisk which stands fifty feet in height. The monolith is covered in runes, symbols, sigils, and scrawlings devoted to Hextor. None have yet been able to decipher the markings, and the priests of the Land aren't talking.

Some sages suggest that the structure is a focus of Hextor's power on Oerth, and that its destruction would greatly weaken his priests. Others argue that this power is for Hextor's puppets, such as Ivid, as a complementary location to the Cauldron of Night (see Ivid the Undying). Still others believe that the purpose here is more complicated and mysterious, but that the effects of its destruction or damage would not be as far reaching as their hopeful colleagues would imagine. Only Hextor (and possibly Istus) knows the answers.

The area surrounding the Obelisk does not contain the blasted rocks found throughout the rest of the demiplane. Instead, the rocks here have apparently been ground to a fine dust. The dust is obviously iron-rich, and it covers dozens of humanoid skeletons, though only random bones are visible to the casual eye. If any living creature (not including golems and other constructs) enters this thirty-foot radius area, skeletons rise from the dust at the rate of six undead per round. These corpses are covered in the iron dust (AC 0), and have six iron-clawed arms useable each round (1d4 + 1 per hit).

As soon as an attack on the Obelisk begins, a *gate* opens to bring fiendish defenders to the scene. The nature, types, and numbers of these fiends are left to the DM's imagination, but the Lawful nature of Hextor should be kept in mind. Also, the Obelisk is difficult to harm, and will cast Elemental (fire) spells (both wizard and priest) as an 18<sup>th</sup> level caster, so the fiendish aid should not be overpowering.

The monolith can only be affected by a limited list of magical effects, and by powerful magic weapons. Followers of Heironeous (especially priests and paladins) are much more effective with their attacks. It is suggested that the DM tailor the Obelisk to fit the specific campaign, although specifics are available (see *From the Ashes*).

## Resources and Treasure

Should the Obelisk be destroyed, considerable treasure will be found below it. Suggestions include components which would make up its powers, such as a *wand of fire*, *amulet of the planes*, etc.

Aside from research aids, the other denizens of the Land hold little in the way of treasure. The trolls are constantly stripped of valuables by the priests, and the constructs obviously do not value wealth, although they may be melted down.

The iron-rich rock found here may be of note, although the disgusting red veins may prevent its use by the dwarves and gnomes of the region (DM's option).

Items of interest may be found in some of the Fading Land's other locations, which are listed below.

## Specific Locations of Note

Some of the following locations will only be discovered by determined parties. Since the only landmark visible from a distance is the Obelisk, these locations may easily be overlooked. The DM must determine the likelihood of the discovery of these areas, keeping in mind the barren, desolate nature of the demiplane.

- ❖ **Construction Time Again.** A group of Hextor's priests overlook the design and manufacture of the many golems and other creations here. Most of the hard work (smithing, carving, etc.) will be done by slaves (primarily humans and gnomes, though some dwarves, elves, and goblinoids may be present). The slaves are mistreated in the extreme, and keep up their best work for fear of ending their days in the Lab (see below). The types, numbers, and nature of the creations worked on here will vary, but the priests will be smart enough to keep a couple of completed juggernauts on hand to assist their fighters in their guard duties here.
- ❖ **Heart of Hextor.** One portion of the demiplane holds a mutation of the red-veined rocks where the veins grow wider, while the pulsing grows slower and becomes audible. As one ventures farther into this area, the effect increases until eventually the rocks are glowing red with veins of iron ore, and the rhythm can be felt in the chests of visitors. Continuing past this point is very dangerous. Soon the explorer will come upon a shallow depression in the earth where the glowing rocks are a liquid, though they give off no heat. This is known as the Heart of Hextor. Any viewing this area must make a save versus spell at -4, or succumb to a berserk rage. This rage will only subside when all living creatures visible are dead, or until a successful

*dispel magic* is made (as against an 18<sup>th</sup> level caster). *Remove curse* will work, but if the recipient again views the Heart the effect will take hold without a second saving throw. Note that followers of Heironeous receive an additional -2 penalty to save versus the berserk effect, and a -2 versus all saving throws made in the area.

- ❖ **A Mighty Servant?** A strange rock formation exists in the Fading Land, and much speculation has centered around it. The shape is very roughly humanoid, but seems to consist of the same red-veined rock found elsewhere. The formation does not appear to radiate any magical aura, but has so far proven impervious to all attempts at investigation. Some speculate that this is the resting place of an ancient Oeridian artifact, while others believe this is preposterous. Only time will tell.
- ❖ **The Lab.** Originally used to create the iron-skinned trolls found here, this magical laboratory is now being used for more sinister experiments by the priests. Enemies, and slaves failing their duties elsewhere will become the subjects of experimentation in skin grafting and limb growth. Other such atrocities may occur here, but such subjects are best left alone. Guardian trolls (who enjoy their enhanced state) and fighters protect the preoccupied clerics and their equipment (characters interested in improving their research labs may find very useful materials here).
- ❖ **Sinkhole.** Only one subterranean structure has been discovered in the Land, consisting of a gaping hole twenty feet across. The exact depth of the hole is unknown, as no magic which produces light (including *continual light*, *dancing lights*, or any fire-based magic) will function here, and infravision has also proven useless. After descending several hundred feet, explorers will arrive in a small cave with a lit passage leading off. Following the tunnel leads the delvers to a huge underground cavern, thousands of feet across. The cavern is filled with glimmering crystals (of no value), providing a breathtaking view. No living creatures dwell within this cavern, and only one additional item of interest may be found here. In the center of the cavern, barely visible beneath a formation of transparent crystals, a tunnel can be found. It appears to be dug from fresh earth, and twists and turns to eventually arrive at a meadow. The meadow holds an amazing variety of fruit trees, vegetables, edible mushrooms, nuts, berries, and tubers. A clear, beautiful stream runs through the meadow, with fresh drinkable water. Numerous harmless forest creatures can be found here, watched over by the keeper of this Sacred Grove. Jetawn, a 20<sup>th</sup> level

hierophant druid of Beory, will assist the party in any possible way, save only that she cannot leave. She will inform them of the powers of this place: all wounded characters may rest here & regain their health at twice the normal rate, healing magic of all kinds function for maximum possible effect, wounds created by clerics of Hextor will heal instantly upon partaking of the Grove's bounties, priestly Divination magic increases in power, and shape-changing magic of any kind can be used here without fear of ill effect (no need for a System Shock check). Any characters making donations to Beory here (which Jetawn will not solicit) will be granted a secret +2 to all saving throws versus fire or electrical attacks for 2 days. Jetawn will not speak of her history, or of the purpose of her Grove. She will provide any information she has (as determined by the DM) regarding Hextor and the abilities of his followers, and seems to have a special hatred for them. This is the haven for the party in the demiplane, and she tells them to return as often as needed. However, she warns them not to allow evil to find the Grove. Should the other denizens of the demiplane follow the characters here, the party will be unable to find a tunnel in the crystal cavern.

## Crypts of Iron Souls

The ancient peaks of the Glorioles range hold many mysteries. Magic lost by the invading Oeridians, the ancient secrets of the dwarves, and pre-historic Flannae remains are counted among these, as well as the Fading Land known as the Crypts of Iron Souls.

Unlike other Fading Lands, the Crypts are devoid of life. The very name of the demiplane should warn explorers away, but they continue to come. The vast majority join the inhabitants in their eternal stewardship of the ancient necropolis.

## Rumors

- ❖ The Crypts are the final resting place of the Axe of the Dwarvish Lords.
- ❖ After his ascent to lichdom was completed, Acererak created (or took control of) the demiplane in order to amass an undead army beyond the prying eyes of mortals.
- ❖ The local dwarves and their neighbors in the Rieuwood are seeking the aid of Sunndi against the undead legions which spill forth from the wretched Land.
- ❖ The Ur-Flannae, ever delving into death and decay, tapped a powerful gate which sucked their ancient city into the Fading Land. The original inhabitants remain there today.

- ❖ After the conquest of the eastern Flanaess, the most powerful of the Oeridian mages secured their most powerful magics within the demiplane.
- ❖ The Reaper has used the Crypts of Iron Souls as his private laboratory for centuries.

### Groups Interested in the Land

- ❖ The Scarlet Brotherhood would be highly interested in swelling the ranks of their slave armies with these undead.
- ❖ Prince Ferrenan of Blacksplinter (see [Ivid the Undying](#)) believes the ancient warriors within the Land would provide just the edge he needs against Szeffrin and his powerful forces.
- ❖ Nearly every evil priesthood is highly interested in the demiplane, most notable are those of Nerull, Iuz, and Hextor.
- ❖ Some folk within the County of Sunndi believe that the Land holds powerful magic for commanding undead, and that this power would greatly assist them versus foes utilizing such corpses against their people.
- ❖ Necromancers across the Flanaess would pay heavily for information or magic from the Fading Land.
- ❖ Many followers of Wee Jas are interested in freeing the spirits of the tormented dead found herein.

### Reaching the Land

The Glorioles range is ancient and dwarf-ridden. Surprisingly, this presents a great problem for most parties seeking the Crypts, for the demihumans hate undead with a fury which shocks outsiders. They even go so far as to cremate their dead to avoid the possibility that they may raise against them. The somber dwarffolk have been accused of killing large parties headed for the Fading Land, although most doubt these rumors. In any event, travelers will find no aid from these folk if they mention undead, the Crypts, or treasures which the dwarves would rather keep for themselves.

Deep in a cleft in the range, an entrance to a tomb may be found carved into the rock. The inscription on the tomb is illegible without *read magic*, and part of the inscription has been worn off by the elements. What is legible reads, "...re the so...the dead guard their secrets...harm." Note that the word "harm" is actually behind a large patch of lichen, and characters must successfully roll to find a secret door (with no bonus given to elves for this search) to even notice that the engraving extends this far. The engraving actually once read, "Where the souls of the dead guard their secrets from those they would harm." The original intent was that the secrets held within

would harm the outside world, and the dead are attempting to protect their descendants. Whether or not this original intent has become warped over time is left to the DM.

Within lies a typical tomb used for minor royalty. The design is unknown; even characters with the Ancient History and Architecture Non-Weapon Proficiencies will find that they cannot identify the craftsmanship. Dwarves and gnomes in the party can confirm that the tomb appears human in construction, but no other details may be learned.

The tomb is empty. The sarcophagus found therein is also empty, though the lid will be initially closed. Characters must climb into the stone grave, closing the lid above them. Note that no more than 2 unarmored characters (or 2 gnomes or halflings in armor) may fit in the sarcophagus. When they again open the lid, they will have entered the Crypts of Iron Souls.

### Geography

This Fading Land is a complex series of caves and subterranean passages. It lies cloaked in a darkness which hides an ancient city of unknown origin. Eroded so far as to be nearly unrecognizable, the remnants of the buildings now more closely resemble worked caves and tunnels than free standing structures. Only a few great doors of stone betray its origin. The stone (which is unknown to dwarves and stonemasons who have examined it) is dark brown in color, mottled in nauseating swirls which make extended evaluation unpleasant. No wood, leather, or other organic materials are found within, yet the entire city holds a faint odor of earth and decay.

The caves and tunnels of the Land are all filled with about 1½ feet of a strange, soupy substance. Appearing to be made up of bones fragments and ash, the semi-liquid slime clings to all substances it contacts, severely encumbering movement. Thus far, nothing has been reported as having affected the stuff, whether physical or magical means were used.

The most unusual aspect of the geography here is the massive erosion found. No water exists in the demiplane, and the air is dead still. Only the magical effects of the region suggest a possible solution to this puzzle.

### The Ash

The muck filling the city consists of the remains of decades of decomposing explorers and undead. The substance is slightly corrosive, eating through leather armor in one day. The ash can eat through any type of protection, taking one additional day for each AC lower than 8. Magical armor receives a saving throw versus acid, but this must be made

daily. Unfortunately, magical *cloaks*, *rings* and *bracers* are ineffective protections against the ash.

As the ash is not deep, only armor covering legs and feet will be affected for those standing. Unfortunately, the inhabitants are aware of the corrosion, and encounters will often begin with strikes to exposed or weakened areas. Wounds will result in half movement until healed, as well as damage from the acidic muck. Unless new wrappings are placed upon open wounds at least twice per day, victims will take 2d4 hp damage from chemical burns. The ash does not harm to the dead here, and damage from the liquid cannot be healed within the demiplane. The liquid ash is apparently infused with energy from the Negative Material Plane. The consequences for explorers experiencing prolonged exposure to the muck are unknown.

### Flora and Fauna

Nothing of this sort exists, except as noted below. No other living creatures have been encountered here. The only sign of vegetable life are petrified trees (appearing to be willow and birch) found in the courtyards.

In place of a typical ecology lies a vast array of undead. Every type imaginable are found here, though the vast majority appear to be human corpses. These include strange varieties such as soul beckoners (see the Greyhawk Monstrous Compendium Appendix or UK7 Dark Clouds Gather), penanggalan, apparitions, poltergeists, phantoms, coffer corpses (the preceding 5 creatures are from the Fiend Folio), slow shadows (see the Greyhawk MC Appendix or WG5 Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure), huecuva, and an alarming number of Sons of Kyuss (see Greyhawk MC Appendix or Fiend Folio). Unfortunately, explorers most often encounter groups commanded by the remains of powerful warriors, now transformed into loathsome beasts such as swordwraiths (see the Greyhawk MC Appendix), death knights, and skeleton warriors (without any apparent circles of command). These ancient warriors are often decorated with insignia, sashes, medals, and other military accoutrements. It should be noted that powerful, intelligent undead (such as liches, vampires, and spectres) have not been reported within, though most sages believe that they have simply sent their lesser minions to thwart intruders, remaining unseen within the depths of the caverns.

### Magical Effects

Possibly the most dangerous effect found in any Fading Land, the Crypts are always eerily silent when adventurers first arrive. This is because the inhabitants know that even the slightest noise can have

devastating effects. Explorers are advised to keep multiple castings of *silence* and similar magics on hand, as the sounds here take solid form.

It is impossible to Move Silently in the demiplane, and the average unarmored character will find that every footfall resembles the thumping of a deep drum, such as a timpani. More percussive sounds, such as those produced by combat, will result in all within a 10' radius being thrown violently to the ground for 1d6 hp damage. Unfortunately for most adventurers, some opponents here are not harmed by such a blow, and use this knowledge to their advantage.

Piercing sounds, such as a scream or a metallic scrape, are powerful enough to melt steel. The intense vibrations created literally break down the structure of the rigid material, causing an effect similar to a *heat metal* spell, with similar saving throws. Should the armor make its save, the melting of the metal will result in the loss of 2 AC in protection. Those individuals encountered not wearing ferrous armor, and those who successfully save versus the *heat metal* effect, are knocked to the ground for 2d6 hp damage, and must save versus paralyzation or succumb to effect similar to a *power word, stun*. Note that the inhabitants seem immune to the *stun* effect, and while many of the dead are incapable of producing sounds, those able have decimated numerous parties with this ability.

No rumors exist of anyone using an item such as a *horn of blasting*, or a *shout* spell here. DMs must decide the result of such foolish actions.

Priests are at a significant disadvantage here, turning or commanding undead as if 4 levels lower than their actual achievements. Additional magical effects here will vary from campaign to campaign, as determined by the DM's Origin Theory (see OJ9).

### Resources and Treasure

Aside from the obvious value to those researching magic and necromancy, this place offers nothing. Like Oerth's other undead, the Land takes all it can and gives nothing in return. Only groups, factions, or individuals with specific agendas seek out the Crypts of Iron Souls.

### Specific Locations of Note

❖ **Barracks.** Found periodically throughout the complex, these open caves hold large numbers of skeletons, zombies, and coffer corpses. The groups are generally commanded by sword wraiths (averaging around 1 sword wraith for every 10 of the unintelligent undead), and the entrances are often barricaded with giant ribs and other bones. Some sages feel these lost souls are trapped in a

strictly regimented routine, as nothing of value has been found near these strongholds to date.

- ❖ **Courtyards.** The occasional explorer will tell of open caves with raised floors and a ceiling that cannot be seen, giving a feeling similar to a courtyard. The liquid ash is absent from these areas. Careful observation reveals that an ancient mosaic pattern once decorated the floor, though its details cannot be discerned. A few explorers have reported the discovery of secret compartments hidden by the pattern, but some report attacks while the floor was searched. The main open areas of the caves hold the petrified remains of birch and willow trees. These ancient plants are generally harmless, but attacks here by *kampfult* (see the Greyhawk MC Appendix or the Monster Manual II) have been reported. These are a mutated variety, petrified to an AC of -1 and triple hit dice. They are just infrequent enough to cause most explorers to let their guards down in the “Courtyards”, as their unliving neighbors do not patrol these areas often.
- ❖ **The Lab.** The only living humanoid encountered within the complex is a powerful necromancer. Not much is known of her, save that she is largely ignored by the other denizens of the Land, and that she appears to be of surprisingly pure Flan blood. She has not openly attacked outsiders, but strange variants of common undead (such as ghouls whose gaze causes *sleep* (as the spell, but multiple ghouls may work together to affect larger hit dice creatures, i.e. 2 ghouls can affect 8HD creatures), zombies which slowly regenerate, etc.) always stand guard over her swift retreats. The types of dead commanded by a wave of her hand indicate her powers are vast. Some speculate that she is researching ancient Flannae powers; others believe she seeks the temple. One party claims to have located her abode, stating that she has surrounded her quarters with crypt things. If this is true, only the most determined will reach their goal. The manner of experimentation which must be performed therein further limits the range of interested parties.
- ❖ **Hall of Spirits.** A large cavern lies deep within the bowels of the complex, the stone honeycombed with holes in a cork-like pattern. Interestingly, it appears the magical enhancement of sound is suspended here, and adventurers will hear moans, wails, screams, and cries coming from within. The source of these sounds has never been discovered. This cavern is enormous, estimated at over a mile long and nearly as wide. Its depth is unknown, as none who have descended far have ever returned. Filled largely with ghosts, wraiths, shadows, and the occasional banshee, the biggest hazard to

explorers here are the flesh golems found stumbling about. Old enough to have a deteriorated appearance, the golems are often mistaken for large zombies, ghouls, or Sons of Kyuss, as the automatons are badly infected with rot grubs. Many delvers have perished by the hands of these guardians while attempting to use holy water or turn them. These golems retain full hit points, despite their physical appearance and despite having served as homes to countless generations of the parasites. Worse yet, these are variants with a ghoul-like touch which causes paralysis, and an immunity to cold attacks. What these creations were originally set to guard is unknown.

