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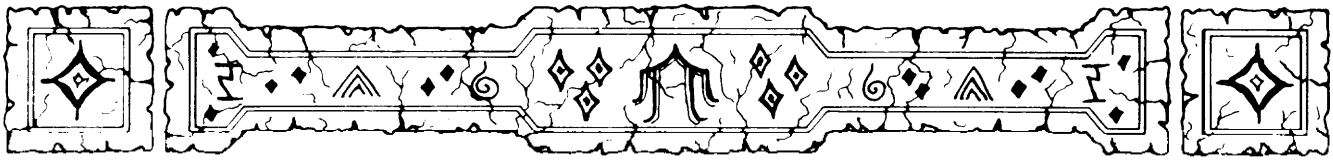
Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®  
2nd Edition



# The Shining South

by Tom Prasa





# Durparian Specialty Priests

## Lucha (She Who Guides)

**Lesser Power of the Seven Heavens, LG**  
**Portfolio:** Those who wander or seek something.  
**Requirements:** Wisdom 15  
**Weapons Allowed:** All bludgeoning weapons, nets, lassos, and anything that allows capture without harming the victim. The first weapon learned must always be a staff.  
**Armor Allowed:** Any  
**Major Spheres:** All, Astral, Charm, Divination, Healing, Necromantic, Protection, Plant.  
**Minor Spheres:** Guardian, Sun, Elemental.  
**Magical Items Allowed:** Same as clerics.

### Granted Powers

Specialty priests of Lucha can turn undead, as can their clerical counterparts. They also receive the navigation proficiency for free at first level. At third level, specialty priests of Lucha can *locate object*, once per day. At 10th level, they receive one *find the path* spell that may only be used to find something that has been lost.

### Other Notes

Lucha is worshipped by nearly everyone in Durpar. Her worshippers believe that she will guide them to the most profitable customers. She oversees connections and relationships, guiding herdsmen to good pastures, blessing marriages, helping lost ships at sea, and insuring safe births. It is widely believed that Lucha herself watches over all marriages performed by her clergy. Nearly all marriages in Durpar are performed by priests of Lucha. Her priests work ceaselessly against those of Mask and other evil gods.

Ceremonial dress consists of a circlet woven of vines or flowers and white robes. No shoes are worn at ceremonies. The only other symbol of office is a staff wound about with vines and flowers.

## Curna (The Wise One)

**Greater Power of Nirvana, LN**  
**Portfolio:** Wisdom, knowledge  
**Requirements:** Wisdom 13, Intelligence 13  
**Weapons Allowed:** Bludgeoning weapons  
**Armor Allowed:** Any non-metal armor or shields  
**Major Spheres:** All, Charm, Creation, Divination, Healing, Protection, Summoning  
**Minor Spheres:** Guardian, Sun, Weather  
**Magical Items Allowed:** Any usable by clerics, plus any that are used to enhance knowledge (*crystal balls, wands of magic detection, etc.*)

### Granted Powers

Specialty priests of Curna turn undead normally. They have a 3% chance per level to recognize any given magical item for what it is. This power does not bestow exact knowledge; it works as much as the bard ability. At 10th level specialty priests of Curna may call upon a *blinding flash* once per day. This is a beam of light that erupts from the priest's holy symbol, affecting a single target. The target must make a successful saving throw versus spells or be blinded. This blindness lasts until it is magically dispelled, or until the priest lifts it by silent act of will.

### Other Notes

Most Durparians pay tribute to Curna before making an important business deal, or before embarking on a new venture. Rich merchants may have a priest of Curna on their personal payroll. Such priests are considered to be very wise, and are consulted frequently. There is a huge temple of Curna in the mountains that bear her name, a complex that is home to a library nearly the rival of Candlekeep on the Sword Coast. The contents of the Curna library differs from that of Candlekeep in that it has fewer historical documents, and more information on the world as it is now. Teams of explorers and sages constantly update this information.





# The Shining South

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# INTRODUCTION

"First time out of Halruaa, isn't it?" The old mage turned to his apprentice. The young man nodded nervously as he watched the sea far below the ship.

"You already know that Halruaa is the best and most civilized land in the Realms. Only there is magic truly utilized to its fullest potential. The other lands of the Shining South differ greatly from Halruaa. You must learn carefully, if you would survive to become a wizard.

"The first country we come to is Dambrath, the land where the Crintri rule. The Crintri are half-elves descended from the drow. The women of that race rule the country with an iron hand. A young man like you would end up working in the mines or herding rothe, provided that they didn't discover you had been trained in magic. It is a hanging offense for a male to use magic in Dambrath.

"Dambrath has only one real thing of beauty, the Dance of the Dolphins." The apprentice glanced at the sea below, trying to hide the excited gleam in his eyes.

"Oh, you've heard of it," the old man chuckled. "I hope that we'll pass over the Bay at dusk so we can see the dance. It's an experience you'll never forget. Thousands of dolphins move in unity and harmony. We really should avoid Dambrath altogether, but I wish to see the dance once more."

The old mage looked off into the sky, lost in his memories. The apprentice cleared his throat. His master was always drifting off like this. If he were left undisturbed, the old man would stare off for an hour or more.

"Where was I? Oh, yes, the lands of the Shining South. After Halruaa, we'll stop in the land of Luiren. Don't expect to find a bed big enough to fit you, though. The halflings don't have many spaces for someone of your size. The Luiren stout and the bouqthi make up for any lack in physical accommodations. Stout is a type of ale, not a type of halfling," the old mage explained. "Bouqthi is a delicious pastry made in Luiren. My mouth waters every time I think about it. The people are a friendly bunch in Luiren. You can

have a grand time there, as long as you keep your hand on your purse.

"After Luiren we'll come to the Shining Lands, as the countries of Estagund, Var the Golden, and Durpar are known. Heldapan in Durpar is our destination. You'll need to be on your best behavior there." The apprentice's eyes grew wide with alarm. The old man smiled. "There's no danger, but a Durparian trader would buy the shirt off your back so fast it would make your head spin. And of course you'd come away feeling you'd gotten a fair deal. Durparian traders have to be seen to be believed. Be wary, Durparians hate fraud and theft more than almost anything else. So keep your hands in your pockets and out of mischief.

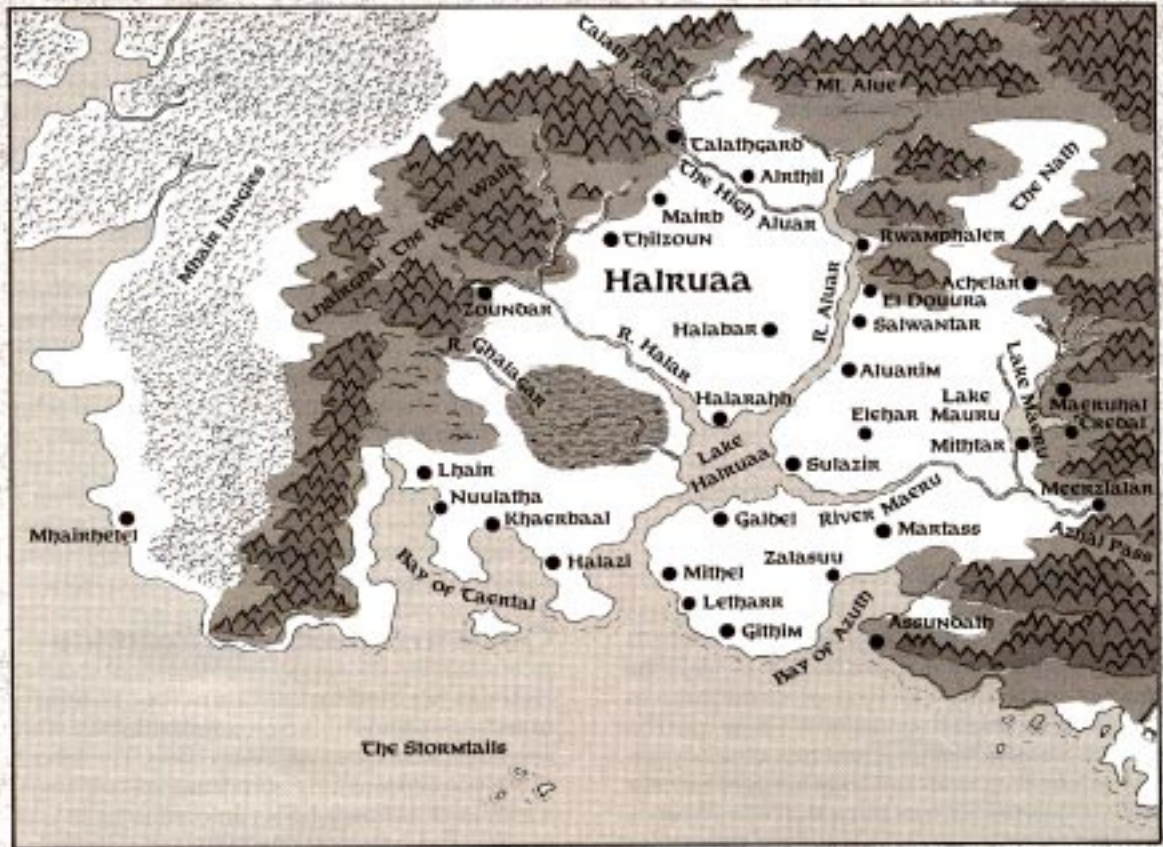
"On the other hand, Durpar does get goods from all over the world. It's about the only place in the Shining South where we should be able to get the rare feathers from Maztica I need to complete my new spell. After we get through at Heldapan, we will fly over to Orvylltar, in Ulgarth, to see my good friend King Drasna the Fortunate. Ulgarth is also the only place in the world where mingari is blended. I intend to bring back several jars." The apprentice frowned, remembering what the old mage had said about Durpar.

"What?" The old man had spotted the questioning frown. "Yes, we could buy it in Durpar, but Drasna will probably make it a gift. I enchanted the ballistas in his harbor, you know."