- ❖ **The Grisly Court.** Sitting in eternal mockery of rulers everywhere, this macabre site has been witnessed by few. Located within the least eroded portion of the complex, this moldering, decayed throne room is home to a large number of skeleton warriors, sword wraiths, and death knights. A death knight rules over all, silently commanding his unquestioning troops. Surprisingly, visitors here can attempt trade or communication without fear of attack. While the dead here are strongly evil, they appear to await something specific. All who have visited the Grisly Court have stated that their actions were carefully watched for a few minutes, then they were dismissed without incident. Many sages would pay extremely handsome fees to learn the secret of these patient undead.
- ❖ **The Temple.** Only related in ancient texts, the Fading Land apparently holds a vast temple to the decrepit Hero-God Kyuss. While the large number of Sons found here would support this, the absence of his priesthood does not. While it also seems unlikely that no adventurers of late would have stumbled onto the unholy site, the small number of visitors to this Land have undoubtedly left much of the demiplane unexplored. The vile sites, beings, and experiments certain to be found within are perhaps best left undiscovered. The fear shared by good priesthods (and the hope of evil priests) is that a powerful relic may be contained within the shrine, one which would give great, horrid power to the wielder. Fortunately, it appears the powerful inhabitants wish such knowledge to remain hidden for the time being.

## Plains of Imix

There is a place within the Adri Forest which is more closely guarded by the local elves than their very homes. It is this place which holds Oerth’s link to the Plains of Imix, a bleak, broken contrast to the lush

forest explorers leave behind. Whether or not the name of the Plain is appropriate is subject to debate, but few can speak of anything regarding this demiplane with certainty. Undoubtedly the Fading Land least explored by the curious, even reaching the portal leading here is a feat worthy of respect.

### Rumors

- ❖ The Sentinels (see [Ivid the Undying](#)) of the Adri know the secrets of the Plains and try to protect outsiders from freeing the evil which consumed the City of Summer Stars.
- ❖ Having created the perfect prison, priests of Telchur cast the imprisoned god into the demiplane. It is here that the vanquished Vatun remains to this day.
- ❖ In the last great cooperative effort made by elementalists, fire specialists destroyed a huge portion of the Adri in a magical mishap. Only swift action by their counterparts contained the destruction.
- ❖ Intelligent dragons have collected and safeguarded several Orbs of Dragonkind within the Plains of Imix.
- ❖ The Coldwood is half of its original size as it is slowly being consumed by the demiplane.
- ❖ The Plain is a staging ground for an invasion by an evil force from the elemental planes.

### Groups Interested in the Land

- ❖ Priests of Joramy and Pyremius constantly compete to obtain magic, news, and samples from the Plains.
- ❖ Fire elementalists are obviously very interested in the Land, but for unknown reasons all other elemental wizard actively seek to thwart their advances.
- ❖ An extreme faction of Adri's younger elves have begun seeking the Plain, feeling that it holds their destiny. Fortunately, the Sentinels have succeeded in preventing this so far.
- ❖ Priests of Hextor seek access to the Plains of Imix so that they may forge alliances with the otherplanar evil located within.
- ❖ Immonara, archdruid of Obad-Hai (see [Ivid the Undying](#)) seeks to understand the connection the demiplane has with the Adri so that she may best protect the forest.
- ❖ Priests of Vhaeraun, the ever-plotting Drow god, see the Fading Land as a valuable tool in their eternal quest for revenge and the conquest of the surface world.

### Reaching the Land

Accessed within the Coldwood, the approach to the Plains of Imix, the inhabitants of the area, and the mysterious Sentinels are all detailed in [Ivid the Undying](#). The portal lies within a few miles past the web-like border, within the hollow of a great, frozen oak.

### The City of Summer Stars

Details on this ancient olven city are found within [Ivid the Undying](#). Some believe the otherplanar forces Darnakurian contacted were from the Plains of Imix. The only known facts are that the city was replaced by the Coldwood, and that the entrance to the fiery Land lies within this frozen forest. While the ice is certainly a deterrent to any fiery invaders, this could easily be coincidence. The only mortals thought to possess this knowledge are the Sentinels, elves who will do anything necessary to prevent the exploration of the area.

Contact with the inhabitants of the Fading Land has also proven futile, as they appear insulted by such questions. Most explorers feel it wise not to upset the elemental folk, leaving the mystery unanswered. It is possible that texts in Celene, the Vesve, or other ancient elven libraries could provide clues, but obtaining access to such desperately protected information would prove difficult, at best. It is also probable that the elves are wise in protecting this secret, and that meddling adventurers should let the matter rest.

**Note:** In the Fading Lands article in OJ9, the timeline for the Coldwood was indicated as a Wars-related event. This was in error, as Ivid the Undying specifies that the disappearance of the City of Summer Stars was pre-history. I apologize for the oversight.

### Geography

A scorched landscape fills this Fading Land, with charred earth and rock covering the ground for as far as the eye can see. Hills, valleys, and even mountains make up the various topographical features, but no bodies of water or rivers are found within. Indeed, the prevalent volcanic activity of the demiplane is almost certainly responsible for the shaping of these landmarks.

Every known type of geothermal activity can be found here, from geysers and hot springs to rivers of magma and volcanic eruptions. The quick cooling of the molten rock ensures plenty of solid ground exists, although no place remains secure for long. Explorers generally receive plenty of warning concerning their current footing, but this is not absolute.

The Land seems to have regions of various temperatures, with the appropriate creatures inhabiting each. For example, creatures of fire and magma can obviously withstand a much higher heat than those of steam. The variations do not follow any known patterns, with the lands in a mountain's shadow being the hottest in one place, the coolest in another.

## Flora and Fauna

Most life in the Land is of a fantastic nature, but a wide variety of mundane plant life exists here. How this is possible is unknown, as the constant churning and burning of the earth makes life short for the vegetation, but the rich, ash-heavy soil is very fertile and many areas are thickly covered with new life. Consisting mostly of grasses, weeds, and briars, many of the plants are edible for adventurers who run low on nourishment.

The more intelligent life in the Land is generally of an elemental nature, including creatures of fire (salamanders/firesnakes, firebats (see *Monster Manual II* or the *Planescape MC Appendix III*), fire giants, efreet, azer (*MC Annual Vol. I* or *Monster Manual II*), etc.), smoke (belker (*PS MC III*), & smoke mephits (*Planescape MC Appendix I* or *Fiend Folio*)), steam (klyndes, & wavefires (both from *Planescape MC Appendix III*), mist & steam mephits), magma (magmen (*Monster Manual II* or the *Planescape Campaign Setting*), magma mephits, & thoqqa (from *Fiend Folio* or *PS MS Appendix III*)), & ash (rasts (*Planescape MC Appendix III*), & ash mephits). Obviously elementals, paraelementals, and quasi-elementals of all these planes are present.

No creatures of the Quasi-elemental Plane of Radiance have been noted, but this is most likely due to their devastating effects on other creatures.

Despite the foreboding name of the Land, the inhabitants are no more prone to evil than humans, and creatures with behavior matching all alignments have been reported from within. There have even been reports of rare fiery druids, true neutral in alignment and tending to the strange ecology found here. Note that race seems to have no bearing on this tendency here, making lawful good salamanders as likely as their chaotic evil brethren.

Although the nature of many of the inhabitants may suggest otherwise, there do not seem to be any cities or other large communities in the demiplane. All inhabitants appear to dwell alone or in small groups, likely due to a vast array of racial and alignment conflicts.

Explorers must be extremely careful of tricks by inhabitants, who know that explorers may have encountered "typical" members of their race before. Some have also found that explorers are often caught off guard by friendly fire giants and efreet.

Masquerading as their benign counterparts, evil fire creatures have been the downfall of most explorers to the Plains.

## Magical Effects

Invocation and Evocation effects are tripled for range, duration, area of effect, etc., with saving throws at -3 in addition to other bonuses. For an unknown reason, this excludes all effects (including area effect spells) which cause direct damage. Breath weapons, spells & innate spell-like abilities, and magical items cannot produce such effects here. These do not function unless a heat based attack is used (such as fire, steam, or magma, but not including electrical attacks). Many explorers use mundane acids or poisons, or illusions, as spells outside of the Invocation/Evocation school function normally.

Additional effects are determined by the DM's Origin Theory (see OJ9).

## Resources and Treasure

Many speculate that great pools of molten metals may be found within the Land, including precious metals. While this has never been reported, recovery of such a treasure would be difficult at best. Imagine the horrors possibly living in such pools!

The individual inhabitants do not tend to possess great quantities of treasure, as the intense heat of the area destroys many substances. Only the strongest gems and metals may be found here, and these have only been reported in the coolest of areas. Magical items are extremely rare on the demiplane, as the inhabitants have little need for them, and few are capable of surviving the environs.

The main resource of the Land is information, as the inhabitants are generally very knowledgeable. While very general, their knowledge tends to cover a wide variety of topics not generally available, such as other planar facts, understanding of chemical reactions, knowledge of the lands beyond the Flanaess (especially Hepmonaland, the Amedio, the southern Hellfurnaces, the Sea of Dust, and Fireland), and familiarity with common types of elementals, demons, devils, devas, and other creatures which travel their home planes.

## Specific Locations of Note

- ❖ **Palace of Imix.** Though nothing has actually linked this castle with the Elemental Lord, the activities within would certainly win his approval. The inhabitants of this place are of varying races but are all deeply evil in nature, preparing to invade an unknown destination. Within the stronghold are many rooms specifically prepared to hold creatures from the Para-elemental Plane of Ice. The fiery denizens keep them alive & in good

health, though they are periodically tortured with various states of meltdown. Apparently, the heat-based creatures are experimenting with protecting themselves from cooler temperatures. The icy prisoners are kept in rooms which nullify the magical effects of the demiplane, enabling them to unleash their powers on their captors. Thus far, the zeal with which these prisoners attack their captors has pleased the would-be conquerors. They realize that unless rigorously tested, any protection discovered may be unreliable. Much testing must still be completed, but many other inhabitants of the demiplane fear the results of such a success.

- ❖ **Forest of Fire.** There is a location deep within one of the hottest parts of the Land which holds strange formations resembling trees. Their substance is unknown, but seems impervious to the surrounding temperatures. Periodically, geysers of flame and lava will erupt from the ground, reaching up to 40' in the air. The area is vast, and has formed a perfect home for many of the less intelligent creatures of the demiplane, such as firebats, giant striders (see Fiend Folio or the Forgotten Realms MC Appendix I), waivers and scapes (see Planescape MC Appendix III (see the Appendix in the rear of the tome)), and the occasional fire snake out on a stroll. These creatures make up the food for a fiery cousin of the kech (see Fiend Folio or Greyhawk MC Appendix). Sharing the silence, camouflage, and trap loving nature of their Oerthly relatives, these creatures also love a tasty treat of human or demihuman flesh. Their traps include pits (covered with a thin layer of semi-hardened lava) and snares, and they love leaping at victims and knocking them into the area's geysers. Even creatures immune to the heat are usually struck senseless by the force of the molten rock spray, providing an easy meal for the cunning fire kech.
- ❖ **Conclave of the Purifying Heat.** This group directly opposes the forces within the Palace of Imix. Stationed in a natural amphitheater, the group will approach individuals from outside the Land, seeking aid in their plight. They are currently an underground faction, and the forces within the evil castle are unaware of their existence. Wishing to remain secret, they will not openly attack their enemies, but may wish for aid in retrieving Shiver (see below). The strengths, resources, and immediate goals of this group are left to the DM, but ultimately every one of these creatures would gladly give their lives to see the destruction of the Palace and all of its forces.
- ❖ **Blue Flame of Truth.** There is a site which is sacred to all inhabitants of the demiplane,

regardless of alignment. Within a dormant volcano, in the center of the cone, lies a diamond altar. From the altar rises a 10' tall flame of deep blue. The locals hold that passing through the flame (known as Joining) will be fatal, unless one is perfectly honest in all dealings. No locals will be able to recall the most recent Joining, but they all know many vague legends regarding this grand event. To become one with the flame is an honor reserved for highly esteemed beings, and it is heavily guarded. Unknown to any living on the Plains of Imix, the flame is perfectly harmless, even to creatures normally vulnerable to fire. It is not actually a flame at all, but a very warm vapor which is being discolored by a strange chemical reaction. The vapor is uncomfortable for all creatures (too hot for foreigners, too cool for fiery creatures), but will not actually harm anything passing through it. If this is revealed, the inhabitants will all fall into a melancholy, apathetic state for a time. The extent or result of this should be tailored to fit the campaign, but it is unlikely that the locals will hale such discoverers as heroes.

- ❖ **The Jet Stream.** The cooler regions of the Land tend to hold hot springs, steam vents, and geysers, as well as the obvious inhabitants. The largest of these regions is a remote area, not generally visited by the fire creatures. The vast number of vents and geysers here has created an unusually strong updraft of hot air. While this air is nowhere near the temperature of the fiery regions, the air surrounding the stream is considerably cooler, forming a buffer which makes the updraft all the more severe. Aided by magic from the locals, the force is sufficient to carry a human-sized creature upwards to the wonders above. Two thousand feet above the ground lies the city whose name translates to Wind's End. A mercantile people, the misty citizens use great nets to catch visitors unfamiliar with landing after their strange journey. Generally benign, the locals welcome visitors and seek almost immediately to trade, with information considered as valuable as a product or a service. The steam-based creatures have found that they are not numerous enough to compete with the other life of the Land, and have joined forces as merchants. Visitors will note many similarities to cities such as Dyvers or Greyhawk, though the city is much more self-sufficient, unified, and safe. Concerned chiefly with survival through their own usefulness, the locals will not offer much to those without something they desire. Due to the strange materials found in the demiplane, services or information are generally the only commodities appealing to the citizens of Wind's End, though

many strange, other-worldly items may be to the visitor's liking.

- ❖ **The Tar Pits.** One portion of the Plains of Imix hold a large expanse of tar pits, which have been the death of many explorers. Obviously found in one of the cooler regions, the steam from the local vents and hot springs will occasionally accumulate, forming the only water in the demiplane still in liquid form. Unfortunately, this is generally absorbed by the ground or collected atop the tar pits. The tar here is exceptionally sticky, and even drinking from the pools will often result in the explorer trying desperately to free herself. To make matters worse, predatory creatures frequent the area, hoping to catch others at a disadvantage. The locals have rumors regarding an ancient complex below the tar, but none have yet returned from attempting to confirm these tales.

# A History & Timeline of Suloise

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## The Time of the Gods

The war between Corellon Larethian and Gruumsh continued throughout the ages in world after world. The battles of this war soiled each place that they touched and produced betrayals and atrocities that authored line after line in *The Book of Sorrows* of the elves and *The Tales of Greed* of the dwarves. Legend tells when this war came to Oerth it was the event that tempted Abbathor to abandon his brethren for ill-gotten gain. It was this war that may have split the drow from the other elven peoples. Though the drow were punished and marked by Corellon for their fabled alliance with Shargaas, the purity and single purpose of the elves was forever shattered. When this war spilled onto Oerth, it began this world's Epoch of Myth.

Corellon saw Oerth as a planet devoid of any intelligent life: human, demi-human, humanoid or monstrous. During this viewing he saw that Oerth had to be made ready for the Great Struggle that would soon come here too. He wept for yet another world that would be soiled by this eternal conflict. However, to give the world to the Unclean (the orcs and humanoid allies of the orcs) was anathema. His elves needed allies and the orcs needed more enemies.

Corellon likely could count on the dwarves to defend the hills, forests and mountains they would eventually gain on Oerth but he could not count on them as firm allies in the fight against the Unclean. Dwarves and elves had always been less than firm in their love and cooperation with one another. Corellon himself and Moradin never did understand each other's ways nor did they view the most basic issues in the same light. If orcs were to be fought Moradin and his pantheon would be there for the battle. Likely Clanggedin Silverbeard, dwarfish Father of Battle, brought Flandel Steelskin, gnomish weapon forger, into the fray. Thus gnomes were added to Corellon's allies, though not by his direct desire or intervention.

Corellon sought out the gods of men because men and their numbers might be needed to oppose the hordes of Gruumsh and his allies. The allies he found were Lendor and Beory. Lendor was the first to pledge his aid. Seeing that he could not possibly be God to all of the men that would be needed to oppose the Unclean, he began the process of bringing forth the other gods that would populate his pantheon. As always good must be balanced by evil, law by chaos

and in so doing the allies of the Unclean among men would be created as well.

With a heavy heart, but in honor to his promise to Corellon, Lendor begets Phaulkon and Weejas, Osprem and Xerbo and Syrul and Norebo and from these came the rest of the pantheon. These deities were available to the Suel when, in the Epoch of Myth, men would choose their gods.

The new pantheon produced great allies for Corellon Larethian and great disasters. It is said that either Beltar or Syrul told Maglubiyet of the conflict and drew his goblin and hobgoblin hordes into the conflict. Ostensibly they were brought to Oerth to fight the orcs of Gruumsh but that plan turned to dust as they fought humans and demihumans as well once they were established.

Men and dwarves would be allies to the elves in many places on Oerth and in many great battles during many periods of time. Some men would and even some dwarves would, however, ally themselves with the forces of the Unclean, or become masters to their Hordes.

Beory's hand in this Great War will be left to the scholars of the Flan to disclose.

## The Epoch of Myth

The oldest myths and legends tell of many different things.

- The humans tell of the Time of Selection, when the various tribes of men selected from the pantheons of Oerth the gods that they would worship.
- The elves speak of The Awakening, when they found themselves on Oerth after the battle of Corellon and Gruumsh.
- The dwarves sing of Forge Time when Moradin forged the lives of the dwarven fathers and set them under the mountains.

Other major forces stirred both evil and good, and warfare was frequent. Each of the major races of Oerth split and formed sub-groups, which often warred with each other and took different Gods to worship.

The elves sundered, some taking to the deep forests, some to mountain fastness, some to the seas, and some to the depths in the Oerth. So too did the dwarves and gnomes divide and find their places in the Oerth.

Humanity, the most prolific of the races counted among the higher species (unlike those called lower, created by evil gods in mockery of the earlier formed), spread first on the continent later called the Flanaess. Here, too, were the demi-human races and the humanoid hordes most prevalent. The demi-humans held sway in the east of that land, and the humans held sway in the west.

Few know of the events of those times when the drow were driven into the depths, the duergar were exiled from their dwarven kindred, and the first gnomes moved from woodland and hill to ever deeper caverns. It was during the end of this epoch that the first mighty empire of humanity slowly grew from scattered groups in the south and west of the Flanaess.

Great heroes lived and died in this age. The races learned how to mine, work metal, find or grow usable plants, make tools and wage war. But of this time little is told, and little is known.

## The History of the Suloise The Epoch of Legend

*Years are on the Suel Calendar; SD, and the Grey Elven Calendar; GE.*

**-1740 SD** or 1 GE (Grey Elven Calendar)

The Grey Elven History is recorded in written form, as opposed to the traditional sung and spoken forms, for the first time. Their gods grant magic to the Elven clergy.

**-1407 SD** The first contact of the elves and dwarves of Oerth. They agree to fight their common enemies: humanoids, evil giants, trolls and primitive man. The trust between them is, however, not deep.

**-1313 SD** Seven elves, later known as The Seven Elven Fathers, discovered the key of how to tap energy from other planes of existence (positive and negative material) and created the New Magic at the Cantrip and First Level of Difficulty.