Welcome to the Shining South, where living is good, and the lands are abundant. This product is for use by DMs, but players may also find much of interest here. To quote the great Satama, founder of the cult of Adama in Durpar, "All is part of the one, but this is the best part."



# Halruaa



## General Description

A rich, reclusive realm, Halruaa is famous for its electrum mines, its fiery Haerlu wine, and, most of all, for its magic.

Halruaa is almost encircled by the Walls of Halruaa, a mountain range that forms the east, north, and west borders of the country. From the south, where the Great Sea beckons, come both trade and trouble. Halruaa's reputation has spread the world over, causing the Halruans to be warlike out of necessity. They have, too often, faced invaders trying to conquer the "vile mages," or fought off someone attempting to steal the magical spells or items that are unique in Halruaa.

## Geography and Climate

The "Walls of Halruaa" are several mountain ranges that almost entirely encircle the nation. Lhairghal is the name given the range that makes up the west wall. Muaraghal is the range to the east, and Nathaghal is to the north. The "High Aluar" is the name of the narrow hilly strip that leads through the mountains to the north, the only natural land entrance to Halruaa. There are several other entrances. The Talath Pass is the largest on the western side of Halruaa, and the Azhal pass south of Lake Maeru is the only one on the east side.

The summers are hot. Magical cooling devices and spells are coveted and expensive. In the winter many of the mountain temples receive snow,



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while the plains receive rains for about four months. The temperature ranges from the 100's in the summer to the 80's in the winter. The winds blow off the mountains until they meet over Lake Halruaa, making the lake a tricky place to sail. The winds help make the life on the land more bearable. Halruaa is not nearly as humid as some of the other countries in the Shining South.

Rains are frequent, so the farms around Lake Maeru and north of Lake Halruaa produce most of the food the country needs. The Nath, the basin in the northeast corner of Halruaa, is filled with herds of wild rothe and auroch, which are cultivated for food. This area is almost 500 feet higher than the rest of the country. Here the temperatures rarely reach 100, and the rains are not nearly as frequent or severe.

## History

Halruaa was settled centuries ago by wizards fleeing the Phaerimm in what was to become the Anauroch desert. The first wizards came in unique flying ships invented by the Netheril. The wizards found a beautiful and rich country, settled only by shepherds and large herds of aurochs and wild rothe. It was here that the wizards decided to make a stand, should the Phaerimm follow. The Phaerimm never did, but Halruaa has had to defend itself from attacks by all of its neighbors since then.

Over the centuries Dambrath has attacked and raided Halruaa's ports and borders. Once, led by a magic resistant Barbarian, the Dambraii occupied all of the country south of Lake Halruaa. They were defeated in battle by the great archmage Mycontil, who slew their barbarian leader. Forty-thousand Dambraii attacked, and were stopped by 500 Halruans. More than 200 Halruan wizards, including Mycontil, died in the battle.

The latest attack was less than 100 years ago. The attack was made through the Talath Pass by the power hungry king of Lapaliya. He had allied with bandits from the wastes. This time the Halruans were able to field a larger force, including fighting men as well as wizards in their skyships.

The attackers were easily routed.

Halruaa also suffered through a civil war about five centuries ago. A number of mages advocated beginning new experiments in magic, ones which even the Netheril didn't approve of. The renegades were driven from the region. The surviving renegades left to found the land of Thay, or so it is said in Halruaa.

Since then Halruaa has been at peace (they have had no declared wars). Halruaa still suffers raids from Dambraii pirates, bandits of the wastes, savages from the Mhair Jungles, and any other pirate, raider, or hungry wizard who thinks that magic and wealth grow on trees in Halruaa.

This constant raiding has made the Halruans very defensive, warlike and traditional. The people say that since wizards have always led them, wizards always will.

## Government and Politics

Halruaa is ruled by the Council of Elders, a tumultuous body of independent thinkers who somehow manage to get things done. The leader of the council and king of Halruaa is Zalathorm, a 29th-level diviner, who is rumored to be several centuries old. He rules from his tower in Halarahh, an ornate place with many magical guardians and defenses.

When the Elders meet, Zalathorm uses a crystal orb, through which all of the Elders can be contacted at once. There are almost 400 Elders, but fewer than half usually respond. Currently, only 39 wizards need to respond to achieve a quorum.

To become an Elder, a mage must be of at least 16th level. Not all eligible mages accept the post. Those that don't accept say they don't want the hassles of being part of the council.

When the wizard-king dies, or steps down, his successor is chosen from among the ranks of the Elders. The Elders pick the most powerful of their number to lead. A complicated system involving level of power, ranking of specialization, and opinions expressed by the Elders, is



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used to determine the new leader. The last three leaders have all been divination specialists. It is thought that these are the most powerful of the wizards. "Knowledge is power, great knowledge is great power."

Since most Halruans worship Mystra, the church plays a key role in the government. Priests of the Lady of Mysteries serve as judges for the state. The large temple complex of Mystra in the city of Halarahh houses Zalathorm's tower. The largest temple of Mystra, however, is at Mt. Talath, an ancient stronghold of caverns, passages, and mountaintop turrets.

Halruaa also has its mundane authorities. Patrols, city guards, and, occasionally, military forces are common sights on the streets. A saying in Halruaa, "if everyone was a mage, who would do the cooking" applies to all of the non-magical professions. Magic is an accepted part of peoples' lives. All patrols and military units have a priest or mage in their ranks.

Laws in Halruaa are strict and justice is swiftly meted out. For any serious offense, the offender may not be convicted without magical proof to back it up. Justice in Halruaa is swift. Someone convicted of murder by his own testimony may expect to be disintegrated before the day is out.

Intent is also studied magically, especially in capital crimes. A defense of "he pointed something at me that looked like a wand, so I slew him," is an acceptable defense, provided the defendant really thought his life was in danger.

## People and Customs

Halruaa is predominantly a human nation. The descendants of the Netheril, mixed with some Arkaiun blood from the western plains of Dambrath, make up over 90% of the population.

The remainder are mostly dwarves, concerned with working the electrum mines east of Lake Maeru. Halfling traders from Luiren can be found near the coast. There are a few elves and half-elves whose fascination and talent with magic is strong enough to grant them a seat on the council of Elders.

## Languages

Halruans speak Halruan, a version of Netherese, brought with them from the far north. It is a complicated language, not easily learned by a foreigner. Nearly all mages, traders and anyone who must deal with folk from the outside speak the common language of the Realms.

## Social Customs

"It's the most paranoid country I was ever in," a Durparian merchant once remarked. "I couldn't walk three feet without some sort of divination spell being cast on me. It made me nervous, let me tell you. Sold my entire load of mandrake root, though, for a nice profit."

Since anyone, even a beggar on the street, could be hiding a *wand of fireballs*, most people are polite and make no sudden moves around strangers. Courtesy and politeness have become so ritualized that people are uncomfortable without them.

The high degree of courtesy has created several customs that are staunchly observed in daily life. Before one enters another's dwelling, one should identify oneself and pledge no magic or malice to those inside. It is considered an insult to use magic inside a dwelling without permission from the host. Depending on one's host's identity, it can also be quite dangerous.

All Halruan children are schooled until the age of 13. Halruan children are expected to learn reading and writing, history and a productive trade. When a child reaches the age of five, he is tested for potential for the Art. If the student is capable, he is also taught spells such as *cantrips*, *dancing lights*, or *audible glamer*. A group of adolescents following several bobbing clusters of glowing lights down the street is a common sight in any Halruan town. This is a popular game called Dueling Globes by the youngsters. The participants must match the movements of their lights from the *dancing light* spells.

Wizards are not a gregarious lot by nature. This is shown in the organization of Halruaa.



# Halruaa

There are many small villages and towns, but few large cities. Halarahh, the largest city, boasts fewer than 8,000 people. Most villages are far smaller. Even along the coast, where most military troops are based, the numerous villages are still small.

The four largest cities after Halarahh are located along the coast, but none of these have populations greater than 7,000. Such a solitary and defensive attitude, insures that the average Halruan learns to defend himself.

As with any small country, the social order is pronounced, although it does not make a huge difference in a Halruan's daily life. At the bottom of the social ladder are those who can use little if any magic, such as a common miner or farmer. Next are those who defend Halruaa, the soldiers and the sailors of the military. The higher levels are all spellcasters.

The lowest group of spell casters in society is the small sect of priests of Azuth.

Above them are the mages, and the priests of Mystra. The order, from least respected to most respected is: necromancers, conjurers, abjurers, clerics of Mystra, enchanters, transmuters, specialty priests of Mystra, generalist mages, invokers, illusionists, and diviners.

This ranking reflects the recent past. After the era of the great Mycontil, an invoker of high level, invokers were felt to be the most powerful mages. Later, the second invasion from the bandit wastes was defeated in large part by many masterful illusions, including a horde of skyships raining fire on the enemy.

Recent years have shifted attention to the diviners, for Zalathorm has predicted many of the raids on Halruaa. This has enabled the border guards to win many battles with few casualties. About one third of Halruans have some ability with magic, and can cast at least one first level spell. The vast majority of these folks can cast no more than that. This means that in a patrol of 20 men, six of them, plus their leader, can cast a *light*, *cantrip*, or other common first level spell. *Cantrip* is especially popular. It is useful for lighting fires quickly, driving insects away

from the steeds, or adding a bit of flavor to the stew. When it comes to cleaning up armor, a *clean* cantrip works wonders.

The same can be said for the average household. The housewife who can cast one spell has magical help with the housework for an hour. Such people are considered to be a special form of dual classed characters. They have the abilities of 1st-level mages along with whatever class they have chosen.

For example, the spell-casting members of a guard patrol start off with only a four-sided Hit Die, instead of the ten-sided die they normally would have. Once they reach 2nd level in the fighter class, they gain additional Hit Dice as a fighter. Such people should have an average of 3 hit points less than their non-spell-using companions.

Halruans are intensely interested in magic, and a gathering is often the place to show off a new magical effect. One of the reasons that the normally reclusive wizards have social gatherings is to show off new magical effects or items. These events are not limited to mages. Rich traders, important generals and electrum mine owners all desire and collect magical items. A new or unknown item is cause for much talk in the villages.

Nearly every Halruan, however, has his life affected by magic. *Continual light* spells are used to light almost all of the streets in the various villages. The richer villages have *cyclical light* spells to provide the lighting on their streets. Lamps with *continual light* spells are also common and affordable, as low as only 100 gold pieces in the towns of the Nath and near Mt. Talath.

Even many who do not cast spells are concerned with magic. Adventurers roam the Realms, searching for new spellbooks or items, to bring them fame and fortune in Halruaa. Many mages also wander the Realms to learn and bring back new magics.

Halruans are fiercely jealous of their own magic. Even though Halruan mages frequently travel the realms, they are expected to guard the secrets of Halruan magic. Spellbooks containing





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unique Halruan spells are extensively trapped and well guarded by the mages when they are taken from the country. The most common protection is a version of the *fire trap*. Since this spell effectively destroys the book, it is favored by Halruan mages to keep the Halruan spells from unfriendly hands. A traveling Halruan mage may end up with no traveling spellbooks, but this is considered a small price to pay for security.

Magical combat is frowned on among common folk. Most villages have a dueling field situated well away from any buildings, to accommodate mages who insist on settling disagreements by magical combat.

Dueling is not officially accepted. In fact it is opposed by the priests of Mystra, for such duels are frequently fatal. Such duels most frequently occur between two mages who have claimed the

same new spell or item as their invention. Nothing matters as much to a young wizard as gaining credit for a new spell or item.

Invention of spells and items is a sure way to fame and fortune in Halruaa. A mage who invents a new spell is quick to advertise it. Just as quickly he'll be getting requests for copies of it, at a good fee, of course. The process of making magical items is even more expensive and is considerably more difficult than inventing a spell. Still, there are many unique items in Halruaa. Some duplicate or combine effects of other items, while others do things no other item does. For example, Zalathorm, the wizard-king, has a floating carriage that radiates a *globe of invulnerability* around it on command. No one else has been able to duplicate the effect, since a globe is normally stationary. Zalathorm has not revealed the



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secret yet. It is assumed that whoever takes over as king will inherit it.

Each Elder receives a *skyship*, and the secret of recharging it. This makes the position of Elder greatly desired among the lesser mages. Every family hopes for a son or daughter to become an archmage.

Twenty years ago, the necromancer Random ignited the latest influx of magic. This strange wizard had finally cracked the Southern Magic puzzle. He returned to Halruaa with a copy of the spell *read Southern Magic*. Over the next five years he made and sold numerous copies of the spell before he abruptly dropped out of sight. Most people believe Random is mad, and the country is better off without him. There is, however, concern that he may reveal secret and powerful Halruan magic. A team of mages has been dispatched by the Council of Elders to either fetch him back, or silence him forever.

## Religion

The majority of Halruans worship one of two powers: Mystra or Azuth. The Halruans were very shaken by the Time of Troubles. Elders of Mystra's church believe either that Midnight has taken over Mystra's duties, or that Mystra has been restored. This split in belief has caused some elders to lose their faith in Mystra. These elders and some of the laity have begun to worship Azuth, infusing that faith with new popularity.

There is only one temple stronghold dedicated to Azuth. It is in the mountains near Lhair in western Halruaa. There are eight temples to Mystra in the mountains around the Nath, each one dedicated to one of the major schools of magic. The largest temple, under Mt. Talath, is dedicated to all forms of magic.

## Money and Commerce

Although the wizards of Halruaa are protective of their magic and their privacy they have developed a taste for the finer things that other nations can provide. Durparian merchants dock at the

ports of Zalasuu, Mithel, Halagard, and Khaerbaal. Goods from all over the Realms flow north into Halruaa.

Among the chief imports are; foodstuffs from Luiren (Luiren Stout is very popular in Halruaa), silks from Durpar, coffee from Ulgarth, and metal goods and weapons from Durpar. The chief export is electrum, which is found in almost pure deposits in the mountains east of Lake Maeru.

Halruaa is the home of two large lakes, Lake Maeru and Lake Halruaa. Lake Maeru has good fishing. It provides many a meal for the electrum miners and the farmers of the valley. Lake Halruaa yields little. The constant churning winds over the fresh water lake make sailing difficult. It is joined to the Great Sea by the Halagard Channel, a three-mile-wide channel which connects to the Bay of Halruaa.

Although Halruaa is larger and more powerful than her neighbors, it is somewhat sparsely populated. The population does not exceed 100,000. There are plenty of wide open spaces.

Traders are always welcome, but are watched with suspicion. Adventurers are seen as busybodies and thieves come to steal Halruan secrets. No Halruan is allowed to teach a non-native any of the unique Halruan spells, under pain of being feebleminded. Non-natives who learn such spells are hunted down and exterminated, for the good of the nation.

Within this stricture, there are still many spells and magical items that are available to outsiders. Someone with a new spell may be able to trade it for a spellbook with many of the common spells of the Realms.

The common currency of Halruaa is the Skie. This electrum coin is produced at the Royal Mint in Aluarim, in the center of the country. The coins bear the image of the current wizard-king, so most of the coins in use have Zalathorm's image. The Durpar Vellim, and the Dambraii Crint and Shebs are also widely used.



# Halruaa

## Cities on Halruaa

Halruaa has numerous villages, too many to detail here. Instead, the four most important are listed, followed by a description of a typical village that outlines what a group of characters might find there.

### Halarahh

The home of the wizard-king, Halarahh has a population of 8,000, which makes it the largest city, in Halruaa. It is a comfortable city on the northern banks of Lake Halruaa, at the mouth of the river Halar. Halarahh is a wide sprawling town; the area of the city is twice what one would expect from the population.

The town is dotted with wizard's towers, for almost half of the citizenry are spellcasters. There are, however, actually only about 300 practicing mages in the town. Much of the town has magical lighting and other conveniences. Many of the buildings are kept magically cool in the heat of the summer by use of the *cooling breeze* spell, and by means of large blocks of ice created by enterprising mages on a daily basis.

Halarahh is home to no less than 17 members of the Council of Elders; therefore, the sight of a *skyship* is not at all uncommon. There are a number of ships that ply Lake Halruaa, but they stay near the shore. The winds on the lake are too dangerous for sailing, even for *skyships*.

### Khaerbaal

Khaerbaal is located along the southern coast, sheltered in the bay of Taertal. It is one of two bases of the small Halruan navy. The entire navy consists of only 50 sailing ships and 20 *skyships*. In times of need, another 40 or 50 *skyships*, along with the archmages who own them, can be raised from the cities along the coast.

Khaerbaal is governed by the leading Elder of the city Grozalum, an illusionist of 19th level. It has a population of about 7,000. Most of that group is concerned with shipping and trading.

The navy's principal fortified base and construction docks are on the outlying isle of Rulasuu. Since there is no real city on Rulasuu, most of the military men based there take shore leave in Khaerbaal. This makes it a rather wild town, with a large number of inns and taverns.

### Zalasu

Zalasu is located on the Bay of Azuth, and is the other base of the Halruan navy. It is ruled by Lailuu, a 19th level priestess of Mystra. Lailuu is more concerned with defending Halruaa than in ruling the city. The day to day administration is left up to clerks and officials, who have little or no skill in magic.

Only 5,000 people call Zalasu home. In addition, 2,000 additional military troops are stationed in a large fort located just outside of town.

The presence of the Kilmaruu swamp to the east of the city make a defense force necessary. It is the site of a ruined city, with many undead inhabiting the broken buildings. In spite of the danger, mages and other adventurers keep searching the ruins. To quote a common Zalasu expression, "The swamp helps keep the number of fools in town low."

### Halagard

Halagard was once the capital of Halruaa. It lost that honor a century ago, when the current wizard-king moved north to Halarahh. It is nearly as large as Halarahh, with a population of 7,500. Halagard is situated at the mouth of the Halagard Channel, on the Bay of Halruaa. It is from here that the fishing fleets sail. The Bay of Halruaa is both a safe harbor and very fertile fishing ground.

The chief Elder in Halagard is Basel Indoulur, a conjurer specialist mage of 20th level. Basel is a rarity amongst Halruan mages; he likes apprentices. The lives of Basel's apprentices are not easy. He works them very hard. Since he is one of the most powerful conjurers in the land, he never lacks for applicants.



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## Other Halruan Cities

There are a number of other cities of note. Maeruhul is closest to the electrum mines, and boasts five *skyships*, all belonging to Elders. The city's regiment of guards includes two companies of dwarven fighters. Aluarim is the site of the Royal Mint, and also the home of the most powerful invoker in the country, Rhodea Firehair. Talathgard, which has a force of 200 trained mountain men, guards the entrance to the vast temple complex under Mt. Talath. Galdel lies on the south side of Lake Halruaa. It has several dozen electrum-smiths fashioning fine art objects and rings, wands, and weapons to be enchanted. The dwarf Boronuil Ironfist, the best craftsman in Halruaa, lives here. If one can afford it, Boronuil will craft items for enchantment. He charges quadruple standard rates, and has a waiting list of two years or more.

## A Halruan Village

The average Halruan village has from 100 to 500 people, usually concerned with a single type of magic or craft. Most villages have a mage of at least 11th level. The highest ranking mage, whether an Elder or not, is considered the village elder, and makes decisions on most things.

The village also has a militia. If it is a very small village, the militia may consist of every able bodied adult in town. All mages and priests are expected to help defend the town. Since even the smallest towns have at least three or four mages, most Halruan villages have little to fear from the occasional marauding beast or raiding bandits. A full 60% of the towns have a member of the Council of Elders in residence. Given the nature of high level wizards, this is easy to understand. Many of the villages were founded around a wizard's tower, both for protection and service.