**-1310 SD** Cherbon, chief of the Seven Elven Fathers, claims that he was visited by an ancient man who advises him to quit the New Magic because it forebodes great evil and conflict. He dismisses this as the insane ramblings of a strange old man. As he watches the man leave he reported that the man transformed into a huge platinum colored beast that took wing and flew into the heavens. As he watched openmouthed the beast simply vanished. He names the beast Draggonus, the Suloise word for 'flying monster'

**-1308 – 1298 SD** . Like gold to a dwarf the new magic became an intoxicant to the elves. Over half of the grey elf population began to dabble in magic and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Key of Spell Difficulty was quickly discovered.

**-1297 SD** The 3<sup>rd</sup> Key to Difficulty is unlocked.

**-1294 SD** A band of grey elves send to secretly spy on primitive man discovers that some of them are worshipping Demonic and Diabolic Beings.

**-1274 SD** The 4<sup>th</sup> Key of Difficulty is unlocked. An elf turns another into a frog for the first time. Dwarves who witnessed the event were said to laugh for almost a week.

**-1113 SD** The 5<sup>th</sup> Key of Difficulty is unlocked. An elf teleports into a solid wall providing more merriment for the dwarves.

**-1037 SD** Dwarves meet gnomes for the first time. They realize they are kindred but that the gnomes prefer to inhabit hills and forests while dwarves prefer mountains. The two races agree to ally as needed against their common enemies.

**-1033 SD** Kranark, Gnomish Chief of the Elevin Clan Chiefs introduces Dobfur the dwarven King Below the Oerth to a Gnome Friend whom he calls Bahamut, an ancient human. Dobfur is said to stare on the human and then, as realization crosses his face, he falls to the floor and praises the human as a god of his people.

**-1011 SD** The elven mages discover the 6<sup>th</sup> Key of Difficulty.

**-971 SD** The elf Elagoris discovers the 7<sup>th</sup> Key of Difficulty. Elagoris' wife discovers that even *wishes* can be limited as she asks her husband for more and more and more.

**-900 SD** The first of a group of travelling grey elves, exploring the south central portion of Oerth meet with tribal leaders of the Suel. They strike up a friendship and find that these men are not the primitives they found almost four centuries before. The elves begin tutoring selected humans in mathematics, language, art and non-clerical magic.

**-898 – 878 SD** The elves provided selected men with the secrets of low level magic only. The Keys to the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Difficulty were given to their pupils. The Suel proved apt students and soon were constructing cities and delighted the elves both with their creativity and their productivity. The cities of the Suel were patterned similar to those of the grey elves set

mountain fastness, but these occupied the plains and river deltas of the Southland.

**-877 SD)** A young Suloise mage named Eomund planned to demonstrate his success with a spell of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Difficulty. He was to *fly* for the marvel and joy of all that came to witness his official elevation to that of 5<sup>th</sup> level mage. Secretly he chose to memorize *fireball* instead. With friends and family tightly gathered around he began to chant the spell aloud. In the throng was the Teriman, the young son of the Suel Schnai Tribal Chief Kel-ak-Kord. Eomund's teacher heard the error in the spell chant but he was too late. The *fireball* blossomed into being at a range of only 1 foot killing Eomund and all but the hero Kestar, bodyguard of young Teriman.

Kel believed that Kestar was part of the elven plot to leave him without an heir. The short bloody war that followed caused great animosity between elves and men. Kel, a typical Son of Kord, drew his sword first and never examined the details. Ironically it was the elves that saved Kestar and it was Kestar who slew Kel in hand to hand combat.

This awful incident caused the elves to rethink the universality of their magic teaching.

**-876 SD)** The Grey Elven Council decides that magic must be limited and that men must be taught no more magic. A large number of elves migrate away from the Suel lands. Elven schools of magic are closed except to the privileged few elves. The tension between men and elves grows.

**-854 SD)** The 8<sup>th</sup> Key of Difficulty is discovered by the elf mage Loquar.

**-717 SD)** A group of beautiful dark skinned humans called Kersi from over the southern sea from a large island continent they called AnaKeri arrived on the southern portion of the Flanaess in large wooden platformed outriggers.

**-551 SD)** The Suel began systemized trading with the tribes to the north and east. The Bakluni in the northern plains and the Flan who dwelt just west of the mountains were among these. Sea trade routes to AnaKeri are developed. The Thirteen Cities of the Suel develop into separate city-states, but all are ruled by a single council of lords under the watchful eye of the grey elves, watchfulness that men begin to dislike intensely.

**-520 SD)** Great prosperity blesses the Empire. Elves and men become more distant over the centuries.

**-299 SD)** A promising young grey elf mage named Zendaris falls madly in love with Imaravelle, the daughter of the elven ambassador Imarollon. When Zendaris makes his desires known at a court in the suel city of Dranel the Imarollon not only rejects him but also actually laughs in his face.

**-281 SD)** Zendaris finds nine greedy and disreputable Suel mages who wish to learn more about magic and who have a general distaste and dislike for elves in general. He teaches these few men the spell Keys to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Levels of Difficulty over a period of 20 years.

**-261 SD)** His trained human mages in tow, Zendaris travels back into the lands of the grey elves, where he ambushes the ambassador's party on the way to the Festival of Labelas Enoreth, which is celebrated only once every 30 years. Imarollon is killed and Zendaris escapes.

**-260 SD)** Zendaris is killed by the very Suel mages he taught. The Nine Mages create terror and mayhem in the Suel lands until seven of them are tracked down and the other two flee – never to be found by the Suel. Rumor abounds that they traveled to the lands of Baklunish to set up shop as teachers of magic.

**-259 SD)** The grey elves depart from the Suel. The reason for leaving is the hatred of the Suel due to the death of so many elves and humans at the hands of the Nine Mages. Also there is news of a fierce war between the grey elves and their dark kindred in the East.

**-258 SD)** Fire mysteriously begins to belch from the mountains in the east. The mountains, once the place of the grey elven cities, are renamed the Mountains of Fire, and the Mountains of Hell, although the Barrier Peaks and Crystalmists remain calm. The fire, gasses and earthquakes that continue to this very day kill Suel seeking to plunder the grey elven cities.

**-223 SD)** Relations between the Suel city-states deteriorate. The last council of the cities is held. Each city arms itself against the other.

**-216 SD)** After seven years of fighting, one city-state, ReAtryniBa, slowly brings the others under control. Its Lord, Anainyer, slowly begins to re-establish the trade, which has been damaged by years of war.

**-210 SD)** Anainyer defeats BiTharOl, the last Suel city to hold out against him. He proclaims himself "The First Protector of the Suel." He renames it ReAtryniBa Suela, the city of the Suloise.

**-207 SD**) to **-22 SD**) Suel mages independently discover the Keys of Difficulty for spells up to and including the 9<sup>th</sup> Level! The most successful Suloise archmage is the woman Abis-ara-Tmat. She is the principal mage in the discovery of most of the Keys.

**-21 SD**) Four of the Council of Eleven Wizards begins to dabble in evil elemental magic even though their own brotherhood and the priesthood of Wee Jas forbids it.

**-15 SD**) After a series of strong “First Protectors” and the development of the interior lands, First Protector Alianor-b-Hurn turns his eyes outward, and desires more control of the trade goods. He first attacks the settlements of the Kersi to the south, and proclaims their lands forfeit to the Suel peoples. He then begins planning “the great invasion” of AnaKeri.

**-12 SD**) Alianor sends a large naval force to invade AnaKeri. The outriggers of the AnaKeri are no match for the mighty warships of the Suel. As the massive armada approaches the clerics of the AnaKeri call upon the elemental princes for protection. The princes encircle the island continent with a maelstrom of wind and wild seas and much of the invading fleet is destroyed. Those that do land are met with upheavals in the land itself and, at last, by beings of elemental fire. A few of the invaders return to tell the tale. The wall of wind and water remains behind circling the continent of AnaKeri to this very day.

**1 SD / 1740GE**) During the years of the turmoil following the destruction of the Suel fleet, Obendar, a mighty Suloise mage takes Abis-ara-Tmat as his lover. They translate some ancient grey elven texts that she has discovered. Using that knowledge, they imprison the elemental king Ethersra to punish him for the destruction of the Suel Fleet at AnaKeri. One by one they trap the Elemental Princes of Cold, Fire, Earth, Water, Air, Ooze, Magma and Smoke. Cryonax, Imix, Ogremoch, Olhydra, Yan-C Bin, Za ooze, T’ Magmas, and Whisp all swear obedience “as long as our King remains imprisoned.”. The pair crafts nine magical items to bind the King and his eight Princes. The use of the Evil Elemental Gods to enable the Suel is considered to be the beginning of the Times of the Suel. The year of Ethersra’s imprisonment is reckoned the first year of the Suel calendar.

Ethersra and the Princes do not become prisoners without a fight. They place a curse upon the Suel such that the Negative Plane Undead begin to arise from the human graves all over the Empire. Skeletons, zombies,

ghouls and ghosts plague man for the first time. They spread like a plague all over the Flanaess.

**-60 SD**) Obendar, who dies on his 113<sup>th</sup> birthday, has a large state funeral. His wife Abis-ara-Tmat is there to mourn his passing. Some note that she seems as fair as she was sixty years before!

**74 SD**) Abis-ara-Tmat writes a text demonstrating how to force the Elemental Princes to perform magic.

**75 SD**) The first Shadows, Wights and Wraiths arise from the graves of the dead in retribution for this subjugation and imprisonment.

**78 SD**) Abis-ara-Tmat hides the nine Binders and then vanishes never to be seen again. Knowledge of the Binders and their nature vanish with her. Two of the High Priests of Jascar are found beheaded on the night of her disappearance. Next to one of the high priests are the scrawled words “she is Tiamat”.

**92 SD**) The Suel appoint a regency of three men to rule in place of the First Protector. This triumvirate divides the Suel realm into three districts and rules in an amazingly efficient manner. The building of ships for anything other than coastal or river travel is banned. No ship is allowed to sail beyond the sight of the Suel lands.

**350 SD**) During the seventh Regency two of the Regents immediately turn on the third and destroy him in the First Regent War, claiming that he was possessed by evil beings.

**470 SD**) The tenth Regency is appointed. The great grandson many times removed of Alianor, Arinanin, approaches the Regency and demands that he be restored as First Protector. His request is denied and he is imprisoned.

**490 SD**) Tilorop-b-Nan, the great, great grandson of the Regent deposed in the First Regent War, frees Arinanin-b-Korin from prison. Tilorop and his family has secretly been worshipping a seldom-whispered name, one called Tharizdun. He converts Arinanin to a worshipper of Tharizdun.

**505 SD**) Arinanin and Tilorop mount a campaign against the Regency, but are defeated in the Second Regent War. Tilorop uses arcane energy to transform himself into the first lich on Oerth. Arinanin is blessed by Tharizdun to become the Oerth’s first vampire. His creation plagues all of mankind to this very day.

**513 SD)** Tilorop and Arinanin mount an attack in the Third Regents War and overthrow the Regency Council. Tilorop is appointed Priest Regent and Arinanin proclaims himself Chief Regent of the Suel. The Time of Darkness begins.

**520 – 720 SD)** The strongholds and temples of the good and neutral gods of the Suel are sacked and burned.

**740 – 840 SD)** All worship of good and neutral Suel gods is banned. Demon and devil worship is held openly. The priesthood of Tharizdun begins to prosper. Apostasy is the rule of the day and many temples are destroyed and clerics slain.

**845 SD)** Though hidden and forgotten the Imprisoned Elemental King and his Princes still were not powerless. They caused ghosts and spectres to arise from the earth throughout the empire.

**850SD)** The last of the grey elven cities in the Crystalmist Mountains is discovered and is destroyed by a concerted effort on the part of the drow/Suloise and giantkind. The defense of the city is so great, however, that drowkind and giantkind is also nigh exterminated. The Suloise army, which aided in the destruction of the elven city, is destroyed to a man, and no word of them can be obtained. The remnant of the elves flee eastward to the interior of the eastern portion of the continent.

**900 – 1000 SD)** After years of quiet plotting the remaining chief houses of the Suel rise up in unison to overthrow the Priest Regent. This is commonly referred to as the Century War of the Houses.

**1001 SD)** The Binders are found by Alberk the High Priest of Jascar. He also finds a tome, written by Abis-ara-Tmat, that discloses the secrets of how to use the Binders.

**1002 - 1005 SD)** Using the Binders Alberk drives Arinanin and the priesthood of Tharizdun from the Suel Empire. The Council of Noble Families is formed to rule the Suel and the Binders are distributed among nine of them. Alberk is unaware of whom the Binders hold prisoner; he only sees them as items of great power to be used in his struggle to save the empire from evil.

**1053 SD)** The four “Elven Realms of the East” are established, and a new calendar is used for the first time among the elves to count the days of these realms. Highfolk is established in the Northwest to guard the northern ways, Celene the Central Kingdom, Aliador in

the Griff Mountains, and Lendore in the Southeast Aerdri Sea (then called the Lendore Sea). This is accounted as (1 OC).

**1060 - 1100 SD)** Discovery of the art of Lesser Binding by the mages of Suel occurs with the manufacture of some minor magic rings.

**1102 SD)** Elonzir-b-nar, the Prince of the house of Rhola (worshippers of Jascar and other Suloise deities of weal) is proclaimed the First Emperor of the Suel Empire.

**1804 SD)** Ollizin-b-Zabor, of the neutral house of Belzim takes the throne when the Prince of Rhola abdicates in his favor. The command to leave the empire is said to come from Sormat the High Priest of Jascar.

**2664 SD)** Succession to the throne of Argent var-Mengar, of the House of Neheli, worshippers of Lydia. All of Belzim’s heirs died on the same day, the 7<sup>th</sup> of Brightleaf.

**2856 SD)** A band of northern nomads, under the leadership of the holy man, El-Baklun-bar-Gash complete a strange circle of stone, and name it Tovrag Baragu, or, in Baklunish, “The Naval of the Oerth.” The Bakluni count the completion of this place as the beginning of the Bakluni calendar (1 BH)

**3188 SD)** The assassination of Argent var-Mengar XXI by unknown collaborators occurs. The throne falls to Zolxor-ad-Zol of the House of Zolax, worshippers of Beltar.

**3204 SD)** Zofar ad-Zol, Zolxor’s heir, proclaims that there is inherent evil in the Binders and commands that all of them be turned over to him for destruction. Zofar collects five of the Binders, in addition to the Chief Binder. Houses Fruztii, Cruski, and Schnai violently oppose this move, causing the Suloise War of Revolution (3205 SD). Zofar, of course, had no intention of destroying the Binders but simply wanted them for himself.

**3235 SD)** Zelfed ad-Zol, the son of Zofar, brings the war to an end but does not gain the remaining three Binders.

**3247 SD)** The Years of Conquest and Prosperity begin. No major foe opposes the might of the empire of the Suloise, although they do not push Eastward, because of some fear of the elfin hosts. Magic is rigorously pursued. Old grey elven texts are discovered and studied. The might and haughtiness of the Elves is

copied in manner in the courts, but their wisdom is not. Slavery becomes common and widespread in the Suloise lands; this continues for many centuries. The Flan in the southeast (just west of the Hellfurnaces), the Oerid to the east, the Kersi to the south (the long distant descendants of those who first sailed from AnaKeri), the Bakluni to the north, and several unnamed small tribes to the west; become the slaves of the Suel. The entire of the western half of Oerik is controlled by the Suel. Drow and darker forces halt the eastern expansion.

**3250 SD)** The Flannae, under the protection of Beory, Pelor and Rao flee their lands in mass, making a perilous crossing of the Hellfurnaces. They move north into the lands of Eastern Oerik, later called the Flanaess, as the first human inhabitants of the area. Initially, they are well received.

**3365 SD)** The founding of the first Flannae City in the Lortmil mountains in eastern Oerik, this is counted as year (1 FT).

**3971 SD)** The Bakluni, under one of their wandering chieftains, Ali-ben-Onar, unite in an effort to throw off the Suloise yoke. During the War of Seven Score Nights one of Zolax's Binders is captured. The war ceases when the Bakluni threaten to use this item. The Suloise cede a large portion of "their" northern territories to the Bakluni.

**3977 SD)** The Suel and Bakluni come to an uneasy peace. The House of Zolax plots to fight the Bakluni influences (in Bakluni lands, and on other groups such as the Oeridians) wherever found.

**4000 SD)** The leader of House Fruztii, Abelbar ben Usby, seeks to wrest control of the Binder from the Bakluni. Instead, he loses the Binder that his family has controlled for millennia to the Bakluni, but he keeps this loss secret.

**4117 SD)** The Emperor Zeeckar attempts to strengthen his realm. He attempts to annihilate the Houses Ulmar and Opell in what he calls "The War of Purity." These western houses have long intermarried with tribes to the west, and Zeeckar uses this as an excuse to tighten his grip on the empire. Both Houses ultimately flee the empire by traveling south over the Vast Ocean, where they pass out of memory.

**4411 SD)** The decay of the Suloise Empire into crime and corruption cannot be denied. Emperor Zinkman ad-Zol goes through the process of self-apotheosis. He uses the power of the five Binders in his possession to enforce his claim.

**4434 SD)** The "god" Zinkman is not accepted by the Oerdian tribes to the north and west of the empire. Zinkman attacks the surprised Oerdian tribes destroying three of the thirteen that exist. The Oeridians are forced to bow to Zinkman. The Aerdy (the chief of the tribe of that name) refuses, and challenges Zinkman in a duel to the death. Zinkman accepts, and, in his supreme vanity, does not take any of the Binders to the Duel. He finds much to his chagrin, that he is fighting none other than St. Cuthbert, himself. Cuthbert reduces Zinkman to a babbling, drooling idiot.

**4435 SD)** Zolax's Binders are NOT taken by Cuthbert but are split up among key houses of the Suel. Regaining as many of them as possible under one man's control is the chief purpose of subsequent Emperors.

**4437 SD)** The House Schnai, after a short struggle, takes the throne of the Empire. Ovrung the First manages to restore the kingdom to a shadow of its former self.

**4788 SD)** The Empire slips into stagnation. Numerous plagues sweep through the Suel Empire, some magical and some mundane. The population falls by over 40%. Many towns are completely emptied, and the border defenses are greatly weakened. This is the first year of those known as "The Plague Years"

**4889 SD)** The population begins to recover, but the Bakluni peace begins to break down. Raids become frequent.

**4912 SD)** The first of the Succession Wars. The Schnai are removed from the throne.

**5011 SD)** The last of the Succession Wars. After 500 years with the succession falling to nine different Houses, the House Zolax regains control of the Imperium.

**5012 SD)** The Bakluni withdraws their ambassador from the Suloise Empire when Zunid-ad-Zol, the Prince of House Zolax is crowned Emperor of the Suel Peoples.

**5031 SD)** The beginning of "The Great War." Nine thousand Bakluni are slaughtered in the Salhaut Pass. Zunid promises to destroy the Bakluni entirely, even if the majority of mages of his own house die in the process.

**5050 SD)** Both Bakluni and Suloise began to go east of the mountains, recruiting humanoids as mercenaries in their battles for the first time.

**5058 SD)** Heeding their prophets, many Oeridians began moving eastward, coming into contact and conflict with the Flannae.