*Cyclical light* spells are common, as are *continual light*, *cooling breeze*, *cantrip*, and *unseen servant*. Other magical effects are also common. The people of Halruaa know about magic, and what it can do for them. Many an innkeeper has

obtained a rare magic book or spell component, then traded it to the local archmage for a valuable magic guard. The Astral Inn, located in the farming community of Eichul, boasts fine wine, good food, and an iron golem for a bouncer. Though that may seem extreme, it is not unusual.

Nearly every town has an inn or hostelry. Travelers, at least Halruan travelers, are common. Strangers stand out. If they appear dangerous or powerful they're watched every second, either openly or magically.

## Places of Interest

### The Walls of Halruaa

The mountains surrounding Halruaa are known collectively as the walls of Halruaa. The mountains on the west side of the country, south of Mt. Talath, are known as Lhairghal, the West Wall. The northern mountains, including those surrounding the Nath, are called the North Wall, or Nathaghal. The East Wall is known as the Muaraghal. These mountain are high, towering 20,000 feet or more. There are three passes through the Walls: Talath Pass on the northwest, Achelar Pass on the east, and The High Aluar on the north.

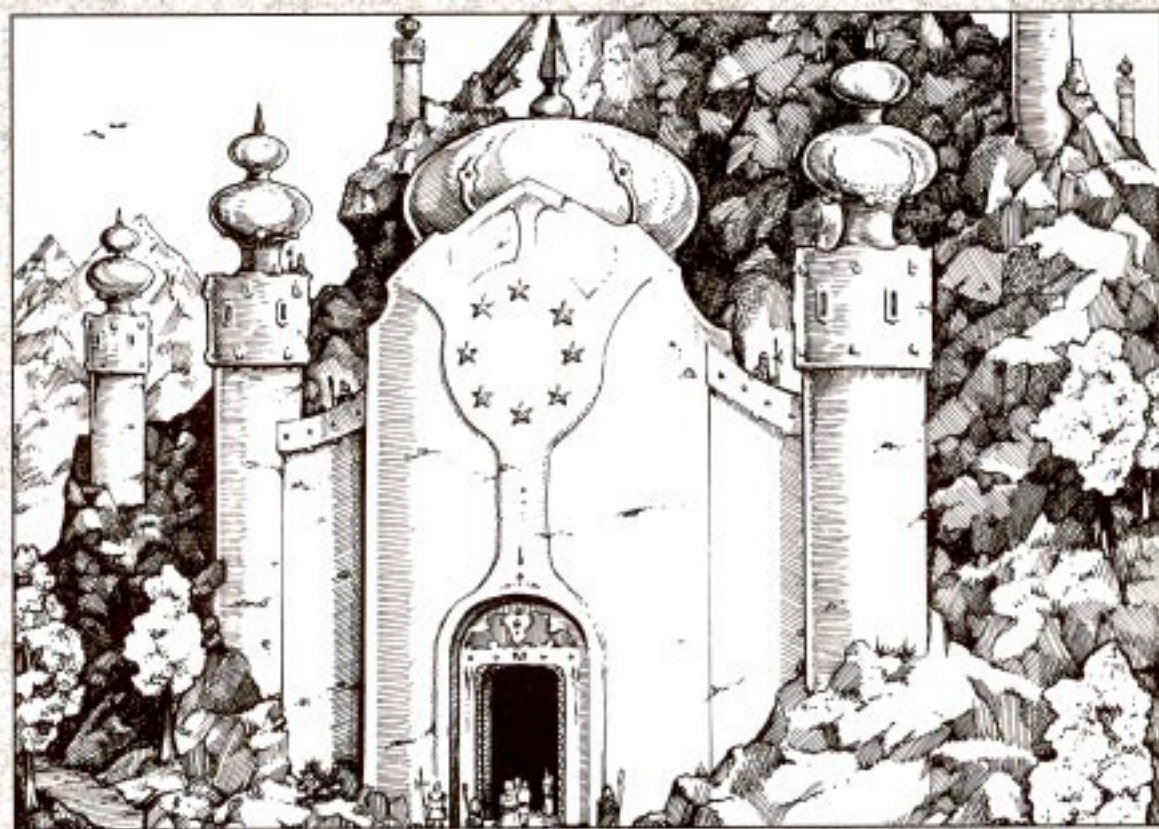
The mountains, particularly surrounding the Nath, are homes to the temples of magic. The mountains are not usually dangerous. At least, not on the Halruaa side of the mountains. Monsters, including cyclopskin, manticores, rocs, cockatrices, and medusae make their homes on the slopes facing away from Halruaa. The Muaraghal is the site of some of the purest electrum deposits in the Realms. Halruans have been mining near Lake Maeru for hundreds of years. The deposits show no sign of running out. This is well, since a good part of the wealth of Halruaa is connected to the electrum mines.

### Lake Halruaa

Lake Halruaa is a large body of water in the center of the country. It is connected to the Great



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Sea via the Halagard Channel, which is used by many ships to reach Halarahh. The ever present winds make the center of the lake extremely choppy and difficult to navigate. Ships that must sail to Sulaziir or Nishtul usually hug the coast, or risk being lost forever.

## Swamp Of Akhlaur

Akhlaur was a 30th-level conjurer in Halruaa 200 years ago. Akhlaur's only interest was to increase his power through magical research. Finally he delved too deep and summoned fiends too powerful for even him to control. He was seized by one of the fiends and dragged back to its home plane. A gateway was left open to the elemental plane of water when Akhlaur was lost, and, since then, the Swamp of Akhlaur has been growing. It

is currently an oblong, 95 miles by 30 miles, and it grows about a hundred feet every year.

Akhlaur was rumored to have magical items that other mages have only dreamt of. Many mages have entered the swamps attempting to recover the treasures of Akhlaur. Others have tried to learn the reason for the swamp's continuing growth. None of them succeeded in locating the tower of Akhlaur. It is believed that the tower lies buried in the swamp, waiting for the mage who can penetrate its secrets.

The swamp is typical of most southern swamps, filled with cypress trees, heavy moss, snakes, crocodiles, piranha, and other swamp monsters. There are a fair number of undead, ghouls and wights abound. There is also a unique type of monster, the one responsible for the death of Akhlaur. The laraken, or magic drainer



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lives in the swamp. The laraken, which is almost totally immune to magic, feeds on magical energy. Few laraken exist, but those that do exist are almost certain death to any mage they meet. They rarely, if ever, leave the swamp.

The swamp is slowly growing. The small gate allows a constant stream of enchanted water into the tower. If left unchecked, it could someday threaten the entire country. It is also responsible for keeping the laraken from invading the rest of Halruaa. The laraken feed off the enchanted water, draining some of its magic. By the time the water moves beyond the swamp, it no longer radiates magic. Only a few of the mages in the council of Elders, including Zalathorm, know this.

## Mount Talath

The center of magic in Halruaa, Mt. Talath is the home of the largest temple to Mystra in the Realms. It occupies an entire cavern complex. Vast storerooms of old tomes, scrolls of knowledge, and long forgotten magical items are kept here. It is here that many mages and priests prefer to come for training. The leader of the temple is Greila Sontoin, a priestess of 20th level. She is said to have unearthly wisdom (22), gained both through magic and the favor of the Mystra. Greila is very old and seldom leaves the temple anymore. She is still capable of powerful magic. The temple is not an easy place to enter. One must pass a rigorous magical screening. Of course, such a large complex has its holes. Thieves and spies do occasionally gain entrance. Such intruders are dealt with summarily — they are fried, frosted, or disintegrated. Those with good intentions who attempt to enter may be admitted. A native of Halruaa is allowed access to almost everywhere; a non-native may be charged a horrendous fee to be admitted to certain “safe” libraries and halls. Outsiders often speak of the wondrous libraries in the temple, not realizing that they have seen less than a third of its treasures.

There is also a grand temple, which anyone

may enter for the purpose of worship. If characters come here expecting to get their hands on unique spells, or magical items, they will be disappointed.

## Halruan NPCs

### Zalathorm, The Wizard King

29th-level human male diviner: Str 10, Des 14, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 17, Cha 14; AI, LG; XC -2; MV 12; hp 52; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff); SZ M; ML 18. Spells 8/8/8/8/7/7/7/7/7

Where Found: Halarahh

Zalathorm is one of the most powerful mages in a nation of powerful mages. He possesses a vast assortment of magical items, and he won't hesitate to use them. His most impressive possession is his crystal orb. This item allows him to communicate with all of the Elders in the Council simultaneously. It is detailed in the new magical items section at the end of this chapter.

Halruaa has resisted many raids from Dambrath and the Jungles of Chult during his long reign. Some say that Zalathorm possesses powers beyond magic. They are correct. He possesses several psionic powers useful for predicting the future. These powers, used in concert with his awesome divination skills, make Zalathorm a very hard man to surprise. He has correctly predicted every major raid into Halruaa in the last 50 years. With that kind of knowledge, the border guards have little trouble keeping the land safe.

The PCs may encounter Zalathorm if they visit Halarahh. He keeps an eye on the city, as well as on the country. He is interested in powerful adventurers, although his main interest may be getting them out of the country.



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## Rhodea Firehair

24th-level human female invoker: Str 9, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 13; AL LG; AC 0; MV 13; hp 42; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff): SZ M; ML 15. Spells 6/6/6/6/6/6 /6/5

Where found: Aluarim

Rhodea is an exception to the rule that says mages should cower in the back of a party. She is absolutely fearless, and has led troops into combat. With her awesome array of destructive magic, she is very effective. Rhodea is probably the most conscientious mage in Halruaa. She has never missed a council call. She also sees to it that the mint is run fairly.