**5068 SD)** The Year of the Prophets. Seven different prophets foretell of the destruction of the Suel Empire within 30 years. The Emperor, Yellax-ad-Zol has all seven drawn and quartered, even though one of the prophets is a High Priest of Beltar.

**5069 SD)** Zellifar-ad-Zol, son of the Emperor, mage/high priest of Beltar, breaks with his father and takes over 8,000 Suloise loyal to himself, and flees the kingdom, eastward. The ferocity and magical might of the movement scatters the Oeridians in its path, causing the remainder of the Oeridian to migrate. Slerotin, called “the Last High Mage” causes a huge tunnel to be bored into the Crystalmists, through which the Zolite Suel flee. He then seals the tunnel closed at both ends, trapping one lesser branch of the family, the Lerara, inside. The Zolites continue eastward heading toward the southeast as well as to Hepmonoland.

**5070 SD)** The Emperor commands that the Houses Schnai, Cruski and Fruztii move to bring his son, and the “Unloyal” back to face justice.

**5071 to 5093 SD)** The Zolites scatter the Flannae before them, and move south to the Tilvanot Peninsula. Zellifar carries with him two of the lesser Binders and the Chief Binder. The three pursuing houses, unable to find the magical tunnel, turn north, where they are met by regrouped Oeridians and fearful Flannae who harry and drive these Suel Houses south. Many are lost and remain in the Amedio Jungle. They eventually back east and march toward what is now the Rift Canyon.

**5093 SD)** One of Zellifar’s minions, the High Priest Pellipardus, slips away from the Zolites and takes his family. Zellifar does not pursue, fearing that this will take his attention away from the Three Houses of Pursuit: the Schnai, the Fruztii, and the Cruski.

**5094 SD)** Zellifar parleys with the Houses of Pursuit. His Archmage, Slerotin, unleashes a *mass enfeeblement* on the mages of the three Houses, and a *mass suggestion* upon, the other members of the Houses. Slerotin is blasted by magical energies upon the casting of these mighty spells, leaving the Rift Canyon as the only physical remains of this energy. The remnants of the Three Pursuing Houses flee northeastward.

The Houses of Pursuit have been *mindswept*. They have no purpose and no direction and no mages whatsoever after they are hit by these spells. They do not know why they are searching or what they are searching for. They have two binders but do not realize it! As they move aimlessly they begin to seek a homeland. They do not remember where they came from.

The memories of their gods are virtually blotted out. The three houses that eventually settle in the Barbarian States lose almost all contact with the more ‘civilized’ and good gods of their people. As they begin to multiply and prosper Kord and Llerg become major gods to them but Fortubo, Lendor, Lydia and Jascar are forgotten.

Farther south in Ratic a slightly different mix of peoples assembles. Gods like Phaulkon, Norebo and Phytan are still remembered.

In the Suel Empire proper, the Suel mages gather their magical energies and cast the *Invoked Devastation*. No Bakluni cities survive this blast of magical energy. But Bakluni mages gathered at Tovag Baragu, using the arcane powers of the Binders, and drawing upon the energies of their holiest site, withstand these energies and counterstrike with the *Rain of Colorless Fire*. The remains of this expenditure of energy are now called the Sea of Dust, and the Dry Steppes. The holders of all Four Binders are utterly destroyed but the binders themselves are not.

**5097 SD)** Zellifar enters the Griff Mountains alone. None know where he goes or what he does there.

**5099 SD)** The Three Houses of Pursuit move into the Thillonrian Peninsula. They turn to the gods they deem to be strong in the face of the harsh climate; Kord and Llerg. Magic is not practiced, and only priests, wisemen and skalds may use it without fear. Witches are not uncommon, but are forced away from “normal” men. The skalds and priests develop a runic alphabet that carries mystic powers.

They do not know where they have come from. Their skalds do not know of the Suel Empire. They have retained memory of their more primitive gods such as Kord and Llerg. Some others like Phaulkon are still remembered but the more civilized gods (Lydia, for example), are forgotten!

**5100 SD / 6840GE)** Zellifar, last scion of Emperors, teleports from the Griff Mountains back to the remains of the Suloise Empire. He is destroyed by the lingering

magics and final throes of conflict in the area. Thus ends the Suloise Empire, mightiest and longest lived of Empires on Oerth, and it's reckoning (although some skalds of the Northern Barbarians, and the Scarlet Brotherhood still use it to keep records). The crowning of the first Overking of Rauxes, and the establishment of the Aerdian Empire, will not occur for another 416 years. This leaves his binders behind and unknown to those who hold them!

### **End of the Epoch**

*Gateway to Adventure*

# Ruins of the Mistmarsh

By Sean Williams- alias Ket Onwall, the Bumbling DM

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This adventure is designed for a party of 4-6 players of levels 5-7 (about 30 total levels). Although based upon *The Ruins of the Mistmarsh* found in *Greyhawk: The Adventure Begins*, any setting with a small town located near a marsh will suffice. A priest and ranger are valuable, although anyone with the Tracking or Survival (Swamp) skill should suffice. Beyond that, the group should include a solid mix of classes. It is up to the individual DM to determine how best to move the party into the keep area. One such way is to have them encounter a band of hunting troglodytes and chase them through the swamp- a chase that brings the PCs within sight of the ruined keep.

**History:**

Long ago, before the time of the twin cataclysms, the western mountains of the Flanaess were the site of great hostilities among the various states of the dwarven nation. Uprooting themselves from their ancient homes, many clans migrated east. Eventually one of these clans, *Mumantadin*, settled in the region known today as the Cairn Hills and the Mistmarsh, building a great, walled keep to help protect their lands.

At the time, the marshlands were fertile plains and provided good hunting. The nearby waterways allowed native Flan and demihuman tribes access for trade, and the Oerth yielded great veins of precious metals. The dwarven people thrived and prospered.

In -105 CY, Rolanta T'shur, a Suel mage, arrived at the gates of the dwarven clan. Badly mauled, bleeding heavily and feverish, the wizard was taken in and placed in the care of the dwarven healers. Rolanta bore a strange pendant crafted of a black metal and set with a stone blacker than the blackest pitch. The dwarves named it *Retna Noth Tura*- a Suel term meaning *Fate's Black Assassin*- for the one phrase that Rolanta kept repeating in his fevered state.

What the pendant was the dwarves never discovered, for shortly after Rolanta's arrival, a dark beast descended upon the keep. Legends tell of a horrific battle, but most are false tales spun by those seeking to gain fortune from the plight of others. What actually transpired is not truly known, for none of the clan ever emerged.

Travelers shunned the keep and the surrounding lands. As time passed the rivers began to take their toll, eroding earth, allowing the water to seep up. Eventually, the soft ground became marsh. The local tribes named the land Mistmarsh for the heavy mist that hangs over the area during early mornings and evenings.

The marshland quickly absorbed the keep and surrounding terrain. Fell beasts occupied its halls, and the elements beat down the walls and roof. Its exact location was eventually forgotten, and ballads arose reciting the tale of the *Lost Clan*. Many would-be heroes have sought the legendary halls; none has ever returned.

**Player Background:**

Rumors of late tell tales of strange goings on in the area of Blackwall Keep, two days east of the City of Greyhawk. Lord Damien Blackwall, noted warrior in the service of St. Cuthbert, has posted requests for *'Men of virtue to aid his Lordship in the eradication of a vile presence.'* These rumors have brought you to the tiny keep that borders the Mistmarsh.

The keep has a small community inside, with an inn, stable, and a dozen merchants and miscellaneous shops. However, it is the keep itself that dominates the town.

Sir Josten Korne, the watch commander, greets any persons arriving at the keep in answer to the Lord Baron's summons. He relays the following information:

"Recently, a large band of lizard-like creatures began raiding farms and settlements along the Mistmarsh.

"Cunning and wicked, these beasts have attacked fishing boats, farmers and small caravans. Recently, a man and his wife were snatched from their very house!

"We have been hard pressed to keep the area protected, and the Lord Baron wants to end this plague once and for all. Find these marauding beasts and deal with them how you see fit.

Sir Josten is authorized to offer the PCs as much as 200 gp each for taking this task. Although he knows the story of the Lost Clan, he knows nothing of the ruins or where they might be located. If asked about the lizard-like men, he says that they are smaller than true lizardmen and exude an overpowering stench. DM's should be careful to not reveal what exactly these creatures are, unless they have been encountered before. The mystery of the troglodytes, combined with the unexpected finding of the ruins work well into a common plot.

Spending time in the inn, which includes a large common tavern, might garner some rumors about the attacks:

- ◆ The marauders are actually a tribe of lizardmen. [F]
- ◆ That which was responsible for the eradication of an entire dwarven clan, has returned to claim new victims. [T]
- ◆ An evil cult is using the bodies of victims for unspeakable acts [F]
- ◆ The spirits of the *Lost Clan* still roam the halls of the keep. [T]
- ◆ A powerful mage bearing an item of magic once visited the *Lost Clan*. It destroyed them all. [T]
- ◆ The lizard creatures are actually slaves to a band of drow seeking to corrupt the area. [F]

#### DM Notes:

The problem faced by the players is not readily apparent. Having just arrived from the Underdark, a tribe of troglodytes stumbled upon the caverns below the ancient dwarven keep *Mumantadin*. The haunt of Rolanta T'shur possessed their leader, a massive, two-headed troll. The haunt, still a powerful mage, conjured forth a nabassu demon. He has been sending the troglodytes out to capture slaves as 'offerings' to the demon.

Wickedly nasty, nabassu spend part of their lives on the prime material plane. As fledglings, they are relatively weak, but as they kill they grow in strength and power. One power is the creation of undead. As a result, there are many undead lurking the halls of the keep and the mines below.

When the demon matures, Rolanta plans to have it aid him in destroying the pendant, thus releasing its power into the mage. His previous attempt failed, allowing the beast to break free of Rolanta's control, and eventually hunt him down in the dwarven keep. The nabassu destroyed the clan *Mumantadin* as an after thought.

The pendant possessed by Rolanta is actually a pendant containing the life force of the demon lord Juiblex. By possessing it, Rolanta is able to assert a greater control over those beings he conjures from the

Abyss. His goals are to 1) Aid the nabassu in maturing, 2)destroy the pendant and assume its power himself, and 3) using that power to overtake the nabassu before his current form is destroyed by the demonic forces possessing it. After that, there is no telling what the mad mage will be able to accomplish.

Fortunately for all concerned, the nabassu is just a fledgling. When it matures, it will gain all of the powers of a greater tanar'ri. The control exerted by Rolanta over the nabassu keeps it confined to a small area of the caverns, though very soon it has been promised 'unlimited debauchery'. When the PCs arrive, it requires 6 kills before it will mature.

#### THE MISTMARSH

The Mistmarsh is a dreary, forbidding place. There is firm footing at its fringes, but as characters move deeper into the marsh they find the ground becoming soggy and wet, until they find themselves knee-deep in muck, making travel extremely slow. Daily movement rates start at one mile of movement per inch of movement for the PC, but by the day's end a rate of one-third normal movement has been reached.

Additionally, travel is exhausting. Players can effectively move for a number of hours equal to one-half their constitution before they must rest. Forced marching can be done if a save versus death is successful, but a character must then rest for one full day. If characters try to travel by one of the numerous waterways, they must resort to canoes, which provide normal movement. Care must be taken, however, for many large creatures prowl the dark waters of the marsh.

A mist permeates the entire area during the early morning and early evening times. During rainy days the mist persists all day. Normally there is a 60% chance per day that PCs not actively following a trail will become lost, but in the mist vision is more limited. Those attempting movement in the mist must make an additional Intelligence or Tracking check at a -5 to avoid becoming lost.

Scattered throughout the marsh are tangles of mangaroo trees. Parties trying to climb their way through these areas find that they become exhausted twice as quickly, and their movement rate is limited to 2" per day. The trees can, however, support a party wishing to sleep out of the mud and water, and they provide relative safety from attacks by night creatures.

Lastly, a thick cloud of insects blankets the marsh. For every two days in the swamp a character must make a constitution check or temporarily lose one constitution point (maximum loss of two points). This is the result of the multitude of tiny bites and scratching the characters must endure. Constitution restores itself within two days of leaving this

environment. PCs taking extra precautions to ward the insects away may ignore this nuisance.

Encounter checks are made four times a day and twice a night using a d6. A 1, 2, or 3 indicates an encounter.

### THE RUINS:

The ancient dwarven ruins are crumbling from age and the constant invasion of plants and moisture. They are located 20 miles southeast of Blackwall Keep. When parties come within sight, read the following:

You emerge from the thick rushes to gaze upon a low hill atop which sits an ancient ruin. Several towers and a high wall, all of which are broken and falling apart, surround a keep whose upper story looks to have completely collapsed. A winding grass-covered trail widens into a small road leading through the twin towers of the gate.

If PCs spend an hour or more searching the area, they come across a small cave along the far side of a neighboring hill. Inside the cave are the remains of campfires, broken utensils and rotting goods, but it is otherwise dry and safe from intrusion. If they remain careful about entering and exiting this cave, the cave will provide a good sanctuary.

### Towers:

There are six towers connected by a 20-foot high wall surrounding the keep and two huge, stone and wood pillars that flank the entry gate. The towers have all crumbled into disuse, and the wall itself is not in much better shape. Parties can explore inside each tower, but aside from the occasional small mammal they are empty. The real danger is from collapse. Characters not taking care have a 20% chance of causing another collapse for 1d10 points of damage. Violent area spells increase the chance for collapse to 75%. In addition to the main gate, there are broken sections in each wall that allow parties (or monsters) to enter and exit the bailey.

### THE KEEP:

When the party enters the main gate, read the following:

Before you stand the remains of an ancient dwarven keep. The track leads up to the gatehouse where the battered remains of a portcullis hang.

The gatehouse makes up the southwest corner of the keep while three small towers comprise the other three. The walls are overgrown with vines and weeds, and boulders and debris litter the entire bailey. A section of wall at the southeast corner of

the keep has collapsed inward giving an alternate means of entry.

The upstairs floor of the keep has mostly collapsed and water, weeds, slime and muck permeate the entire complex. Violent area spells (Lightning, Fireball, etc) have a 75% chance of collapsing more of the ceilings or walls. Players caught under this collapse suffer 1d10 damage, save versus Dexterity for half-damage.

### 1. Entryway-

Passing beneath the ancient portcullis you enter the gatehouse. To the left a door hangs partially off its hinges. To the right a low tunnel slopes to the courtyard.

The ground is made of fitted stones long since broken and overrun with knee-high weeds. Numerous skeletons, dwarven in appearance, lie strewn about the entry and tunnel.

There is a *magic mouth* spell cast upon the archway leading to the courtyard. It bellows, "Welcome to *Clan Mumantadin!*" in ancient dwarven. The sound echoes dully off the keep walls, and within two rounds the ghouls from area 2 arrive in search of food. On the fourth round, the ghost will arrive.

### 2. Gatehouse-

The interior of the gatehouse is a shambles. The northern half of the room's ceiling has collapsed, though a rotted set of wooden stairs leads up to what remains of the upper floor. The air is foul with the smell of rotted meat and mud.

The downstairs is the lair of five dwarven ghouls created by the nabassu. They have heaps of dead carcasses in the niche, under which they hide their treasure, which consists of 100 assorted coins, an amethyst (50gp) and a silver candleholder worth 25gp. They attack immediately. One round later the ghost from up above rushes down the stairs to join the combat.

**Ghouls** (5): INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 6; HD 2; HP 11, 10, 7(x3); AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA Paralyze; SD; Immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells; SZ M (5-6); ML Steady (11-12); XP175.

The stairs are partially rotten, but as long as only one character at a time traverses it will hold up. The ghost has made a nest of reeds, mud, and trash in the corner of the only two walls left standing on the second floor. Where the two meet, the roof is still partially intact providing a flimsy overhang for protection. Characters trying to move anywhere else

'upstairs' find themselves crashing through for 1d6 points of damage. This beast's treasure is buried in the rubble under its nest, and contains 10pp, a ruby (100gp) and shiny silver ring of *chameleon power*.

**Ghast** (1): INT Very (11-12); AL CE; AC 4; HD 4; HP 16; AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8; SA Paralyze, Stench 10'R (save versus poison or fight at -2); SD Immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells. Cold iron does double damage; SZ M (5-6'); ML Elite (13-14); XP 650.

### 3. Kitchen

Once a finely stocked kitchen this area is now a wreck. Trash and rubble litter the entire floor making movement difficult. A small closet is to the left and a fireplace is set into the far wall.

This room is devoid of anything interesting.

#### A. Garbage Chute-

Characters can hear a faint howling sound from behind the door. Caution must be exercised, however, for the rotten wood door gives way at the slightest nudge.

This small closet has a two-foot wide hole leading down. A faint howling sound, like that of the wind, can be heard. Refuse litters the entire area surrounding the hole.

This is what used to be a garbage chute. The one-foot round hole is too small for any but the smallest creatures to descend, and leads down to an old garbage chamber. The chamber, located on the first mine level below the keep has a narrow tunnel leading back up into the swamp. Shifting through the garbage reveals nothing but some small, maggot-like creatures. These rot grubs set upon unwary characters.

**Rot Grubs** (10): INT Non- (0); AL nil; AC 9; HD 1Hp; AT 0, Dmg 0; SA Burrow into flesh. Requires open flame to kill (1d6 damage) or a *cure disease* or they burrow to the heart in 1d3 turns, killing the character. SD nil; SZ T (1"); ML Unsteady (5); XP 15.

### 4. Chapel-

This chamber was once a chapel of some sort and it stretches up to the second story. Torn tapestries, rusted and tarnished candelabras, broken benches and rubble lie strewn about and the many fine frescoes on the walls have been desecrated almost beyond recognition.

The roof is arched and appears to be made of a glass-like material, though most of it has shattered

and fallen away. Where the altar once stood is now just a chunk of smashed rock.

Buried in a pile of refuse in area 4A is an ancient text. It is bound in leather and contains the tale of the Clan Mumantadin. Though most of the text has been ruined, those with Ancient Languages, Dwarven may decipher the following excerpts:

"... broke into a deep cavern this day. Below, a great river flows..."

"...worker of arcane art visited us... T'shur... House Naelex..."

"... black creature whose flesh repulsed our axes as though they did not exist..."

The text is worth 250gp to the right collector.

### 5. Privy-

Two skeletons lie huddled together in this room. A tiny chair with a hole in the seat sits on a raised dais, which sits atop an open hole in the floor. The unmistakable smell of roses is present.

A permanent *freshen* cantrip is cast upon this room to prevent the smell from escaping. The hole under the dais is four feet wide and goes down for twenty feet. PCs brave enough to descend and investigate get the full effect of the smell and must save versus poison at -2 or be affected as if by a *stinking cloud* spell.

An elven skeleton lies at the bottom. He wears a diamond earring worth 500gp and carries a *portable hole*, worn like a headband, in which he has a scroll of *protection from evil*, 50 PP and 250 GP.