## Rym Windwalker

5th-level half-elven male mage: Str 9, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 9, Cha 14; AL CG; AC 5; MV 12; hp 15; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (dagger): SZ M; ML 12. Spells: 4/2/1

Where Found: Halruaa

Rym Windwalker is a typical young mage. If a PC party encounters him, he is looking for adventure. Whatever they propose, he's up for it. Unfortunately, while Rym has a high intelligence, his wisdom is low. He is likely to foolishly charge into danger at the first sign of trouble. His power, however, does not match his enthusiasm. If he is allowed to travel with a party, he is loyal, friendly, and rather inept.

## Ramael The Reader

18th-level human male mage: Str 13, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 17; AL LN; AC 2; MV 12; hp 40; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff): SZ RI; ML 14. Spells 5/5/5/5/3/3/1

Where Found: Wanders, currently the Dales

Ramael is called the Reader because of his fond-

ness for *ESP* spells. He is a powerful mage, smart enough to have invented the spells he claimed. He escaped from Halruaa after being accused of spell theft, losing an eye in the process. He currently roams the Dales, always looking over his shoulder. He is currently masquerading as a bard, with the help of a *harp of Myth Drannor*. Ramael possesses a number of magical items, most notably an *amulet of proof against detection and location* and a *ring of mind shielding*. He is being hunted by Halruan mages, for he left the country with many unique spells in his spellbooks. He possesses all of the spells listed in the New Spell section, as well as quite a few others. When he encounters someone next, he is distrustful. He will attempt to keep up his act as a bard at all times. Once he has a chance to check out the PCs' intentions telepathically, he can be reasoned with. Ramael will teach PC mages new spells, but the price is sure to be very high.

## Random Riellor

19th-level human male necromancer: Str 11, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 19, Wis 17, Cha 9; AL CN; AC 2; MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff); SZ M; ML 18. Spells 6/6/6/6/6/4/4/2

Where Found: Almost anywhere in the Realms

Random is credited with cracking the puzzle of Southern Magic. He is brilliant, but very erratic. He possesses a *ring of teleportation* that allows him to *teleport* up to three times a day. He can be used as a recurring "mad wizard," showing up at anytime and at any place. He is just as likely to hinder characters as help them. Random's personality changes from day to day; the only thing that is constant is his brilliance. He is not interested in fiery magic, claiming that his magic is more subtle. He has fitted his *skyship* (currently in orbit above Faerun) with a spelljamming helm. He has left the Realms several times, but has always returned. The ship makes a convenient place to *teleport* to when he has finished his business. Random helps only those who further his research.



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## Adventurers in Halruaa

Halruaa is home to many adventurers, but non-Halruan adventurers are seldom welcome. Venturing into the forest of Mhair, the Swagdar, or even the swamp of Akhlaur can be good training and profitable if one survives. Outsiders can find many other places to adventure as well, but the suspicion and watchfulness never end. Fighters may find work with patrols. Mages may be able to pay or trade for training. Priests are welcome, if they worship Mystra or Azuth. Priests of other deities and thieves, should they draw attention to themselves, are politely asked to leave.

### Halruan Adventurers in The Realms

Halruan mages travel all over the Realms, searching for new magic. If a new spell gains popularity, a Halruan mage will eventually show up to learn the spell.

One prominent group from Halruaa, and the only one which claims Halruaa as its home, is the Destroyers. This is a highly specialized mercenary company, led by Daltim Flamefist, a 14th-level fire mage. There are 30 wizards and psionicists in the group, and Daltim is known to have wild psionic talents himself. They are a strictly Lawful group, honoring any contract they have made.

Some travelers have chosen not to return to Halruaa. Among the more prominent of these fugitives are: Omen, whose adventures have been chronicled in *The FORGOTTEN REALMS™* comic books; Darsson, a powerful mage now thought to be somewhere near Raven's Bluff or Tantras; Ramael the Reader, an Elder who was exposed as a spell thief; and Random, an erratic mage who many believe is incurably insane.

## New Halruan Magic

*Old Empires* (FR10) introduced a type of magic called Southern Magic. When these spells were introduced, they could not be used by normal mages. Because they were written in a different

magical language, a normal *read magic* spell would not reveal this writing. Therefore, mages could neither transfer them to their spellbooks, nor could they learn to use them. Two decades ago, the erratic Random learned the *read Southern Magic* spell. It is now available in Halruaa.

This is a small selection of the new wizard spells and magical items available in Halruaa. If DMs wish to introduce new spells from other accessory books, they will find Halruaa an excellent setting in which to do so.

## First Level Spell

**Insulation** (Abjuration/Alteration)

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 2 rounds/level

Casting Time: 1

Area of Effect: Creature touched

Saving Throw: None

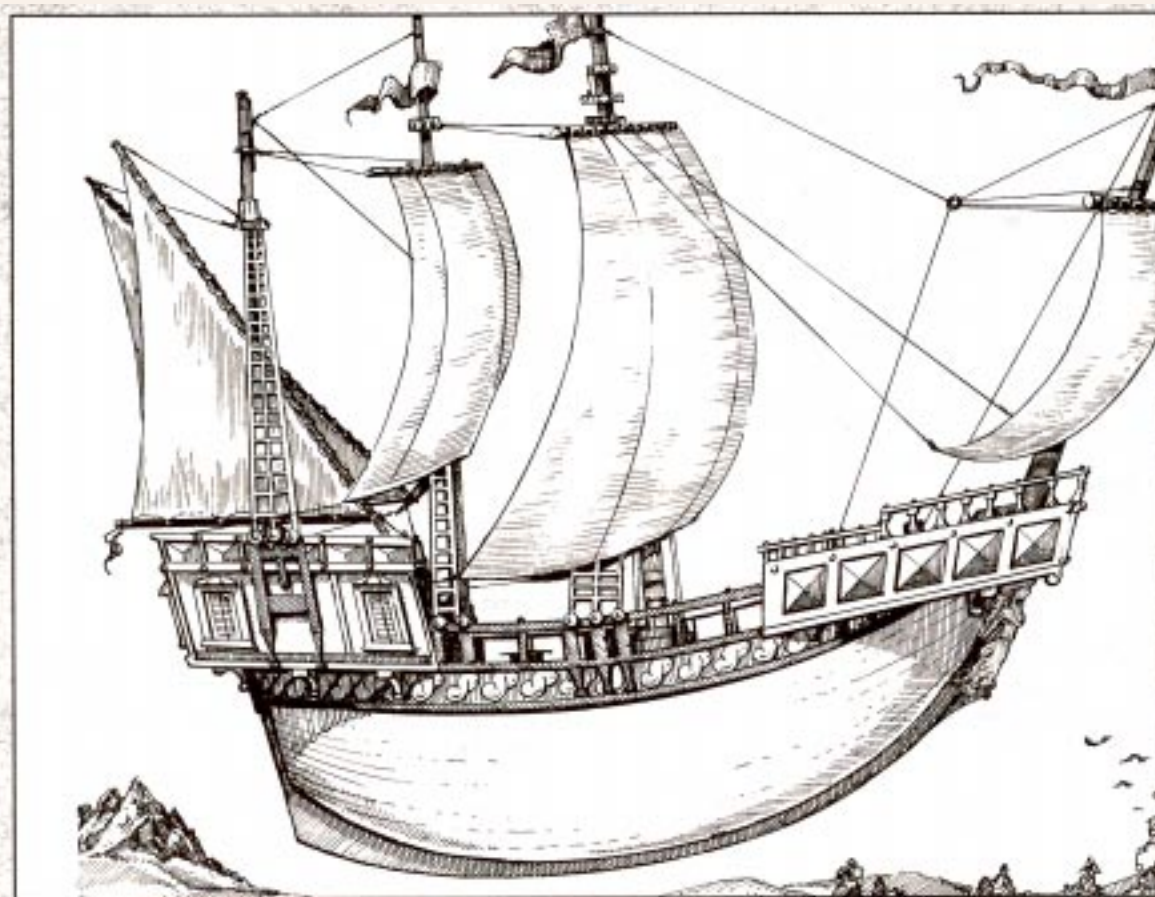
This spell provides the caster with a temporary resistance to all electrical spells or effects. The recipient of the spell gains a bonus of +3 to saving throws against such attack forms, and all damage sustained is reduced by 50%. If the saving throw is failed, the protected creature sustains one-half damage. If the saving throw is successful, only one-quarter damage is sustained.

The material component of this spell is a 1" square piece of rubber. This must be placed between the recipient's foot (shod or unshod) and the ground. It must be touched by the recipient at all times or the spell is ineffective. If conditions are wet, i.e. the recipient is standing in water, or in a thunderstorm, the bonus on the saving throw is reduced to +1. The resistance to damage is unchanged.





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## Second Level Spells

### Protection From Birds (Abjuration)

Range: 0

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 5 rounds +5 rounds/level

Casting Time: 5

Area of Effect: One Creature

Saving Throw: Negates

This spell provides protection against most types of birds (any with feathers). Any bird with less than two hit dice is prevented from attacking the caster at a distance of one foot. Birds with 2 to 9 hit dice attack the caster at a -2, while birds of 10 hit dice or greater are not affected by the spell. The material component is a feather from any bird. If a feather from a roc or giant eagle is

used, the duration of the spell is doubled. The *protection from birds* spell was invented by an obscure abjuration specialist who was tired of having *protection from cantrips* as his only second level Abjuration spell.

### Darsson's Cooling Breeze

(Alteration/Evocation)

Range: 0

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 4 hours/level

Casting Time: 2

Area of effect: 3 foot radius/level

Saving Throw: None

This spell is a less powerful but longer lasting version of the *gust of wind* spell. It allows the caster to place the spell on an object, or at a spe-



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cific point if he wishes. When cast, the air about this point moves slowly in a circle around the center. The air movement is slow. It won't move faster than 5 mph (about the same as a ceiling fan). This spell is widely used, since it keeps the air moving in an enclosed place. This spell serves almost no purpose except to make a stifling room more comfortable. Richer citizens of Halruaa often cool their homes by means of this spell. It works well when combined with large blocks of ice, that can be purchased from enterprising mages who use the *wall of ice* spell.