### 6. Guest Chamber-

This two-story room appears to have once been very lavish. The remains of tapestries, padded furniture, and ornately carved wardrobes and desks lie broken and strewn about.

The Mistmarsh has begun invading, as there are stagnant pools of water and reeds growing from the floor. A large, heaping mound of filth lies at the room's center and insects buzz fanatically around.

A small balcony lines the upper half of the room, giving access to the many shelves of books visible. A fallen staircase can be seen along the southern wall.

This room was once a guest chamber. The mage Rolanta was staying here at the time the nabassu

attacked. Its current resident is a large shambling mound.

**Shambling Mound** (1) INT Low (5-7); AL N; AC 0; HD 11; HP 59; AT 2; Dmg 2d8/2d8; SA Suffocation; SD Fire and edged weapons do only one-half damage, crushing weapons do no damage. Cold-based attacks do half-damage (save for no damage) and lightning causes the creature to grow by one hit die; SZ L (9); ML Fanatic (17-18); XP 6,000.

Hidden amidst the heaps of vegetation is the creature's treasure: 2,000 cp, 500gp, matching jade statuettes of a male and female dwarf (250gp), a +2 *medium buckler*, a *potion of healing*, a *potion of plant control*, and two scrolls, one of which has the spell *magic missile*, and the other containing *dimension door* and *spectral force*. Lastly is Rolanta's spell book. The last few pages comprise a small diary, though water damage has rendered all but the following passage unreadable:

"... I have found the tunnels down and hope to escape the beast. All of the clan is gone or dead. I shall try to bargain for what it seeks. Curse Naelex house for their arrogance! The Faceless One shall devour them all..."

The following spells are still intact:

First Level: *audible glamer*, *chill touch*, *color spray*, *detect magic*, *enlarge*, *magic missile*, *read magic*, *spider climb*

Second Level: *bind*, *darkness 15' r.*, *flaming sphere*, *magic mouth*, *scare*, *shatter*, *summon swarm*

Third Level: *dispel magic*, *explosive runes*, *lightning bolt*, *hold undead*, *slow*, *spectral force*

Fourth level: *dimension door*, *illusionary wall*, *phantasmal killer*, *shout*, *remove curse*

Fifth Level: *airy water*, *avoidance*, *distance distortion*, *wall of force*

### 7. Courtyard-

The courtyard has become overrun with weeds and wild flowers. A statue of a dwarf sits at the center, and large willow tree provides cool shade. There is a mound of wet-looking vegetation under the tree, and a pair of tiny boots can be seen poking out from underneath. Flies and bugs buzz all about.

The eastern end of the courtyard contains a fabulous example of stone latticework, and through it can be seen a garden and its inhabitants- a group of large frogs. Steps lead from here into the keep proper.

The tiny feet are the remains of a halfling thief, who long ago lost the battle with the giant sundew that lairs under the willow tree. If the party is successful in defeating the sundew, the halfling's pouch contains 20gp and a *chime of opening*.

**Giant Sundew** (1) INT Low (2-4); AL N; AC 7; HD 8; HP 50; AT 6 per person; Dmg 1d3; SA On a score of 20, the victim's mouth and nose are stuffed with the sticky sap, resulting in suffocation in 1d3+1 rounds; SD half-damage from fire and/or missile attacks; SZ M(5-7); ML Steady (11); XP 2000.

### 8. Keep Towers-

Rubble and debris litter the floor and a spiral staircase leads up to the collapsed second floor.

Each tower is the same- empty save for an occasional small mammal. The stairs leading up are blocked by fallen rock and wood beams, but DM's may allow characters access to the second floor if desired.

The upper floor has almost completely collapsed, with small sections of wall still standing. Birds, rats and other mammals lair there, though the DM may add other inhabitants if desired.

Outside the northeast tower is a set of stairs going down to the dungeon level. The stone stairs are smooth, worn and slick and care must be taken going down. Characters not doing so must make a Dexterity check or slip and fall for 1d4 points of damage.

### 9. Garden-

What was apparently a lush rock garden, now houses weeds, mosses and swamp grass; this is in addition to the monstrous toads seen lazing in the reeds. A faint stone path can be seen under the muck, but it is nearly impossible to follow. A 5-foot high wall separates the garden area into two equal parts, and beautiful, stone latticework separates the garden from the main courtyard.

There are two niches carved in the garden wall. The northern niche has a bas-relief, depicting a dwarven male. At its base is carved the word "Dulfek" for the last dwarven clan lord. The southern niche is identical save for that it depicts a female. At the base of this carving is the word "Finelil".

The garden is home to eight giant toads. They are relatively peaceful unless party members try to get a close look at the northern bas relief, as a nest with four eggs lie at its base. The path the stone trail follows is not significant.

Area 9B has a partially collapsed wall giving access to the bailey. PCs can safely enter and exit the keep from here.

**Giant Toads** (8): INT Animal (1); AL N; AC 6; HD 2+4; HP 16,15,15,13,12,12,10,9; AT 1; Dmg 28; SA On a score of 20, medium sized or lower creatures swallowed whole; SD nil; SZ M (5'); ML Unsteady (7); XP 120.

Inside the belly of the largest toad is a +3 *dagger of throwing*.

#### 10. Hall of Heroes-

This wide hallway depicts bas-reliefs of numerous dwarf heroes in action. At the north end hangs a large target. A spear sticks from its center.

The bas-reliefs tell the tale of various heroic dwarves from the clan. Of particular interest are two depicting a dwarven king in battle with a huge creature, using only a spear. The spear found in the target is non-magical (and unrelated), though it is fashioned from hornwood and tipped in silver. It is worth 25 gp.

#### 11. Stables-

The wood forming the stalls has long since rotted away and the straw is molded and decomposing. The stench of swamp gas is strong here making your eyes water. Above you there is a small loft. A rustling can be heard coming from there.

There is a carrion crawler in the loft above that attacks as soon as anyone pokes his head up into the loft. When that happens, three more burst forth from the debris on the floor. There used to be a ladder up to the loft, but it has long since rotted away.

**Carrion Crawlers** (4): INT Non- (0); AL N; AC 3/7; HD 3+1; HP 19,15,11,10; AT 8; Dmg 1-2; SA paralyze; SD nil; SZ L (9'); ML; Special; XP 270.

#### 12. Practice Yard-

This large space is open to the sky. A large metal-bound door leads through the north wall and beside it is a small stair running up to the top of the wall. There are pools of stagnant water everywhere but the place is devoid of any grass. Various bits and pieces of wooden dummies broken arrows spears and targets lie everywhere as do several skeletons.

The northeast alcove is actually covered, and a ladder there leads up to a trap door in the ceiling. This leads up to the dwarven clan lord's chamber, although the upper floor has collapsed. The stairs along the north wall lead up to the keep wall, where a narrow parapet can be traversed the entire length. The skeletons are the remains of the former clan.

#### 13. Great Hall-

A long low table stands in the center of this great hall adorned with many fine plates cups and cutlery.

The food that remains however is rotten and molded and the chairs are broken and smashed.

A large throne chair sits on a single-step platform along the north wall. A huge, tattered tapestry hangs behind the throne revealing a hidden niche. Seated on the throne are the remains of a dwarven skeleton still replete with noble finery. Its position suggests that it was placed as a mockery to the dwarven clan. Several more skeletons lie about though most appear to have been taken apart and thrown randomly about the room.

All three entrances are *wizard locked* at 10th level of ability, but saying the name of the clan lord "Dulfek" or queen "Fanlil" (found at the base of the bas-reliefs in the garden) will allow a person to enter these doors normally.

Characters entering are met by the specters of two dwarven guards who cross their spears before the first to enter. These particular dwarves were the clan lord's personal guard, who fell trying to defend him. Speaking in whispery voices, they ask:

*"Speak the name of the Lost Clan and enter with humility. Fail and depart."*

Characters answering "*Clan Mumantadin*" are allowed to pass. Entering with humility means that the characters must then approach the throne and pay homage in the form of a bow or other acknowledgement of nobility. Those that answer incorrectly or fail to pay respects within three rounds are attacked by the two specters.

**Specters** (2): INT Avg. (13-14); AL LE; AC 2; HD 7+3; HP 40 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA drain 2 levels per hit; SD +1 weapon too hit, immune to sleep, charm, cold, poison. Holy water inflicts 2d4 damage. *Raise dead* kills the specter; SZ M (5-6'); ML Champion (15); XP 3000.

The ghost of Clan Lord Dulfek meets characters defeating the specters, or who enter safely. The ghost asks the player's aid in removing the evil artifact from the caverns below and restoring his remains to their rightful place, the nearby clan-home of Karakast (or other place deemed by the DM). The ghost tells the tale of his clan, as related in the above history.

Characters are under no obligation to do the task, though should they refuse the ghost of Dulfek will attack with all of his powers in an attempt to force the characters out of the keep.

**Ghost** (1):INT Avg. (13-14); AL LE; AC 0(8); HD 10; HP 66; #AT 1; Dmg age 10-40 yr.; SA save versus spell or flee for 2d6 turn, *magic jar*, SD half-damage

from silver weapons, full damage from magical weapons; SZ M (5-6'); ML special; XP 7000.

A search of the great room will find the following: a tapestry depicting clan life of 400 years ago (800gp), 10gp, 15sp, and 10cp, all of which are very old minting and as a set are worth 200gp to a coin collector. The plates (20) are of a ceramic material, ornately painted, and when cleaned up, are valued at 2sp each.

#### DUNGEON LEVEL:

The dungeon and mine walls are slick with mud, water, slime and algae. In some spots tree roots have broken through from above. The walls and floor are primarily stone blocks, though in places they have fallen out and reveal the earth behind them. The mines are supported every ten feet with cross-timbers.

#### AREAS 14-20 Wight Lair

The dungeon area served two purposes for Clan Mumantadin. First, it served as an access to the mine levels. Second, it served as a place to hold prisoners. Though not an evil clan, these hardy dwarves took battle with their enemies seriously and were not above strong-arming prisoners for information.

To that end, a dour and slightly sadistic dwarf named Carnac oversaw the prison area. 'The Warden', as he was called, took his job seriously, and had no friends. His later years saw him turn bitter, as he was looked upon as an overseer of filth, turning him even more sadistic in his duties.

When the nabassu attacked, Carnac hid himself in his chamber, cowering in fear at the Black Assassin. His fear literally killed him, as he wasted away slowly, fearing to even peek out from his hiding spot. Eventually the dwarf expired, and his bitterness brought him back in the form of a wight. Since then, he has created three lesser wights, adventurers who were not consumed immediately. They roam the rooms of this dungeon, leaving only at night to forage in the marsh. The silver inlay on the doors between rooms 14 and 20 keeps them from the lower mines, much to the relief of the troglodytes.

**Carnac (Wight)** (1): INT Average (8-10); AL LE; AC 5; HD 4+3; HP 30; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA Energy Drain, SD Immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold* spells, cold-based attack, paralyzation, or poison. Only hit by silver or magic weapons; SZ M (4'-7'); ML Elite (14); XP 975.

**Lesser Wight** (3): INT Average (8-10); AL LE; AC 5; HD 2+3; HP 14, 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA Energy Drain, SD Immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold* spells, cold-

based attack, paralyzation, or poison. Only hit by silver or magic weapons; SZ M (4'-7'); ML Elite (14); XP 975.

#### 14. Empty Chamber-

The stairs open into a large basement-like room. Several broken boxes, bales of wool, and broken rock litter the floor. The decomposing remains of two lizard-like creatures lie here, their leather vests torn open.

A doorway leads to the west, and a set of ornately carved double-doors lead north.

These two troglodyte scouts encountered the nearby wights and were quickly overwhelmed. On each body there is a tiny pouch with 1d4 gold pieces. These coins are minted with a spider on one side, and a mace on the other, for the drow house of Despana for whom these creatures were slaves. 1d3 of the lesser wights will be encountered here 25% of the time. The double doors are carved with the heraldry of the clan, and inlaid with silver.

#### 15. Ante Chamber-

Two large, ironbound doors dominate the far wall and an intricately carved stone archway the south. Two long tables sit at the room's center, with benches lining each side. Several metal plates and mugs lie thrown about the mud-coated floor and what were once bright tapestries now hang in tatters. The room smells strongly of bile and urine.

The tables and benches are marred by claw marks, as are the walls and floors. Amidst the trash are 15 platinum coins and a logbook detailing prisoner movement in and out of the cellblock. DM's are encouraged to flesh this information out. 1d3 of the lesser wights can be found here 40% of the time, with Carnac being present 20%.

#### 16. Cell Block-

The archway leads into a vast chamber nearly 60 feet to a side. Several round, stone pillars line the east wall with four skeletons chained to them. A long table dominates the room's center and about the walls can be seen hanging various tools of questionable purpose.

As stated before, Carnac took his job seriously, while the clan lords turned their heads. As long as the required information was extracted, that was most important to the clan. Hooks, blades, pincers and the like can be found lining the walls, and if cleaned up would fetch 10 gold from the right buyer.

Note, however, that characters are sure to recognize the items for their purpose, and the sale of them might be considered evil.

Carnac is found here 50% of the time and the lesser wights 75% of the time.

### 17. Warden's Room-

What was once a fine office and bedchamber is now a ruin. All items of value have long since been destroyed. Furniture is broken; bedding lies strewn about and the bodies of several animals lie piled in the far corner. The stench is nearly overpowering.

Carnac will be found here if he has not already been encountered. Amidst the ruin is his personal treasure of 1,000sp, a whip handle fashioned from a mangaroo tree and inlaid with 4 different stones (total value 200gp), a *+1 suit of dwarven platemail*, and a *potion of undead control*.

### 18. Prison Block-

The door opens into a long hallway lined with doors to either side. Each has a small barred window.

Rooms marked 'A', 'B', and 'C' are the personal lairs of the three lesser wights. They will be encountered here 100% unless already met. Each room is nearly the same, with rotted meat and vegetation piled within. The wights have a small cache of 100gp and a 25gp gem each.

The other cells have doors that are swollen shut and have rusted hinges. Open doors checks are made at a -2 for these rooms, though there is nothing inside.

### 19. Storage Room-

The door to this room lies off of its hinges deep gouges visible in the old wood. Inside, numerous crates, bales, boxes, sacks, and tools lie busted and piled about. Faint scratching noises can be heard coming from within.

The noise is from three meglo-centipedes foraging in this room.

**Meglo-centipede** (3):INT Animal (1); AL N; AC 5; HD 3; HP 17, 15, 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA poison, SD Nil; SZ M(5); ML Average (8-10); XP 175.

### 20. Storage Room-

The remains of numerous broken casks and barrels stand spilling their contents upon the floor. Nothing else appears of interest.

Four casks of fresh water still remain. Though it is stale tasting and may give rise to concerns of illness, it is perfectly good to replenish low skins. Two barrels of wine remain unopened, their contents long since turning sour. Hidden behind the larger barrels (treat as concealed) is a small cask of ale that would fetch 100gp.

### 21. Mine Entrance-

The walls of this room are lined with dozens of pick axes, cloaks, helmets, torches, large ropes and many other mining oriented utensils. A wide passage leads north into darkness.

This chamber serves as the entrance to the mines. Observant characters will see clawed tracks in the muddy floor, made by the two troglodytes that were found in room 14.

The secret door to room 22 is trapped. Failure to speak the password "Dulfek" will cause a *magic mouth* to begin screaming "Thief! Thief!" in ancient dwarf. The troglodyte guards in room 23 will arrive in three rounds to investigate. If any wights remain, they, too, will investigate.

### 22. Secret Treasury-

The secret door opens into a small chamber. In the center of the room sits a table on which sits a locked chest. Piled in the corner is a mound of broken rock.

The rock is raw adamantite ore and will fetch 500gp to the right buyer. Unfortunately, it is mixed with normal rock and the entire pile weighs nearly 1,000 pounds.

The chest is trapped with a poison needle, and failure to save will result in the PC falling asleep for 2d10 turns. Additionally, when opened without saying the word "Dulfek", a specialized form of *hold person* will affect anyone within five feet that fails to save versus magic. Inside the chest is a portion of the clan's treasury: 2,000gp, 1,000sp, 4 diamonds (500gp each), a *+2 throwing axe*, 3 *potions of healing*, and a scroll of *raise dead*.

### 23. Mine Nexus-

The tunnel opens into a wide nexus with passages leading off in all directions. A huge forge dominates the center of the main chamber, its bellows lying tattered and broken. Above, a small vent pours a thin stream of water back onto to forge and floor. Two burning torches flank the entrance to the passage north.

The torches should give indication that this area is occupied. A character with mining knowledge

can determine that the tunnels here were collapsed purposefully, as the support beams appear cut. The dwarves did this in an attempt to seal off the demon below, but were unsuccessful.

Six troglodyte guards hide in the various alcoves and passages. Their location is shown on the map as a "T". Each guard has two javelins, and two of them have stone maces as well. If things go badly, one of the troglodytes will try to escape to the mineshaft in area 24 to drop warning stones down to their tribe below. Each guard has 1d4gp.

**Troglodyte** (6): INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 5; HD 2; HP 8 each; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4+1 or by weapon type; SA +3 to hit with javelin, secrete noxious smell- save versus poison or lose 1d6 strength points for 10 rounds; SD Nil ; SZ M(6'); ML Steady(11); XP 120.

#### 24. Mine Shaft-

A large shaft disappears into the darkness below. A protective wall with a metal gate rings the top and rigging overhead provides a means for raising and lowering a wooden basket.

Several small rocks are piled neatly next to the wall and four torches burn in their holders. A collapsed tunnel can be seen leading from the east.

The troglodytes from room 23 use the stones as a warning. Characters can expect company below if the troglodytes are successful in warning their comrades. As before, a character with mining knowledge can determine that the tunnel was collapsed purposefully.

The shaft is twenty feet wide and descends for 90 feet. Every 20 feet down there is an entrance to the next level, though they are all collapsed. These first three levels may be expanded at the DM's discretion.

There is room for two persons to ride in the basket at the same time, but any weight over 250 pounds causes the overhead supports to break free 1-10 on a d20. This increases by one point for each additional 10 pounds of weight, and the check should be made every ten feet. Characters suffer 1d6 points of damage cumulative for each 10 foot fallen.

#### CAVERN LEVEL:

The tunnel from the mines slopes sharply downward, dropping 20 feet over the course of its 60-foot length. It is roughly hewn, obviously the work of mining. The floors of the caverns are slick with scum and muddy, sand-covered rock, with areas 25-30 flooded to a depth of three feet, the cause of which is an underground river has burst through into area 30.

An exit to the Underdark leads from area 40, which also provides an outlet for the water.

The nabassu roams these chambers, with a 20% chance of its being found in any one of the caverns. Should the party attempt to flee, the demon does not pursue outside these areas.

#### 25. Large Cavern-

The tunnel opens into a huge, vaulted, water-filled cavern. From where you stand, three sandy shelves slope down into the chamber, the total drop being nearly 20 feet. Stalagmites and stalactites are visible everywhere, with one huge column of rock stretching from floor to ceiling on the right. Tunnels can be seen leading out to the north, west, and southwest.

The water depth is approximately three feet, and characters taking the time to do so will find a very slight current running north. This is due to the sloping passage from area 30. Several ghouls and a ghast lie hidden underwater, awaiting unsuspecting characters. They get a +4 to their surprise roll when attacking. They have no treasure, although one of the ghouls still wears a gold wedding ring (5gp).

**Ghouls** (10): INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 6; HD 2; HP 14,12,11,11,10,9,4,4; AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA Paralyze; SD; Immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells; SZ M (5-6'); ML Steady (11-12); XP175.

**Ghast** (2): INT Very (11-12); AL CE; AC 4; HD 4; HP 15,12,12; AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8; SA Paralyze, Stench 10'R (save versus poison or fight at -2); SD Immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells. Cold iron does double damage; SZ M (5-6'); ML Elite (13-14); XP 650.

PCs moving around the giant column see that it forms a cave. Five dwarven skeletons can be found here, each bearing the heraldic symbol of Greysmere. These are the remaining members of a dwarven expedition that was lost decades ago. PCs returning these remains to the dwarven stronghold of Greysmere gain an added 500XP for their good deed.

#### 26. Side Chamber-

This chamber is more of an alcove than a chamber, but floating in the water you can see three troglodyte bodies.

Directly overhead is a patch of green slime the same color as the rest of the slime in the complex. Any character investigating the corpses will be dropped

upon. Treat the slime as a secret door for inquisitive players.

**Green Slime** (1): INT Non-(0); AL N; AC 9; HD 2; HP 12; AT 0 Dmg nil; SA turn flesh into slime in 1d4 rounds; SD nil; SZ S; ML Avg. (10); XP 65.

### 27. Nexus-

The connecting tunnel widens into an immense, vaulted cavern. The overhead above is too high to see, but the fluttering of bat wings can be heard. A stone column, glittering gold in the torchlight, can be seen in the chamber to the left. A third passage leading northeast is blocked by fallen rubble, but the water can be heard flowing through them to the other side. Lastly, a wide tunnel leads off to the northwest.

The chamber is vaulted 60 feet overhead. The bats are harmless.

Digging through the collapsed tunnel is possible. A total of eight man-hours of labor are required to remove enough rubble to safely pass through to the tunnel beyond. During any excavation, the running water poses a serious threat. There is a 60% chance per hour (non-cumulative) that the water will erode enough foundation to cause another collapse. PCs caught within will suffer 1d10 points of damage.

**NOTE:** No attempt has been made to expand this portion of the adventure. Several TSR products such as the *Descent into the Depths (D1-3)* series of adventures and *Night Below* would work well here.

### 28. Lodestone-

Two large columns stretch up out of sight here, forming a sort of welcome-gate into the next chamber. A third pillar, a glittering gold in color, stands in the center of the area beyond. Beyond that, the cavern sweeps right and left out of sight.

A skeleton, clad in plate armor, stands against the gold column, its arms wrapped upon it as if hugging the stone good-bye.

The smaller column is actually a gold-lichen-coated lodestone. Anyone wearing metal that gets within ten feet feels the tug. A save versus strength must be made, at a -1 due to the slippery floor, or be drawn to the column. Four checks are made- one for each two feet closer to the stone a PC gets. Each check is at a cumulative -1. PCs trapped by the stone require at least a 15 strength to break free, with any check being made at a -5. Of course, characters that manage to shed metal before getting trapped can save himself from the magnetic force. Those that manage to bypass

this object will find the remains of a rust monster on a sandy shelf in the southeastern alcove. This creature, at one time, was feasting quite well. It has long since died of starvation.

### 29. Rolanta's Lair -

Moving into this chamber you can see that it apparently stretches off to the left with a smaller opening leading straight on. Vision has become extremely difficult here as your light seems to be muffled by the surrounding air.

The dimming of the light is a warning that PCs are entering a magically darkened area. Chamber 29 and 30 are both completely pitch black, being caused by Rolanta's *darkness 15' radius* spells. At the southern entry, the tips of several shriekers can be seen protruding above the water level. Incautious parties will set them off, thus eliminating any chance of surprise.

**Shriekers** (4): INT Non- (0); AL N; AC 7; HD 3; HP 15 each; #AT 0; Dmg 0; SA nil; SD noise; SZ M (4'-7'); ML Steady (12); XP 120.

Rolanta's 'Lair' is a 10' wide by 20 foot long ledge in the north west tip of area 29. Parties first encountering this nightmarish creature will think him only to be a massive, two-headed troll. In fact, the haunt of Rolanta resides with in the troll's body, but he retains full function (i.e. spellcasting ability) of his former self. Rolanta is a genius, and should be played as such.

The smell from this room is horrific, as rotting flesh, molded rags, and stagnant water all mix to create a smell that stings the eyes. The remains of an overly large mattress sits in one corner, covered in mud, slime, and fungus. The remains of some form of humanoid creature lies on top of a large chest to the rear of the cave.

Inside the chest is the total of this beast's horde; 3 opals (75gp each), 500gp, 100ep, matching marble bookends fashioned like spiders (200gp), a *wand of enemy detection* (14), and a *potion of delusion*.

**Rolanta/Two-headed Troll** (1): INT Genius (18-19); AL CE; AC 4; HD 10; HP 65; #AT 4 or 1; Dmg 1d4+4/1d4+4/1d12/1d12 or by weapon type, spells; SD Regeneration 1hp/rnd; SZ L (9'); ML Fanatic (18); XP 5000.

**30. Nabassu-**

Pitch-blackness envelops you as you enter this room. A soft bubbling and splashing can be heard.

The nabassu wastes no time in assaulting the arriving PCs. The demon is large, mean, and eager to complete its assigned task. Although still in its fledgling state, it makes a formidable foe, and with each kill it grows in strength. The beast will choose mages first, followed by warriors, priests and then rogues.

**Tanar'ri, Greater- Nabassu (1):** INT High (13-14); AL CE; AC -2; HD 7+14; HP 49; AT 3; Dmg 2d4+7/2d4+7/1d10+2; SA *death gaze* 1/day per hit point above 7 hit dice (failed save means irrevocably turned to ghost-ghoul for demihumans), *darkness 15'* R, back stab X2, MS 40%, HIS 50%, DN 55%; SD +1 weapon or better too hit, 50% magic resistance; SZ M (7'); ML Champion (15-16); XP 22,000.

When PCs are able to see again, read the following:

The darkness vanishes revealing a horrific sight. Dozens of bodies in various states of decay are pinned to three great lime columns dominating this chamber. The vast majority of them are dwarven in origin but there are several human, gnome, elf, and halfling mixed among them. Although they appear dead, many heads still loll back and forth and several reach for the spears, sticks, or whatever it is that pins them to the rock.

The floor is covered in water some two to three feet deep, but a sharp rise leads up to a raised alcove along the eastern wall. In the center of the room, there is a low fountain of water splashing up. Apparently some waterway below has broken through here.

The nabassu is not the only inhabitant of this chamber. There are 20 zombies here, as well as four ghouls and a ghost. Fortunately they are all pinned to the three stalagmite columns, as the demon was using them as playthings. If the battle goes against it, the demon will begin releasing its prisoners, starting with the ghost. Every other combat round it will release 4 more undead. Thus, the 4 ghouls would be next, then the 20 zombies.

**Zombie (20):** INT ; AL N; AC 8; HD 2; HP 15, 12 (x8), 10 (x6), 8 (x5); AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA nil; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm* or *hold* spells. Holy water

inflicts 2d4 points of damage.; SZ M (5-6'); ML special; XP 65.

**Ghouls (4):** INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 6; HD 2; HP 11,9,4,4; AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA Paralyze; SD; Immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells; SZ M (5-6'); ML Steady (11-12); XP175.

**Ghast (1):** INT Very (11-12); AL CE; AC 4; HD 4; HP 11; AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8; SA Paralyze, Stench 10'R (save versus poison or fight at -2); SD Immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells. Cold iron does double damage; SZ M (5-6'); ML Elite (13-14); XP 650.

There is a small rift, five feet long and three feet wide, located in the center of the room. It travels down nearly 150 feet to an underground river. When and if the PCs defeat the demon, they will have access to the raised alcove. When they enter, read the following:

Working up the slippery and steep embankment, you manage to fall into a rocky shelf ten feet wide by nearly 50 feet long.

That is all the PCs will see, for a powerful illusion hides the pendant in the last five feet of the northern alcove. This illusion is a powerful spell, having all the sights, smells and feelings of real stone. PCs attempting disbelief do so at a -2. When PCs discover the item read the following text:

The illusion fades away to reveal a single pendant, sitting on the rock floor. A circle of power has been scribed around it, using what appears to be salt and metal mixed together. Additional archaic runes and symbols are etched into the stone around the circle.

The pendant appears to be of a dark, black metal. It consists of a circular disc, finely etched, and a smooth gem of some type set in its middle. What makes the necklace most intriguing, however, is the chain itself. As you look upon it, it appears to writhe and move as if alive, though at a second look it appears still.

Specifics on the pendant are provided at the end of this adventure, under **New Items**. The runes carved into the walls and floor is a powerful protection from evil. PCs with Spellcraft have a +1 chance in their determination of this. Also, the circle of powdered iron and salt shows signs of coming apart. Again, those with Spellcraft have a +1 to determine that something powerful was trying to get at the pendant. PCs are not bound by the same constraints as the demon, and so can pick up the item with ease. However, a failure to detect traps will result in a rune of power being set off

when the item is picked up, releasing a powerful electric shock to all within 10 feet. 2d10 damage is done, save for half-damage. See the end of this adventure for an **Alternate Conclusion**.

The nabassu also has a small horde of treasure buried in the northern alcove of the main chamber. Treat it as a concealed door: 25 gems (base value 100gp), 300pp, 4,00gp, +3 *longsword*, *frostbrand*, two *potions of extra-healing*, a scroll of *teleport* and a scroll of *raise dead, create food and water*, and *cure poison*.

### 31. Guard Post

The entrance to this cave is narrow, but it widens into a huge, vaulted cavern with numerous alcoves. A pale glow emanates from the lichen coating the walls.

The fungus on the walls is harmless, and is the source of the light. A leader troglodyte and five guards stand watch here. Their purpose is to deter any would-be intruders.

**Troglodyte Leader** (1): INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 5; HD 3; HP 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4+1 or by weapon type; SA +3 too hit with javelin, secrete noxious smell- save versus poison or lose 1d6 strength points for 10 rounds; SD Nil ; SZ M(6'); ML Steady(11); XP 160. In a pouch he carries 1d8gp.

**Troglodyte** (5): INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 5; HD 2; HP 10, 9, 9, 8, 7; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4+1 or by weapon type; SA +3 too hit with javelin, secrete noxious smell- save versus poison or lose 1d6 strength points for 10 rounds; SD Nil ; SZ M(6'); ML Steady(11); XP 120. Each carries 1d4gp.

### 32. Exit

The floor of this large chamber is covered in a thin layer of mud. Smokey torches flicker, making the wet walls glisten. Piles of collected ore lie all about as do broken handles of picks and axes. A winding tunnel slopes upward and to the east. Four troglodyte guards stand watch here.

This chamber holds four troglodyte guards, three inside, and one further up the tunnel. They have a +4 chance of being surprised by parties coming via the caves than down the tunnel they are guarding. Each guard has two javelins and a stone mace.

**Troglodyte** (4): INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 5; HD 2; HP 10, 8(x3); #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4+1 or by weapon type; SA +3 too hit with javelin, secrete noxious smell- save versus poison or lose 1d6 strength

points for 10 rounds; SD Nil ; SZ M(6'); ML Steady(11); XP 120. Each troglodyte guard has 1d4gp.

### 33. Empty Cave-

This cave is empty although the muddy floor indicates that extensive traffic has come through here. Three additional exits lead to more caves from here.

Although this cave is empty, PCs can see troglodytes moving back and forth within the other caves.

### 34-35. Troglodyte Caves-

This large cavern holds numerous mats made of grass, cloth, and other handy materials. Bones of various creatures, some humanoid and some not, litter the floor. A dozen or so lizard-like creatures are present, most of which wear armor and are armed with stone maces and javelins. Also present are several young.

There are two of these caves, all of which are similar. Each cave houses 30 males, 20 females and 10 young. At any one time, there are 5 males (the remainder are out on guard duty), and 6 females present. The young do not fight, but the females fight with ferocity, gaining a +1 too hit and to damage in their unarmed attacks. The males each have two javelins and a stone mace with which to fight.

**Troglodyte** (11):INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 5; HD 2; HP 8 (males) 7 (females) each; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4+1 or by weapon type; SA +3 too hit with javelin, secrete noxious smell- save versus poison or lose 1d6 strength points for 10 rounds; SD Nil ; SZ M(6'); ML Steady(11); XP 120. Each troglodyte has 1d4gp.

### 36. Troglodyte Hatchery-

This cavern apparently serves as a hatchery for several large nests are in here. Each nest holds one or two leathery eggs.

In here lie ten nests with 1d3 eggs apiece. Most are not due to hatch anytime soon. There are always 4 unarmed females here as well as 3 males armed with javelins and stone maces. As above, the females get a +1 to hit and damage in an attack.

**Troglodyte** (7):INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 5; HD 2; HP 8 (males) 7 (females) each; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4+1 or by weapon type; SA +3 too hit with javelin, secrete noxious smell- save versus poison or

lose 1d6 strength points for 10 rounds; SD Nil ; SZ M(6'); ML Steady(11); XP 120. Each troglodyte has 1d4gp.

### 37. Sub-chief's Lair-

Four large mats are thrown along the floor of the southern alcove and the skeletal remains of a human figure lie crumpled against the north wall. A passage exits to the east.

This is the lair of the sub-chief and the troll's personal guard. The sub-chief is here 50% of the time. The other times find him in the tribal caves (30-31) or the cavern entrance (35). The guards split their time between here and being with the troll chieftain, but at two guards are with him at all times. The guards all have two javelins and a stone mace each. The sub-chief wields a large, two-handed sword.

**Troglodyte Guards** (3): INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 5; HD 3; HP 18 each; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4+1 or by weapon type; SA +3 too hit with javelin, secrete noxious smell- save versus poison or lose 1d6 strength points for 10 rounds; SD Nil; SZ M (6'); ML Steady (11); XP 175. The guards have 1d8gp and 1d6gp each.

**Troglodyte Sub-chief** (1): INT Low (5-7); AL CE; AC 5; HD 4; HP 26; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4+1 or by weapon type; SA +3 too hit with javelin, secrete noxious smell- save versus poison or lose 1d6 strength points for 10 rounds; SD Nil; SZ M (6'); ML Steady (11); XP 270. The Sub-chief's treasure is buried under his bedding, and contains 100gp and a filigree necklace made of gold (150gp)

### 38. Fungus Cave-

This cavern arches some 40 feet overhead. The entire cave is a garden of fungi, moss, rock, and mold. Numerous standing puddles of water cover the floor, and the south wall leaks what appears to be a milky, white substance. A loud hiss is heard, as what looked like a chunk of rock raises up, transforming itself into a huge lizard.

This subterranean lizard feeds off of the fungi, but it is not above trying the PCs as a bit of variety. The fungus garden includes shriekers, violent fungi, normal moss and fungus, and phycomids (milky substance).

**Shriekers** (4): INT Non- (0); AL N; AC 7; HD 3; HP 18, 15, 10, 7; #AT 0; Dmg 0; SA nil; SD noise; SZ M (4'-7'); ML Steady (12); XP 120.

**Violet Fungi** (2): INT Non- (0); AL N; AC 7; HD 3; HP 20, 14; #AT 1d4; Dmg Rot Flesh; SA Save versus poison or *cure disease* or flesh begins to rot in one round; SD nil; SZ M (4'-7'); ML Steady (12); XP 175.

**Phycomids** (1): INT (unknown); AL N(E); AC 5; HD 5; HP 33; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4+2/1d4+2; SA infection; SD save versus poison or cure disease or a new growth will sprout from infected area within 1d4+4 rounds. This causes an additional 1d4+4 points of damage and will kill the host in 1d4+4 turns; SZ Tiny; ML Steady (14); XP 975.

**Subterranean Lizard** (1): INT Non- (0); AL N; AC 5; HD 5; HP 35; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6 (bite); SA a hit with a 20 means double damage with 2d6 damage each round thereafter as jaws are clamped on the victim. This lizard can elect to attack from up to 20' away with its tongue. A successful hit means that a bend bars check is required to escape. Failure results in 2d6 damage being incurred each round thereafter; SD nil; SZ H (20'); ML Avg. (8-10); XP 1400. There is no treasure in this cave.

### ENDING

PC's that miraculously stop Rolanta and drive the nabassu away should receive a hefty story award. A recommendation of at least 2000 XP per player, be given in addition to any experience earned from combat, DM bonuses, etc. The locale community would best be served by the characters delivering the pendant to either a powerful temple of good (such as Pelor or Heironeous) or to the Guild of Wizardry in Greyhawk. Keeping the item only invites an attack from creatures from the Abyss, who arrive every two weeks until they succeed in obtaining the pendant or the pendant is destroyed.

### ALTERNATE ENDING

Of course, the players may arrive too late, be overcome by their foe, or a number of other plausible outcomes. Should that occur, Rolanta will succeed in releasing the power of the pendant. Unfortunately, what the mage failed to realize, is that the power is not just the spirit, but rather the actual demon lord himself! Thus, upon its release, a thick, mucous-like ooze begins to pour from a large, black void which appears where the pendant lay.

It slowly spreads across the room, where its bubbling and writhing begins to take the shape of a towering mass of ooze and jelly. Juiblex, The Faceless Lord, has arrived. He sets upon Rolanta, dispatching him quickly. He then turns his sights on the surrounding lands. Unless the party is still relatively powerful, he will ignore them (barring nothing foolish on the part of the party. If they are trapped, the Demon

Lord will leave them as food for his 'children' which begin to arrive (oozes, jellies, slimes, etc). PC's are best to make haste for the City of Greyhawk to seek aid. For the truly brave who wish to challenge the demon, his stats are provided below. It is up to the DM on how to proceed with the faceless Lord's plans.

**Juiblex "The Faceless Lord", Demon Lord of Oozes, Slimes, and Jellies-**

INT Genius (18); AL CE; AC -7; HD ; HP 88; #AT 1; Dmg 4d10 SA see below; SD see below; SZ L (9' +); ML Fanatic (17-18); XP 47,280 (material form only. X10 if slain on his own plane).

There is no question that this is the most disgusting and loathsome of all demons. Juiblex is foul and nauseating in the extreme. His dripping form can lash forward in melee to cause terrible damage- both from the force of his blow and the caustic properties of his noisome secretions. Juiblex is reclusive and hates intrusion by any form of normal creature but surrounds his person with slimes, jellies, and puddings. If encountered in his lair there will be from 1-4 green slimes, 2-8 ochre jellies, 1-4 gray oozes, and 1-4 black puddings. Other demons and creatures similarly shun him.