The material component of the spell is a dried legume.

## Darsson's Fiery Cube (Evocation)

Range: 5 yards/level

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting Time: 2

Area of Effect: 10-foot cube

Saving Throw: 1/2

The *fiery cube* is an explosive burst of flame that covers an area no larger than a 10' cube. It detonates with a low roar creating a cube of fire. The fire inflicts 1d4 points of damage per level of the caster, to a maximum of 10d4. The *fiery cube* will fill any open space in its area of effect, but will not expand beyond that area. Thus, if it were cast in a corridor 5' wide and 7' high, it would fill a volume of 10' x 7' x 5'.

Besides causing damage, the spell ignites all combustibles in its area of effect and melts soft metals. Exposed items requires a saving throw versus magical fire to determine if they are affected. Items in the possession of a creature which makes its saving throw are unaffected.

The caster points his finger and speaks the range (distance and height) at which he wishes to place the spell's center. A streak of orange light flashes from the pointing finger, detonating in cube shape at the prescribed place, unless it strikes a solid object before reaching that place (early impact indicates an early detonation).

Creatures who fail their saves take full damage. Those who save successfully are assumed to have leaped part way out of the cube and take only half damage.

The material component of this spell is a tiny cube of bat guano, a small amount of sulfur, and a flake of phosphorus.

## Third Level Spell

### Scintillating Sphere (Evocation)

Range: 15 yards + 10 yards/level

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting Time: 3

Area of Effect: 10-foot radius

Saving Throw: 1/2

This spell causes a grape-sized sphere to appear near the caster. The sphere then travels in a straight line at high speed to a position in sight of the spellcaster.

Upon reaching this position, the sphere pulses outward twice and then disappears. Damage is caused by the second pulse only, and is electrical in nature. Damage caused is 1d6 for every level of the caster, to a maximum of 10d6. A successful save versus spell reduces the damage by half. The position is chosen by pointing at the spot and speaking the distance for the sphere to travel. Saving throws for items are as per a *lightning bolt* spell.

The material components are a small glass sphere and a pinch of iron oxide. The components are consumed in the casting.



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## Fourth Level Spell

### Ramael's Cyclical Light (Alteration)

Range: 90 yards  
Components: V,S,M  
Duration: Permanent  
Casting Time: 4  
Area of Effect: 60-foot radius  
Saving Throw: None

This spell is similar to the *continual light* spell, except that it fades and glows in response to the outside light. It can only be cast on an object. It may not be cast into thin air or on a living creature. It can, however, be cast on non-living creatures.

When the spell is cast on an object, it is immediately bound to the object. If the object is in full daylight at the time the spell is cast, no effect will be noticed. When the object is taken into a dark place the value of the spell is noticed, for it begins to brighten immediately. When in total darkness, it shines as brightly as full daylight. The effect requires from 2-5 (1d4+1) rounds to adjust to changes in outside light. If some light is present, the glow is no brighter than necessary to place the object in the equivalent of full daylight.

A stone with this spell, placed deep in a backpack, or wrapped with black silk, glows with full brightness when unwrapped, even in torchlight or the presence of other *light* spells. Other light must fall upon the enchanted object before the light begins to dim.

The material components of this spell are optional. If cast with no material component, the light resembles a normal *continual light* spell. If a small gem, worth at least 10 gold pieces, is used in the casting, the light will be the same color as the gem.

This spell is very popular in Halruaa. Most mages actually give credit to Ramael for it, considering it the one spell he truly invented. Some mages theorize that a cyclical *darkness* spell is possible, but no one has yet spent the time or energy to research it.

## Fifth Level Spells

### Damson's Music Box (Enchantment)

Range: 10 yards Components: V,S,M  
Duration: Permanent  
Casting Time: variable  
Area of Effect: 1 object  
Saving Throw: None

Using this spell, a wizard may enchant an inanimate object, usually a seashell or small box, to play a magically recorded message or song. The caster may use the spell to save a special song; to play dramatic music when anyone enters his dwelling; or to create a fancy doorbell.

The message recorded may last for up to one turn. To record, the wizard casts the spell and mentally commands the recording to begin any time in the next round. Likewise, the caster may end the recording by mental command before the maximum one turn duration has expired. Any sound made within a radius determined by the caster (up to 30') will be recorded. Recordings of spellcasting and command words may be made, but may not be used to actually cast spells or cause magical items to function. A recording may be used to trigger a *magic mouth* or other spell that requires a specific condition to be met, provided the condition specifies a recorded message as a trigger.

Recorded material is played back when specific conditions are fulfilled, according to the spellcaster's instructions. Playback may be at any non-damaging volume, determined at the original casting time. Two recordings made of the same musical piece, made at the same time on two different objects, may be made to respond to the same condition, producing a stereo effect. Most of Darsson's music boxes are set to respond when the name of a recorded piece is spoken, but they may be set with any trigger, general or specific. Some examples are, "when anyone knocks on this door," or "when the king enters the throne room." Another possibility is "when one or more halflings enter the larder." The trig-



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ger cannot distinguish invisible creatures, alignments, level, Hit Dice, or class, except by external garb.

The material component for the spell is a pearl or a small cube of brass which is placed inside the ornately carved box, polished seashell, or other fine object on which the dweomer is to be placed.

## Rapid Reflexive Response (Alteration)

Range: 0

Components: V,S,M Duration: 1 round/level

Casting Time: 5

Area of Effect: Caster

Saving Throw: None

This spell was claimed by the infamous Ramael the Reader, but most Halruans give credit to the famous Mycontil. When cast, this spell enables the caster to grab hurled or projected missiles, such as arrows, axes, bolts, javelins, small stones, or similar objects that weigh less than 7 pounds, out of the air and immediately hurl them back at the attacker with a +4 bonus on the attack roll. The caster may grab one object with each hand each round and return them the same round. An attack roll with the stated bonus is required for each attack. The spell expires at the end of the stated duration, or as soon as the caster performs another action other than the *reflexive response*. This spell actually speeds up the caster's reflexes to a superhuman level, so in order to perform a normal action, such as casting a spell, the caster must end the spell.

The material components are a glove once worn by a thrown weapon specialist or a halfling, a shaving of licorice root, and a frog's tongue. The caster must consume the latter two components as part of the casting. The glove remains and may be reused.

## Sixth Level Spells

### Ring of Disintegration (Alteration)

Range: 30 yards

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting Time: 6

Saving Throw: Special

Area: 1 creature

Another of the "stolen spells of Mycontil", this one is also falsely claimed by Ramael the Reader. When cast, a tiny bit of annihilating matter is brought into existence, growing to the form of a six-inch circlet at impact. A successful attack roll must be made by the caster, as a fighter of his her level. The target creature is entitled to a saving throw versus petrification. Affected creatures suffer 1d6 points of damage per level of the caster, and also lose an appendage. Creatures who successfully save suffer half damage, and no appendage is lost. Creatures of size L, or larger are not subject to the loss of a limb, since the sphere is too small to affect them in that way. For purposes of determining which appendage is lost, roll at random. The head does count as an appendage.

The material component for this spell is a specially prepared silver bracelet worth at least 100 gp, with 1 gram of mithril worked into it. It is consumed in the casting.

This spell can be very dangerous. On an attack roll of a natural 1, the caster must make a saving throw vs. spell or fumble the throw, and lose his own hand as a result of the fumble.

### Suspension (Alteration)

Range: 20 yds/level

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1-4 days +1 day/level

Casting Time: 1 round

Area of Effect: 1 creature or object

Saving Throw: Neg.



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This is a powerful, long lasting version of the *levitate* spell, thought to have been brought south by the original Netherese. This spell is known to be one of the magics necessary to power the fabled *skyships*.

It functions in all ways as does the *levitate* spell. It can be cast on the mage's person, on an object, or upon a single creature. The weight limit, 1000 pounds per level of the caster, is greater than that of the *levitate* spell. Unwilling creatures are allowed a saving throw versus spells to avoid the effects.

Concentration is only required when changing height. The movement rate for this spell is 120 feet per round. Smashing someone into a rock ceiling at that rate causes only 1d6 points of damage, with a saving throw versus paralyzation to avoid any damage. Once the desired height is reached, the levitated object or person remains at that height for the spell duration, or until the height is changed again. The material component is a small leather loop suspended from a bent golden wire. Both are consumed in the casting.

## Seventh Level Spell

**Nerve Dance** (Necromancy)

Range: 10 yards/level (120 yd. maximum)

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 3 rounds +1 round/5 levels

Casting Time: 7

Area of Effect: 1 to 3 creatures Saving Throw: Special

This is another spell from the books of Random the Mad. Casting this spell causes one to three glowing, red streamers to shoot from the caster's hand. Each of these streamers pursue the intended target or targets for the stated duration, or until they strike and wrap around the target. Targeted creatures are allowed a saving throw versus spells each round; failure means they are struck by the streamers. The save must be made each round until the spell expires.

Those who fail their saving throw take 2d6 points of damage per round, and fall to the ground in excruciating pain. Those who make their saves must continue to dodge and weave, and are incapable of spellcasting or similar actions. Targeting multiple streamers at the same target has no additional effect. The caster must concentrate on the streamers to direct them. If his concentration is broken the spell ends immediately. The streamers may be destroyed before they hit. They are AC 0, and any hit from a magical weapon destroys them. They take no damage from normal weapons.

The material components are a 6-inch strand of red spider silk, and a glass rod with *continual light* cast upon it. The rod is used to direct the streamers. The spider silk is consumed in the casting, as is the *continual light* spell.