Juiblex is able to shed a *circle of darkness* (15' r) at will. He can also *cause fear* (as a fear wand), cast a *circle of cold* (10'), and regenerate 2 hit points per melee round. The demon lord is also able to do any one of the following during a melee round: *detect invisible*, *locate object*, *ESP*, *fly*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility* (10' R.), *charm monster*, *hold monster*, *telekinesis* 15,000gp weight, *project image*, *phase door*, *putrefy food and water*, *cause disease*, *speak with monsters*, speak an *unholy word* once per day, and *gate* in 1-4 lesser demons (70% chance of success). He is also able to spew forth a jelly-like slime (combining the effects of an ochre jelly and green slime) once per turn with a 15' range and a blob size of 3 cubic feet.

As a demon lord, Juiblex receives half damage from the following attack forms: cold, electricity, fire, gas, and no damage from silver weapons. A +2 or better weapon is required to hit him, and he has a 65% resistance to magic.

Description: Juiblex has no set form (he can spread himself into a vast pool of slime or raise up into a towering column of disgusting ordure 18' or more in height) but he usually takes the form of a 9' tall cone-like heap, striated in disgusting blackish-greens, foul browns and yellows, and sickly translucent grays and ambers. From this mass protrudes several glaring red eyes.

**NEW ITEM:**

***Retna Noth Tura***

**Fate's Black Assassin**

Long ago, the Demon Lord Juiblex, "The Faceless Lord", secreted his consciousness into a piece of mineral mined from the deepest layer of the Abyss. Infusing the rock with powerful protective magic, he laid it into a finely crafted piece of adamantite. The 'chain' he fashioned from the same metal, only this time he fused it with bits and pieces of jelly, slime and ooze, making it to appear to writhe constantly as if alive.

In the days of the Suel-Baklunish War, a faction of the house of Naelex sought to overthrow their enemy by conjuring the mighty Juiblex. Promising him the knowledge of *The Binders* (the power to bind djinn and efreeti into a magical item) in return for the destruction of their enemy, the magi convinced the evil one to carry out the task.

While the demon was away, the treacherous magi entered his plane and stole the amulet containing his essence. Returning to find it missing, the enraged demon lord sent demon upon demon to slay his betrayers. The faction of Naelex was slain, save for one who managed to escape to the east- Deldellan Naelex.

The pendant passed from mage to mage, becoming a sort of graduating gift. As apprentice became master, the former master moved on, giving the pendant as a symbol of the apprentice's recognized accomplishment. Eventually the pendant became known as the Black Assassin, for the demons that would appear in the dark to threaten the life of its owner. Juiblex has never rested in his attempt to get it back.

The pendant appears as a smooth piece of black mineral approximately three inches across. Close observation can detect faint markings on the surface, which read *Concordia Discors*, translating into 'Harmony in Discord'. When peered at closely, a faint glow can be seen emanating from deep within.

The mineral is set into a circular piece of adamantite. Inscribed across the metal surface is a pentagram, and along the edges of the pentagram are inscribed the most powerful protective runes. These runes protect not only from magic, but from good as well. Any good character touching the pendant receives a shock of cold for 1d8 points of damage, no save. Each round held another 1d8 points are suffered, but these additional points of damage may be saved versus magic for half-damage.

The deadliest part of this item is the 'chain' itself. Also crafted from adamantite, it is fused with live gray and black ooze, green slime, and ochre jelly. In addition to receiving the above damage, any good or neutral PC coming in contact with it suffers as if he or she had come in contact with one of the actual creatures (25% chance for each). Damage continues for

each round the item is held. Those of evil alignment are allowed a save versus magic to avoid the damage. Additionally, evil persons overcoming the aforementioned damage gain the following spell-like powers:

- ◆ Summon and control (10 turn time limit) any form of ooze, slime or jelly thrice per day
- ◆ Spew forth green slime thrice per day, with a range of 5'.
- ◆ Immunity to all forms of ooze, slime or jelly attack
- ◆ *Curse* once per week, as the priest spell, with a form of rot that slowly liquefies skin and bone, until victim becomes an ochre jelly. The victim's Constitution, Strength, and Dexterity each drop by one point per day; a succesful saving throw delays the effects of the curse for one day. The victim is completely transformed when any one ability score reaches zero.
- ◆ Increased control over any beast originating in the Abyss, by 30%.

# Mastryne Castle

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## History

Mastryne Castle was built nearly 100 years ago by the half-elven adventurer Elin Baridel. Originally from Celene, he spent his youth wandering throughout the Flanaess seeking his fortune. As he neared middle age, though, he decided to retire near his birthland. At home in the lands of the Wild Coast, he also wanted to be near Celene. So he founded Baridel castle in the Welkwood, on the eastern side of the Jewel River, about 60 miles south of Narwell (hex I4/154).

Elin lived a peaceful life here, only occasionally having to send out patrols to root out bandits. In 580 CY, he passed away quietly in his sleep. Having no children, his castle passed to the hands of his chief lieutenant, Brandon Stark. Brandon immediately began hiring more soldiers and increased his patrols, hunting down bandits throughout his lands. It was well that he did, for two years later, the Greyhawk Wars broke out.

Turrosh Mak's raiders arrived at Baridel Castle in 586 CY, during their attempted invasion of Celene. The orcs quickly set fire to the village that had grown up south of the castle, destroying it utterly. Then they turned their attention to the castle itself. Their initial attacks were easily repulsed, and so the raiders dug in for a siege. Tunneling under the castle and using ramps and ladders to scale the walls, the orcs futilely attempted to take the castle. Their efforts were thwarted in large part by a company of adventurers led by Cedric Mastryne, who had been using the castle as a base for adventuring for the past several months.

Cedric's company rained down fire and lightning upon the raiding orcs, while priests tended the wounded and helped with food supplies. One priest even called down a pillar of flame, obliterating an orc sortie. Mastryne led troops in digging counter-tunnels to engage the orcs, and with their combined magical and divine effort (and a few well-placed traps), won the underground battle. Human rangers, druids and a few local elves harassed the orc supply lines and killed sentries during the day. The orcs, badly beaten, could only pull back.

After the orcs were routed, Brandon learned that the Pact of Greyhawk was to be signed and much of these lands were to be annexed. He and several of his retainers rushed to the City, arriving only a few days before the signing. Brandon immediately saw

what gains Greyhawk was making in the local area. Realizing that his lands were at stake, he met with his retainers and prepared. The next day, a messenger delivered a letter to Nerof Gasgal, as well as the rulers of Narwell, Hardby, Dyvers, Celene, Safeton, and even Turrosh Mak. It declared that henceforth Mastryne was independent, ruled by the new Baron, Brandon Stark. It further stated that though the Baron sought alliance with Greyhawk, he in no way would accept a position of fealty to said City. This did not please Gasgal one bit, but with everything else going on, he could hardly spare the troops necessary to deal with one well-defended and isolated holding. In one stroke, Stark officially became a noble and maintained his independence from the strongest human-controlled power in the region, though Nerof Gasgal left the matter of an alliance for a later time.

As soon as Stark left for Greyhawk, Cedric Mastryne and his party acted on their own plans. Mastryne had intended from the start to acquire the castle and its surrounding lands for himself. First, he cemented his high standing with the troops. He promised them great glory and much treasure if they would join him. Many did. Then he sent a messenger north bearing a sealed scroll to political figures in Greyhawk. Finally, four nights after the now-Baron Stark left, Mastryne led his men in a bloody coup.

Mastryne killed all who opposed him, and then set about taking control of the surrounding village. He promised to rebuild their town, and in exchange they would provide his men with labor and food. If they wouldn't, they would be killed. To celebrate his victory, Cedric renamed his castle Mastryne, in honor of himself. His adventuring partners stood by him, eager to share in the power and newfound wealth.

All this didn't go unwitnessed by the local rangers and elves, and they sent an outrider to Baron Stark, telling him what happened. Stark was in a quandary. He had claimed independence from Greyhawk, losing a potential ally, while at home Mastryne robbed and pillaged Baron Stark's holdings. Vowing revenge, he set about a plan to regain his lands.

## Current situation

Stark now roams the forests, acting as a bandit lord. He and his loyal followers harass Mastryne's men at every opportunity. Stark has gathered a small group

of bandits aided by local rangers. He also courts local rulers, claiming that Mastryne is evil, and will eventually turn upon them. For now the rulers are willing to overlook Mastryne's treachery since he and his men present a formidable buffer between themselves and Turrosh Mak (and some of them gained their positions through means similar to Mastryne's). Mastryne's troops have been spotted in the Pomarj, gleaming in their black plate mail, felling orcs. Gasgal maintains Stark obviously doesn't want Greyhawk's help, as he so explicitly stated at the signing. Some villagers brave the wrath of Mastryne and smuggle food to Stark and his men, hoping for his return to power, though in all reality, that is unlikely.

Mastryne has patrols constantly moving along the borders, as well as within the realm. Patrols near the castle or village consist of 5 men-at-arms (0- to 1st-level), armored in foreboding black plate mail. Patrols along the southern border with the Pomarj consist of 10 men, while patrols outside the forest are of 10 heavy cavalry. Patrol boats roam the river, being a sailed barge manned by 3 sailors and 5 marines. Each patrol is led by a sergeant (2nd-3rd level) of the same type. All patrol boats carry either a mage or cleric (3rd-5th level). Mages and clerics occasionally accompany the other patrols as well.

Periodically, Mastryne heads into the Pomarj with his men to fight the orcs. During one such trek Mastryne in a fit of rage charged into a group of orcs. When his party finally caught him he was wildly swinging at invisible enemies. He killed 20 orcs alone during that "hunting trip." He is known to have a great hatred for orcs, and never hesitates to attack them. His companions aid him in his endeavors wholeheartedly out of loyalty and perhaps to stay on the safe side of his wrath.

With respect to religion, the townsfolk prefer to honor the good-aligned and nature-oriented gods, favoring Pelor, Ehlonna, St. Cuthbert, Berei, Phytton, Wenta, and Mayaheine. Mastryne and his men are uniformly followers of Hextor. He allows the other gods their followers amongst the villagers, as he really doesn't care what they do, as long as he has laborers and food when he needs them.

Mastryne has also assumed the title of Baron, as a jest and to torment Stark. He has granted knighthood to his band of men and other traitors, along with token amounts of land.

There are several knights with important duties (and sizable land holdings). They are Sir Walter Payne (Captain of the Guard), Sir Aldric Redwyne (castellan), Sir Berrendor Moonfeather (commander of the south march and a high elf), Sir Cefwyn the Drowned (commander of the river fleet), Sir Lindon Moonfeather (commander of the east march and Berrendor's son), and Sir Ander Mallory (commander

of the north march). Each is a former adventuring companion of Mastryne's, and he makes sure they are kept happy.

Other knights include Sir Loris Sunblade (a half-elf), Sir Walter Dayne, Sir Bruce Harlaw, Sir Cedric Rowan, and Sir Garrick Marsh. All of these men earned their knighthood during the purge of the castle.

Mastryne is a 15th-level fighter, and his command knights are also adventurers. There is at least one priest and two mages among them. The rest are fighters. All are evil. They enforce Mastryne's will for fear of his wrath, but also because they enjoy it.

Mastryne Castle has developed a bit of a bad reputation. The sight of black plate mail causes superstitious peasants to trace holy symbols in the air, especially since some of the soldiers don't mind beating "unruly" locals. Also, Mastryne's apparent treachery in gaining his seat of power makes people nervous. Anyone who will stoop so low is not someone to be trusted. Occasional disappearances are also rumored, especially concerning agents of good. Nothing has been proven, but a priest of Pelor and his retinue never returned from a visit to the castle. Mastryne also has a known distaste for adventurers. They have an annoying habit of preventing his men from their assigned duties (like harassing peasants). More than one adventuring party has been sent on its way by an armed escort.

Mastryne has kept open lines of communication with several unsavory traders from Narwell, and he sends all of his trade north to them, since the orcs have captured the other local cities. Trade items include timber, wild animals, captured monsters, humanoid slaves (illegal, but present), and a dye made from an algae found in the Jewel River. Imported items include weapons, metal armor, wool, and some other items harder to come by in a forested region. The land is largely self-sufficient, with farmers and horse-breeders living along the eastern border and hunters, trappers, and fishermen living within the forest. Sir Ander Mallory has patrols march the length of the trade route to the border of the Domain of Greyhawk. The patrols engage interlopers and invaders, and "escort" travelers.

The village has been largely rebuilt by 591 CY. Mastryne sent soldiers who were scheduled for castle duty to help the locals with their work, which hastened the rebuilding process. Mastryne and his men decided that if he can keep the villagers happy, they will be less likely to desert or betray him. In all honesty, he wouldn't mind killing the lot of them, but he needs them for work and food.

## Laws

Simply, whatever Mastryne feels is necessary is law. Punishments are uniformly harsh. Murderers, rapists, and those who aid Stark are tortured, then killed. Their bodies are hung from the castle walls to reinforce Mastryne's rule. Simple thefts, brawling, and other such activities lead to a few nights in the pit dungeon (when the guards are feeling particularly bored, they sometimes capture and wound rats to enrage them, and drop them into the pit). Heavy fines are also exacted.

## Taxes

The following table indicates all taxes collected per month by the baron, payable in coin or goods. Much of Mastryne's income is captured from the orcs or unearthed from ruins, so he's been careful not to overburden his meager tax base.

5 cp - peasant

5 sp - tradesman

5 gp - nobleman

An important addition to these taxes are the lands the baron leases to people. The baron owns all the land in Mastryne (except that given to knights, but even those deeds are tentative). Villagers and anyone else building in Mastryne has to lease the land from the baron. Peasants pay 1cp per year for each building they erect. Tradesmen pay 1 to 5 sp per year, depending on their business income. This is in addition to any costs incurred from building the establishment itself.

## The Barony of Mastryne

**1 - Inn of the Everful Cup** - This establishment is run by a large man named Col, along with his wife Inka and his son Jari. The food is plentiful (and of above average quality), while the ale is excellent. Col smuggles several barrels each year to Greyhawk, Narwell, and Safeton. His mysterious hooch is welcome but scarce.

The inn has a large common room, with several booths curtained off for the use of interested persons. Room and food costs are per the DMG, while ale is 1.5 times normal price. Col has set aside some good elven wines for use by Mastryne's elven companions and their guests, a fact which has made them visit here often. They treat him fairly well, recognizing that he had the forethought to supply them with such a delicacy. Col has stables for 10 horses behind the inn. His son takes care of the animals.

Col secretly sends supplies into the forest for Stark, and hopes that Mastryne is soon deposed. He is willing to help front a group that may make that possible.

**2 - News Post** - A six-foot tall wooden pillar is found by the intersection of roads detailing all the local news. A guard comes down every day at noon to read the posts aloud, for the benefit of the many illiterate locals. A pillory is across the intersection, and some poor soul can be found there nearly every day.

## Castle Mastryne

The castle sits atop a steep-sided motte (20' high). The walls are 20' high, while the towers reach 30'. The inner keep is also 30' high. The baron had mages place magical wards on the walls, which both strengthen them and give warning if invisible creatures come within 10' of the walls.

**3 - Entrance to castle** - The gate, consisting of a drawbridge in front of a portcullis, is usually open. The portcullis is lowered at night. Two guards stand here during the day, waiting to question those who would enter the castle. Guards in the gatehouse and the towers keep an eye on those entering the castle as well, ready to call an alarm if necessary.

**4 - Gatehouse** - This tower houses the controls for the drawbridge and portcullis. Murder holes above the entrance allow guards to attack invading troops with arrows or hot tar. Two guards are normally stationed here.

**5 - (4) Towers** - Each tower has three levels, with a storeroom on the bottom, a guardroom / relief barrack in the center, and a dedicated guardroom on the third level. Access to the towers is from a wall passage on the second level and a wallwalk on the third level. A ladder can be dropped from the second level to the storeroom. Three guards are positioned at each tower, manning the ballistae and catapults. Their weapons cover the river, the road, and part of the village.

**6 - Keep** - The baron and his guests live in the keep. His quarters encompass the entire second level of the keep, including his bedroom, dining hall, war room, guest rooms, and throne room. The first level houses the kitchen, the troops' dining hall, the armory, quarters for visiting knights, and the servants' quarters. The third level has the castellan's quarters, quarters for the baron's Guard, the treasury, and a dark and twisted shrine to Hextor. The roof has a guard shack, with two soldiers on duty. A dungeon exists, though only the first level is used, where prisoners of war and dangerous criminals are held, as well as drunks sleeping it off. There are several cells in the dungeon, and three pit dungeons, each fifteen feet deep. The entrance to the lower levels was sealed shortly after the orc attack. Two guards are stationed here, usually as a punitive duty. The baron has considered having

someone check out the lower levels, but has other more pressing duties.

Unbeknownst to Mastryne, a small orc force has taken up shelter in the lower levels of his dungeon. They are all that's left of a unit assigned to undermine the castle walls, but were separated when their tunnel collapsed. Attempts to tunnel back the way they came only caused further cave-ins, so they continued under the castle, reaching the dungeon only hours after it was sealed. They have constructed a tunnel that exits to the woods east of town. They scavenge supplies from the sleeping villagers, as well as hunting small game. So far, no one suspects their existence. Townsfolk think the missing items are used by Baron Stark, so don't mention anything. The orcs are quite cautious, as they know that one slip-up will raise the alarm. They see themselves as terrifying warriors and spies waiting to ambush the enemy, but the truth is they've grown quite fond (in a vicious, orcish way) of their new home and inflated self-image, and have no desire to return to the cutthroat Pomarj.

**7 - Stables** - The baron's horses and his visitors' steeds, as well as the troop mounts are kept here. A guard or two are usually here, tending to the horses and cleaning stalls. Soldiers in trouble often end up here with shovel and pitchfork.

**8 - Barracks** - These buildings house the local troops. Those not on watch, working, or drilling can be found here, either polishing gear, gambling, or sleeping.

**9 - Storehouse** - This locked building contains enough stores to keep the castle running through several months of siege. One room has been magically cooled to preserve perishable items. The roof is reinforced and covered with sod to prevent it from being burned down.

**10 - Well** - This well supplies enough water to meet all the castle's needs.

## Mastryne Village

**11 - Docks** - These docks are for the use of the riverboat patrols, as well as local fishermen. There are sailors and marines hanging around here during the daytime, with one marine on guard at night. There is usually one riverboat tied up at the docks, with the others patrolling somewhere on the river.

**12 - Dockhouse** - This large two-story building houses Sir Cefwyn the Drowned, who earned his name after being knocked off a boat and drowned by an orc. Luckily, a cleric was nearby to revive him. At first the name was considered a joke by the sailors, but Cefwyn, being very witty, adopted it and boasts he's "Born again

meaner than before." He also believes he can never be drowned. Now the name is accepted by all, and the sailors have grown quite fond of the knight. Cefwyn's quarters occupy the entire second floor of this building. A small kitchen, a meeting room, and a room for the officer of the watch occupy the first floor. Cefwyn is usually only here in the evening and at night. The officer of the watch is either here or at the docks in the daytime, and here at night.

**13 - Smith** - The local blacksmith lives and works here. His name is Karl. His wife is Aharra. His apprentice Eldith, is usually at the forge with Karl helping him with his work. Karl does simple repairs, as well as making nails and horseshoes. He can repair armor, but has no skill with weapon repair or manufacture. Karl doesn't care who rules the castle, as long as they leave him alone and still give him business.

**14 - Cobbler** - Ernst runs this shop. He can fix any type of shoe, and is kept quite busy supplying the villagers and the troops with footwear. Ernst is evil, and delights in what happened at the castle. Besides, now he has more business.

**15 - General Store** - This shop is run by Hal, with help from his wife Sara (sister to Aharra, the blacksmith's wife). Any regular adventuring gear may be found here, though Hal does not sell weapons or armor. Several uncommon items, such as weapon black and thieves' tools may be bought here, but Hal must be persuaded to show these items let alone mention that he has them. Hal hopes Stark comes back to power, but lacks the fortitude to do anything to help.

**16 - Farmer** - An old man named Horace lives here with his wife Bela, his sons Mak and Eldith, and his daughter Anna. Mak actually does most of the farming nowadays, while Eldith works at the forge as an apprentice. Anna is eighteen and quite beautiful. Horace worries that she will take up with one of Mastryne's men, and is trying to find a suitable husband for her.

**17 - Bleeding Orc Tavern** - This tavern is run by an ex-soldier named Derol. He is missing most of his left arm, thanks to an orc. He was injured defending the castle, and the Baron saw to it that he had enough money to open the tavern. Many of the soldiers, sailors, marines, and villagers can be found here at night. The tavern consists of a large common room, with tables scattered about. A girl from Hardby named Elista acts as waitress, and is rumored to be romantically involved with Derol. Derol is a quiet supporter of Mastryne, as everything he now owns he owes to the man.

**18 - Dyemaker** - The widow Anice lives here. She makes dyes from algae gathered along the banks of the river. Several fishermen help her collect it. Several of her dyes sell for a good price in Greyhawk, and Anice is fairly well-to-do. Her husband died during the siege of the castle, and since she is only 32, she is looking for another. Several of the fishermen are quite interested in her, and it is but a matter of time before she makes up her mind. Anice doesn't care who the ruler is, as long as they don't raise taxes.

**19 - Leatherworker** - Sid works here, tanning hides, repairing bridles and leather armor. He also sells leather and studded leather armor. His wife is Julie, and he has a little girl named Beth. He, Hal (the storekeeper), and Zak (the carpenter) are brothers. Sid hopes for Stark's return, but for now contents himself with business.

**20 - Carpenter/Woodworker** - Zak the carpenter lives here. He builds a variety of cabinets and tables for trade, as well as building houses, barns, and other such establishments. He lives with his son Mik. His wife was killed by orcs, and Zak hates them with a passion. Zak is seriously considering joining Mastryne's men, just so he can go with them on their raids into the Pomarj.

**21 - Grocer/Barber** - This store is run by Winston. He sells a variety of fruits and vegetables to the locals. His wife Elsie cuts hair for a copper, and she is known to create quite fancy styles for women. Many locals hang out here to gossip, and rumors are easily picked up by others shopping for goods. At the request of Mastryne Winston has recently started supplying both normal and preserved rations sealed in wax for the increasing campaigns into the Pomarj. Winston is a spy for Stark. He hears pretty much all the rumors, and passes them on to one of his regular "customers," a hunter from the woods who is actually one of Stark's followers.

**22 - Butcher** - Jonas the butcher lives here. He raises cattle, as well buying from the locals. A good portion of his goods go straight to the castle, though Jonas is willing to sell meat to any interested customer. He pays well for bear and deer meat, as he can preserve these and ship them to his brother in Narwell, who sells them in Greyhawk for a handsome profit. His wife Frannie (Karl the blacksmith's sister) tends the stock along with his son Tod. Tod also hires out part-time as a teamster when traders are heading north. Jonas has no opinion regarding what's going on, because "opinions are dangerous".

**23 - Farmer** - This farm is run by Tel. He has quite a few livestock, as well as several large fields. He has a large family, including his wife Jenna, his sons Aldric and Berek, and his daughters Kory and Tina, all in their teens. Elderly Horace is Tel's uncle, and Karl & Frannie are his cousins on the other side of his family. Tel doesn't give a hoot who's ruling, they all want their taxes, so there's nothing different about them.

**24 - Temple of Mayaheine** - This temple was opened several years ago by Father Joran (P7), originally of Crossford. He has one acolyte, Anton (P1). Joran heals the villagers for free, which has earned him the goodwill of the village, and the previous rulers. Right now, Mastryne's men have been standing about the place. They harass any who enter, and many of the peasants have been scared away. Joran is quite furious about what's going on, but there is nothing he can do. If he tries to defend his parishioners too strongly, his church will likely be destroyed. Then he would be unable to help anyone. Joran actively aids any who oppose Mastryne, and routinely visits Baron Stark to heal his men and provide support (especially with spells like *create food and water*).

Joran's other main problem is his assistant Anton. Anton is something of a fanatic. Twice in the last month he has slipped out at night. He searches for the troopers who routinely cause the most harm to the villagers. Then he engages them in banter, leading them to a secluded area where he attacks them. Anton has killed two men so far, and is willing to kill more. He does nothing stupid, yet his midnight forays to punish the worst of Mastryne's troops are placing the church in danger. Joran is aware of his activities, and though he secretly admires Anton's activities, he has told his assistant in no uncertain terms that they will not happen again. Anton agreed, but it is a matter of time until he continues his secret escapades.

**25 - Boardinghouse** - This is actually just an apartment building, with rooms being rented for 1 silver per week. Several people staying here have skipped out without paying, which causes the owner, Gilda, no end of grief. What no one knows is that Gilda is a priestess of Iuz, and she has kidnapped several of her guests, sacrificing them to her god. She then buries their remains in the forest. She delights in what happened to Stark, but still doesn't care for Mastryne (after all, he doesn't follow the One True God). Her business has been in a bit of a slump lately, due to Mastryne's poor reputation. There are fewer travelers, and the ones that do come through are generally tough customers (mainly traders from Narwell that deal in illicit goods -- like humanoid slaves).

**26 - Fishermen's huts** - These huts are inhabited by a number of fishermen. Most of their day is spent on the river, with nights at one of the taverns. Several of them are vying for the attentions of Anice the dyemaker, often making fools of themselves trying to impress her. For the price of 5 coppers, one of these men will gladly ferry people over to the other side of the river as that is where Anice works.

**27 - Mill** - Kent the miller lives here. He grinds all the meal in town, and ensures that the baron gets his share. Many of the villagers dislike him, but the baron has ordered that only his mill is to be used for grinding grain. Kent's wife Stacy and their daughter Pam also live here. Kent doesn't like Mastryne, because the Baron has one of his guards here making sure Kent doesn't cheat him of his share (something Kent got away with before).

**28 - Cooper** - Rand the barrel-maker lives here with his wife Harriet and their children Luke and Alice (both quite young). Rand learned his trade from Zak (the carpenter's) father, and Zak's wife was Rand's sister. Rand makes all the barrels in the area, and has deals worked out with the inn, both taverns, and the baron. He also ships barrels for several taverns in Narwell, which ensures that he never runs out of work. He really doesn't care who rules, as long as he has business.

**29 - Mason** - Josh the mason lives here. He does all the repairs on the castle walls, as well as doing work for the locals. His wife Cathy and his son Bo also live here. Josh is pragmatic, and while he doesn't care for Mastryne, he knows there is nothing he can do about it.

**30 - Bowyer/Fletcher** - Aryn Silverleaf, a half-elf, lives here. He makes quality arrows (flight ranges 1.25 times normal), and has a deal with the baron to supply his troops. Many locals also buy their arrows here. Aryn is a spy for Celene. He sends reports about once a month via dove to a fellow elf on the other side of the river. He is also a Knight of Luna, and his messages reflect this. He has been requesting that the elves take action against Mastryne, but so far has been ignored. He would like to meet Baron Stark and offer him aid, but he has no way of contacting the man. He arrived only shortly before the Greyhawk Wars, and is considered an outsider by most of the locals.

**31 - Barracks** - This large building houses all the sailors and marines. Several of each may be found here at any time of day. A small shrine to Hextor has recently been erected near the building.

**32 - Aeric's Tavern** - This tavern was built very recently. It is quite rough-and-tumble, and caters to soldiers. A dwarf named Aeric runs it, and he is rumored to have had a few adventures himself. He has two barmaids named Shonda and Ann. Both are from Greyhawk and view the locals as pretty backward. He also has a big man named Ceff working as a bouncer. Unbeknownst to Aeric, Ann is a spy for Greyhawk, while Ceff is actually a half-orc spy from the Pomarj. Both are gathering what information they can find. Ann wants to know what the baron is doing and how it will affect Greyhawk, while Ceff is finding out information about Mastryne and his troops in preparation for an attack by orc forces.

Here's a general Layout of the area (I don't have a mapper program). #1 and #2 are just east of the castle, #3 thru #10 are in the castle, and the rest are in the village (spread out a little). River is immediately to the left of the castle and the village.

## NPC's of Note

### Baron Cedric Mastryne (15th level NE fighter)

Mastryne is the absolute ruler of these lands, and he intends to keep it that way. He is a large man, with short brown hair, obviously of Oeridian birth. He wears magical black plate mail, and wields a flamberge (two-handed sword) in combat. He is quite grim, not trusting anyone completely. He respects his former adventuring partners, and tries to keep them happy. After all, they know his weaknesses. He has a deep hatred of orcs, stemming from some mysterious incident in his past. When engaging them in battle, he enters a berserk rage and isn't satisfied until he has killed all within reach. He occasionally makes forays into the Pomarj, at the head of his troops, in a vain attempt to defeat the creatures. He knows that he will never truly vanquish his foes, which causes them to become even madder than before his raids.

### Sir Walter Payne (12th level LE fighter)

Payne is Mastryne's best friend. They have known each other for years. They understand each other quite well, and willingly come to the other's aid. Payne is one of only two men that Mastryne trusts enough to give them any true power (the other being Aldric Redwyne). Payne always keeps his word, though he occasionally twists the meaning of what he promises. He wears magical black plate mail similar to Mastryne's, and wields a broadsword and shield in battle. He is also a large man, yet with blond hair and blue eyes (being of pure Suloise extraction). He also has a hatred for orcs, and rumor has it that his hatred was acquired during the same incident where Mastryne

also gained a hatred for that race. Of course, no one is stupid enough to ask him about it.

**Sir Aldric Redwyne** (16th level NE thief)

Redwyne is Mastryne's castellan. He is a master thief, as well as a good merchant. He claims to have known Mastryne back when the Baron was but a young lad, fresh to the world. It's probably true, as Mastryne leaves Redwyne the run of the castle when he raids into the Pomarj. Redwyne typically wears black silk clothing, with no apparent armor (he has magical belt buckle that is the equivalent of a *ring of protection +4*). He is fairly short, with brown hair and eyes, being a mix of Oeridian and Suloise blood. Redwyne has yet to be seen outside of the castle walls, claiming that he feels quite at home behind them.

**Sir Berrendor Moonfeather** (elven, NE, 9th level fighter/8th level mage)

Moonfeather is somewhat of a rarity, being an evil elf. He is commander of the southern border with the Pomarj. He wears magical plate which appears to allow spell-casting. It's painted black, of course. He has the typical elven hatred for orcs, and always accompanies Mastryne on his forays into the orc-lands. He has an important secret, which no one else knows. He is a cousin to Yolande (queen of Celene). The relation is not very close, yet he is an embarrassment to her. She does not currently realize where he is, and Berrendor means to keep it that way.

**Sir Cefwyn the Drowned** (11th level CN fighter)

Cefwyn is another adventuring partner of Mastryne's. He is no longer quite right in the head. Having been drowned and brought back to life has left him a little confused about certain things. He is quite sure that he is immune to drowning now, and takes unnecessary risks on board the boats. He also seems to be very cheerful, and never sees the down side to anything. Of course, this makes him a great favorite with his men, but he can be quite annoying to the other lords. He is fairly short, with blond hair, green eyes, and an expanding waistline. Cefwyn is quite happy doing what he is assigned to, and never joins in on Mastryne's raids.

**Sir Lindon Moonfeather** (7th level NE elven mage)

Lindon is Berrendor's son, and is much like his father. He is unaware of his lineage, and will probably never find out about it. In appearance, he is of average height (for an elf), with long blond hair and piercing blue eyes. Aldric calls him a real lady-killer. Lindon is quite an accomplished mage, and will soon pass up his father in the magical arts. Of course, he is an abominable fighter and always has several bodyguards during the raids into the Pomarj. Currently,

he heads the defense of the eastern border of Mastryne's realm.

**Sir Ander Mallory** (13th level CE cleric of Hextor)

Mallory is a fanatical follower of his god, and it was he who pushed Mastryne into completing the takeover of the castle. He has grand plans involving a cathedral to Hextor, but first he's got to get rid of the temple to Mayaheine. Mastryne has limited him to harassing the followers of the rival god, but Ander would love to just raze the church to the ground. Ander has managed to gain quite a few converts among the castle soldiers. He has sent messages to the Church in Ahlissa requesting funds, but has yet to meet with success. He is a short man, with deep black hair and dark glaring eyes. He is also quite prejudiced. He likes Oeridians and tolerates Suloise, but considers the other races to be inferior. He also hates humanoids of all types, considering them to be inferior beings. He joins Mastryne's raids, but for a slightly different purpose. He captures orcs during the raids, and leads them back with the aid of some of the troops (going ahead of Mastryne). Upon nearing the castle, he meets with slavers from Narwell at a prearranged place and sells the orcs to them. These operations have allowed him to begin accumulating enough wealth to build a temple to Hextor. It will be some time before he can gather enough gold to pay for everything he desires, but he can soon lay the foundations for at small temple at least. Ander's other task is commanding the northern border. He has Sir Walter Dayne take care of all the messy details, and only occasionally checks the area himself.

The other knights are routinely given minor duties, but have no real power. Mastryne does not trust them, and refuses to give them any true responsibility. He is aware that Sir Mallory relies quite heavily on Sir Dayne, and has agents keep an eye on the man.

**Sir Loris Sunblade** (half-elven, CE, 5th level fighter/4th level mage)

In charge of drilling the troops, Loris is lazy and more concerned with researching magic than supervising soldiers. He still puts in the allotted time, just to keep out of trouble.

**Sir Walter Dayne** (6th level NE fighter)

Sir Ander Mallory's assistant. Walter has quite a bit of power, actively overseeing the northern border. He is careful not to tread on any toes, however, being intelligent enough to know that his position could quite quickly become unnecessary.

**Sir Bruce Harlaw** (5th level CE fighter)

In charge of procuring supplies for the castle, Bruce is a true wheeler-dealer, and gets along well with Sir Redwyne. He's been skimming supplies and selling or trading them on the side for personal profit.

**Sir Cedric Rowan** (5th level NE mage)

Sir Rowan assists Sir Cefwyn. He attempts to make sure all patrols are properly manned and report in on time. Quite humorless, he can't stand Sir Cefwyn and hopes the man will soon drown again. The men hate him.

**Sir Kordin Throck** (5th level CE cleric of Hextor)

Sir Throck is a bloodthirsty, avaricious, and power hungry follower of Hextor. Unfortunately, he's neither bright enough to hide it nor charming enough to win people over, with the result that no one likes him or trusts him. He acts as Sir Mallory's assistant, and Mallory has so far managed to keep him busy on pointless errands and orc-hunting trips. It seems only a matter of time before someone succeeds in killing him, a matter subject to a good number of wagers among the guardsmen.

**Sir Garrick Marsh** (4th level CE fighter)

In charge of maintaining order in the village, Garrick is a bully. He never pushes anyone too far, but he is a master of taking them to the brink. Currently, he has orders to shut down the Temple of Mayaheine. He is not supposed to act too directly, but harassing any who try to enter is considered acceptable.

**Baron Brandon Stark** (10th level NG fighter)

Stark is the rightful ruler of the castle, and loves telling this to anyone who will listen. Unfortunately, that includes only his own men and some of the villagers. Currently he runs a small band of raiders, hiding within the forest east of the castle. His men ambush Mastryne's soldiers, as well as killing any orcs they find (which is becoming quite rare, due to Mastryne's raids). Many are long-term soldiers who served the previous lord as well as Stark. Stark is a gifted strategist, managing to stay one step ahead of his enemies. He gets some support from the villagers, as well as help from the hunters and trappers who live in the forest. He would dearly love to find an ally to his cause, but so far none have been forthcoming. Physically, Stark is an average man, of typical height. He has brown hair and eyes, and has adopted a mustache. He is Oeridian by birth. He typically wears a mix of brown and green clothes, and is learning the art of the bow (before he was always a swordsman). His band consists of 25 men-at-arms (0 to 1st level), as well as his castellan, Jarek Ravenclaw (5th level NG

fighter). Several local rangers also assist him, often showing up just in time to warn him of the approach of Mastryne's men. So far, Stark has been quite lucky. If Mastryne ever manages to corner him, he would be food for the crows.

# THE FINAL WORD

## News and Announcements from the Council Of Greyhawk

### How to Get Stuff in Here!

The Council of Greyhawk accepts freelance submissions from anyone interested. If you have something you wish to submit, or would like to discuss an idea for an article, send e-mail to "Oerthjrn1@psionics.net". All submissions are reviewed by a small editorial board and checked for clarity, grammar and consistency. We will work with all submissions, but reserve the right to reject a piece if it does not conform to the aforementioned standards.

The Oerth Journal is always interested in in-depth examinations of the nations, cities, and sites of the Flanaess and their history, as well as adventures, artifact and magical item descriptions, kits, a detailed write-up of Waldorf, and just about anything else related to Greyhawk. Regular departments include *Dyvers*, *City of Adventure*, which details guilds, individuals, locations, and organizations of the City of Sails, *With Boccob's Blessing*, an in-depth look at a magic item or artifact unique to the World of Greyhawk, *Gateway to Adventure*, with World of Greyhawk-based adventures, *The Good Oerth*, featuring detailed exploration of "off the map" areas of Oerik and beyond, *Denizens of the Flanaess*, detailing unique monster NPCs of the Flanaess, and *Of Oerth and Altar*, a regular feature examining the myriad deities of Greyhawk.

Writer's Guidelines are archived at the Oerth Journal section of the Council of Greyhawk website.

### Write to us!

What do you think of the Oerth Journal? What would you like to see more of? Less of? Write the Journal and let us know!

### What is the Council of Greyhawk?

The Council is a loosely organized group of Greyhawk enthusiasts who currently meet and operate via email and IRC. Regular meetings are open to all interested. Check our web page, the World of Greyhawk folder at KEYWORD: RPG on AOL or GREYtalk for meeting times and details.

Visit our Web site at:

<http://members.xoom.com/cogh/index.html>

Subscribe to the Council mailing list for information on the latest Council projects and events at:

<http://www.onelist.com/subscribe.cgi/CoGH>

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