## Ninth Level Spells

**Power Word: Banishment** (Abjuration/Conjuration)

Range: 5 yards level

Components: V

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting Time: 1

Area of Effect: 1 creature

Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell, the caster can banish one extra-planar creature, forcing it to return to its home plane. The effect is instantaneous. The subject cannot return without a special summoning, or some means of egress from its home to the plane from which it was banished. This spell closely resembles the 7th-level spell *banishment*, but it is more powerful and more dangerous. The caster need merely look at the extra-planar creature and speak the name of its home plane. The effect happens immediately. Of course, any magic resistance that the creature possesses must be overcome for the spell to function.



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If the caster has correctly named the home plane of the subject, and if the creature currently has 70 hit points or fewer, it is banished. If not, the caster is in a large amount of trouble.

If a caster fails to overcome a creature's magic resistance, the spell merely fails. However, if he has named the wrong plane, or if the creature is too powerful to be affected, the caster must immediately make a saving throw versus death magic at -4. Failure means he is banished to that plane himself. If he succeeds, he is dazed and shaken by the brush with disaster, and can take no actions other than defense for the next two rounds. Even if the spell is entirely successful, the force of the spell is such that the mage cannot concentrate enough to cast another spell until at least 1 full round has passed.

This spell cannot be cast on oneself. The caster must be able to see the creature he is casting it on. Clever mages who cast the spell into a mirror might succeed in returning the mirror to its own plane, but it certainly wouldn't do anything for the caster.

## Mycontil's Last Resort (Alteration/Evocation)

Range: 10 yards per level

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting Time: 1 (see below)

Area of Effect: 30' radius

Saving Throw: 1/2

This is the spell that most mages claim Mycontil used in his climactic battle against the Dambraii. The spell was claimed by Ramael, and is one of the chief arguments his foes used to discredit him.

When cast, this spell converts all remaining spells in the caster's memory to magical energy, in much the same way that a *staff of power's* final strike does. All creatures in a 30' radius take 1d4 points of damage per spell level memorized; creatures farther away than 10' may save versus death magic for half damage.

This spell works even against magic resistant

creatures. A creature who is 65% magic resistant can resist only 65% of the damage, he takes the rest normally. If he is farther than 10' away, he still gets a saving throw to evade half of the damage that would affect him.

The effects on the mage can be devastating. When the spell is cast, the caster must immediately make a system shock roll. If he fails, he dies immediately, consumed in the casting. If he succeeds, he permanently loses one point of constitution, and is in a coma for 1-4 weeks. A *heal* spell will shorten the length of coma to 1-4 days from the time the *heal* spell was cast.

The material component is the finger bone of an archmage, which must be prepared in a ritual which takes from 1-4 days. The material for the ritual is costly as well, involving diamond dust worth at least 5000 gold pieces, and a pure platinum ring on the finger. When the ritual is complete, the caster intones all but the final word of the spell, which he mentally commands at the time of the casting. After all is prepared, the caster can activate the spell merely by speaking the final word and breaking the finger bone. After the initial casting the caster does not have to keep this spell in memory. Once the ritual is completed, the caster may memorize another ninth-level spell to replace the *last resort*.

For obvious reasons, this spell is not used frequently. In the history of Halruaa, only Mycontil is thought to have cast this spell.

## New Magical Items of Halruaa

A few of the magical items from Halruaa are presented here. These are but a small sampling of a wide variety of unique items.

### Girdle of Priestly Might

XP Value 3000

This *girdle* first appeared after the Time of Troubles. Priests of Mystra took it to be a sign



# Halruaa

that the goddess had regained her power. This item is one of the reasons that Azuth has not gained more supporters in Halruaa.

These *girdles* actually come in three versions. The basic *girdle* allows the wearer an 18/99 strength and a +2 armor class bonus. The second type, called a *girdle of priestly warding*, grants the above powers, plus a *protection from evil* (or good). The third *girdle*, the *girdle of holy might*, grants the preceding powers, plus the ability to use a *word of recall* spell once per month.

Percentile Roll	Type of Girdle Found
01-70	Priestly Might
71-95	Priestly Warding
96-00	Holy Might

The *girdle* bears the symbol of the power to which it is bonded on the front. However, any priest or cleric of the same alignment as the power whose symbol appears on a given *girdle* may use it. (One need not be a priest of that particular power, only be of the same alignment.) The *girdles* are not aligned with respect to Chaos or Law, being vessels either of good, neutrality, or evil. A priest who tries on a *girdle* of an opposing alignment is *cursed*, and will receive no spells above 2nd level until he receives an *atonement* spell. A quest of the power's choosing may also be necessary. A neutral cleric who tries on either a good or evil *girdle* suffers the same effect.

It is not known exactly how many other *girdles* have appeared in the Realms. Given the new, more active stance that powers have been forced to take in the Realms, it is thought that there may be more than a few of these items. It is highly unlikely that these will be found in treasure hoards. The *girdles* that are known to exist are all carefully guarded. It is doubtful that such a *girdle* will be found on anyone who has not been a high priest for quite some time.

The priests of Mystra are known to have at least one of each type in the temple fortress at

Mt. Talath. There are also rumors that the secret of constructing more of these items has been discovered. If so, it is sure to be a long and expensive process.

## Crystal Orb

XP Value 10,000

This *orb* is thought to have been crafted by the great wizard Halruaa himself. The reigning wizard-kings have had this *orb* for as long as Halruaa has existed. It has the unique power of being able to contact up to 500 beings at once. Zalathorm (or another wizard using it) may contact as many beings as he wants. It takes but one round to activate the *orb*. In order for the *orb* to function, however, it must be attuned to those it will be used to contact. This is as simple as having the owner speak a command word while touching the intended recipient. Having used the same command word for each mage, Zalathorm can contact every Elder mage by speaking a single command word. Mages may refuse the contact. If the intended contact is deep in concentration (casting a spell or enchanting a magical item), she does not feel the contact until she relaxes her concentration.

The *orb* also has the property of highlighting in the *orb*, and in the minds of all in the group contact, the image of whoever is speaking. It has the additional advantage of only allowing one person to "speak" at a time. It thus acts as a sort of "meeting organizer" for the tumultuous wizards who form the Eiders of Halruaa. Zalathorm can break in at any time by touching the *orb*, giving the wizard-king complete control of all meetings of the Council of Elders.

The only known *orb* of this type is stored in a special room in Zalathorm's tower. It is thought to be one of the most heavily guarded magical items in all of the Realms. Among other protections, Zalathorm has cast a variant of a *contingency* spell on the *orb*, that should it be stolen or taken out of the room by someone who is not attuned to it, it immediately teleports to the



# Halruaa

hands of the high priestess of Mystra, in Mt. Talath.

## Halruan Skyships

XP Value: 8,000

The Halruan *skyships* are famed all through the Shining South. Even Elminster has described such vessels in his writings. *Skyships* are not to be confused with ships capable of spelljamming, although it is known that one can be outfitted with a spelljamming helm.

The ships were originally invented in far off Netheril, by the ancestors of the Halruans. The Red Wizards of Thay have claimed the credit for the invention, but Halruans know the truth. A *skyship* is a sailing vessel, broad-beamed so as to be able to rest easily on the ground. Its material tends to be light and flexible, to give and flow with the winds. The standard ship of Halruaa has three masts of flexible wood, and two panels that can be swung out for steering and guidance.

While undamaged, the vessel can never be sunk beneath the sea, for the same power that holds the ship aloft affects the water that surrounds it. The ship's hull is studded with polished plates taken from the species of giant turtle found in the waters off the coast.

The ship is at the mercy of the winds. The leeward panels do allow it some control, so that it can run before the winds and not be buffeted by them.

The control of the ship is tied to a special magical rod. This rod has three parts: a central shaft usually made of silver, and two hollow cylinders of gold, one over each end. The cylinders may be moved towards the center of the rod, exposing the ends. One end dampens the *levitation* fields of the ship, the other augments it. This allows the ship to climb or dive, at a rate of 120' per round. The cylinders are usually carved so that one can tell the difference, even in the dark.

Obviously this is no safe and steady fighting platform, although mages may cast spells from

its deck. It is a large and clumsy target in aerial combat (maneuverability class E). It has a great degree of variability in speed and stability due to the chance of the wind and the turbulence created by other aerial bodies. Nonetheless, it is very effective in dropping solid missiles, flaming oil, or other things upon hostile forces.

A *skyship* has its greatest buoyancy near the ground. At an altitude of 100' a standard *skyship* has a cargo displacement of 10 to 15 tons, a fraction of what a sea-going vessel can lift. This drops as the vessel climbs, until at 3600 feet it can lift little more than its own weight, and that of the crew. A standard crew is 20 to 30 men. If the ship is operating with a short crew, it can carry a bit more cargo. Since the Walls of Halruaa are much higher than 3600', such ships can only leave Halruaa through one of the mountain passes, by sea, or via the High Aluar.

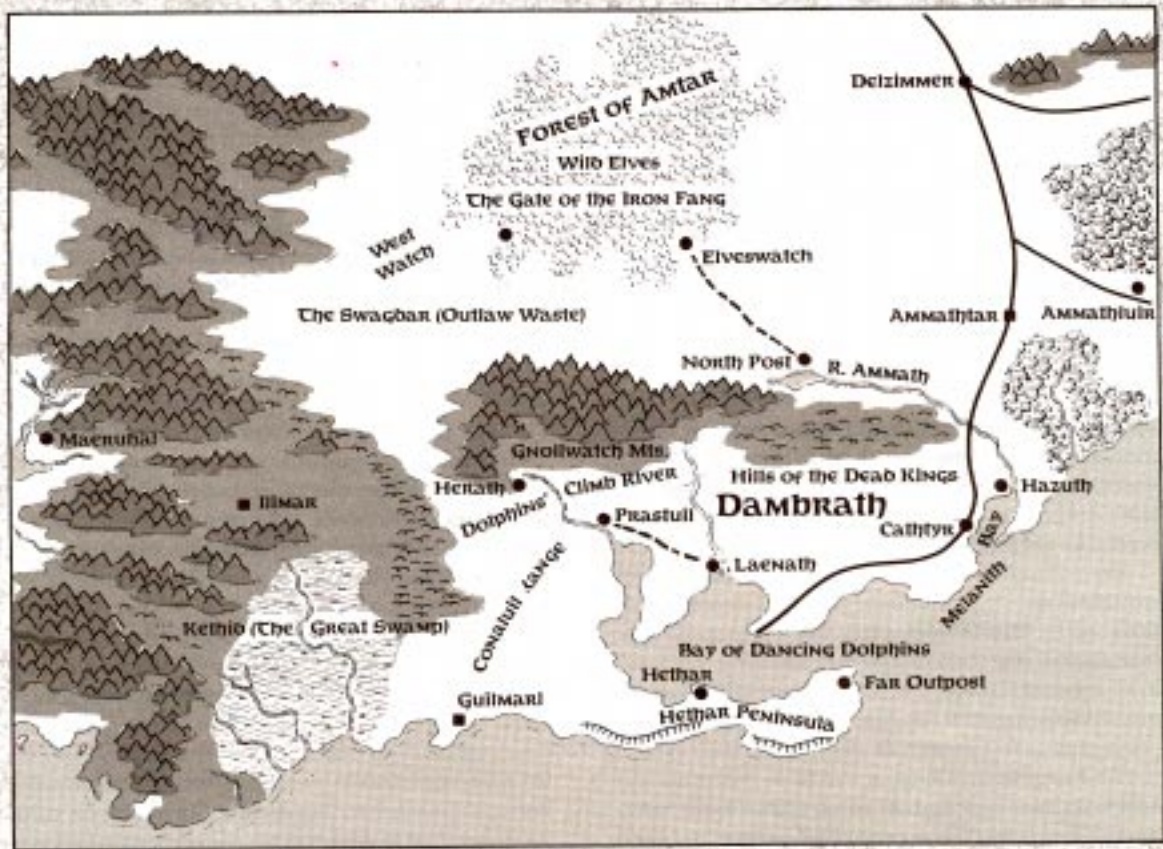
The control rod needs continual recharging, and the *levitation* spells on the ship itself must be renewed once per year. The rod can be recharged by the casting of *suspension* or *levitate* spells. The secret of renewing the ship is known only to the council of Elders.

These ships are relatively common in Halruaa, but are rare anywhere else. Of all of their secrets, the mages guard that of their *skyships* the most zealously.





# Dambrath



## General Description

Dambrath is bordered on the south by the Great Sea and on the north by the Forest of Amtar. To the west lie the semi-mountainous region known as the Walls of Halruaa and the great Kethid Swamp. For hundreds of years, the horder on the east has been the Trader's Way and the River Ammath. The Dambraii do not claim or want any part of the Eastern Shaar or the Granuin Forest. The proper term for a Dambrath citizen is a Damhrai, the plural and possessive form of this is Damhraii. Damhrathian or Damhrather are used only by foreigners.

## Geography and Climate

Dambrath is an open land, with miles of range-land, and hundreds of miles of safe coastline. The Bay of Dancing Dolphins has not suffered a had storm in five hundred years.

The fields of the ranchos grow a tall (3' to 4') grass called arkas. The grass is exceptionally good feed for livestock.

To the north, the Grollwatch mountains are not a particularly impressive mountain range. Mount Hazail, the tallest peak, only reaches 11,500 feet. Most of the mountains average only 9,000 feet. To the west the mountains give way to the Hills of the Dead Kind which are alive with streams, grassy knolls, of seasonal groves of fruit trees, and many other signs of life. The river



# Dambrath

Ammath is the largest river in Dambrath, flowing southeast around the Hills of the Dead Kings. The Keless river is much busier, affording a fast road between the mines in the mountains and the Bay of the Dancing Dolphins.

The Bay of Dancing Dolphins is truly a treasure of Dambrath. Not only is it a safe harbor, but it is rich in swordfish, red snapper, mahi-mahi, and sea bass. It produces a decent crop of pearls each year, and draws many schools of friendly dolphins. The ever-present dolphins won't let a human drown. Dolphins have been a protected species in Dambrath, ever since one saved queen Melanith over 300 years ago. Fishermen follow dolphins to the good schools of fish, and sailors know that when the bay gets crowded with dolphins, a major storm is heading north on the Great Sea.

Most Dambraii have never seen snow. The summers are hot, but the breezes off the sea cool the nights. The temperature usually passes 100 during the day, but drops quickly after dark to lows around 60 degrees. North of the Gnollwatch mountains the temperature is even hotter, and the nights aren't as cool as nights near the coast.

The rainy season begins in Uktar (November), and lasts two to three months. There have only been 12 actual frosts recorded in the last 500 years. This occurrence is always taken as a sign of extreme displeasure from Loviatar herself.

## History

The nation of Dambrath was formed out of a barbarian kingdom almost a half-millennium ago by a powerful alliance of priestesses of Loviatar and drow from the city of T'lindhet.

In 211 DR four tribes of barbarians, fleeing from the destruction of the homeland by the then-great kingdoms of Unther and Muhlorand, entered Dambrath. They found a coast where the dolphins danced and plains where the grass was long. They roamed from the borders of the Walls of Halruaa as far east as the current borders of Estagund. They soon became known as the Arkaiun, or "people of the wind."

Then in 545 DR a great warchief, Reinhar, arose to lead the tribes. The halfings of Luiren were quickly enslaved, and several of the coastal cities of Durpar were captured or razed. Estagund fell to his rule. Finally Reinhar turned his attention to Halruaa.

An army of 40,000 horsemen and a fleet of 50 ships mounted a coordinated attack on Halruaa. Even though Reinhar was able to get beyond the Walls of Halruaa and occupy the cities of Mithel, Galdel, and Zalasuu, the wizards proved to be more than a match for Reinhar's army. Reinhar was finally defeated in a great battle at Sulaziir by the arch mage Mycontil and his troop of wizards.

Reinhar's son, Reinhar II, took command of the army and set out in an overland march for the Walls of Halruaa. Two months later, with a thousand fighting men and no shaman, he arrived home. Reinhar II proved to be as good a ruler in defeat as his father was in war. He consolidated his forces, pulling home almost all his troops. He knew that the defeat made them tempting prey for raiders and encroaching monsters. By the time Reinhar IX was king, in 802 DR the Arkaiuns were fat and lazy. But Reinhar IX, of Reinhar the Foolish as he is more commonly known, insisted on expanding his nation to gain more money to finance his military campaigns. He ordered the mining of many rich lodes of silver and electrum in the Gnollwatch mountains. Before his plans of expansion could begin, the miners encountered the drow of T'lindhet. The drow were outraged and began a steady series of raids and attacks on the Arkaiun strongholds. Whole villages were destroyed overnight. No trace of the invaders could be found.

Reinhar committed the foolhardy action of attacking the drow. The Arkaiuns succeeded in getting a force into the drow city. This action united the normally chaotic drow, and for once the full power of a drow city was turned against an enemy.

The battle quickly moved back to the surface. Reinhar's raiders were wiped out, leaving Reinhar with only a small portion of his original military. This was not enough for the drow, who



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demanded total enslavement of the entire surface nation. The Arkaiuns resisted valiantly. The war went on for three decades, at a tremendous cost in life to the Arkaiuns and to the drow.

Finally, the drow had the Arkaiun forces cornered at Malduir. The defenders were overjoyed when a group of half-elven pilgrims entered the city. The high priestess, Cathtyr Shintar, offered the aid of her clerics to help defend the city. Reinhar took this to be an omen from the gods, and placed a priestess with almost every company.

Within the week, the drow struck. The priestesses did indeed prove to be a great aid—to the drow. Every priestess turned on the Arkaiuns, and Cathtyr herself slew Reinhar. The drow were still weakened by the battle. Only the presence of the priestesses enabled them to win. Cathtyr realized that she had a unique advantage over the drow. She made a deal that even the suspicious drow embraced. Her priestesses would rule the land. In exchange, they would provide access to the surface for the drow, trading weapons, slaves, and surface supplies.

The drow were delighted with this brazen offer from surface dweller. Reinhar had been slain and the insult avenged. After 30 years of war the drow were not particularly interested in Dambrath. They did insist, however, on taking the best captured males as slaves. Cathtyr quickly agreed to this, seeing the males as an obstacle to her own power.

Cathtyr ruled for 205 years. She fulfilled her promise to make Dambrath, or “The Nation of Pain,” a bastion of evil in the Realms. In her time, Cathtyr saw the priesthood of Loviatar expand to thousands. Faith in the Beastlords previously worshiped by the Arkaiuns was nearly eradicated. Many of the Arkaiuns were able to escape their new mistresses, and flee to the Swagdar. There they resumed their almost forgotten nomadic life,

The priestesses of Loviatar continued to enjoy good relations with the drow. Some of them mated with the drow, creating a race of drow half-elves. These half-elves became known as the

Crintri, or “noble ones.” Most are priestesses of Loviatar, and many are mages as well. They consolidated their power, learning much of the area from the Shebali, or “lower ones,” as the Arkaiuns are now called.

The capital of Dambrath was established at Cathtyr, a city built after Cathtyr’s death, and named in her honor. Her death came at the hands of her daughter, Filina, who had grown tired of waiting for her mother to die. Filina ruled for only five years before her own daughter, Cathakay, assumed the throne in the same fashion. Cathakay ruled for 54 years, dying in a battle against a gold dragon. She died childless, and her niece Melanith assumed the throne.

Melanith faced an increasing population, and unrest among the males who enjoyed far less power under female rule. Melanith did not return their previous status, but she did make use of them. Fearing that the great nations of Mulhorand and Unther might rise again, she decided that unimportant tasks such as defense of the kingdom would be handled by men. She was the first to name a male to the post of warchief. Sadalar, a Crintri, became the queen’s consort. His term as warchief was characterized by widespread bribery and corruption. He was, however, responsible for getting many privileges returned to the Arkaiuns. After Melanith’s rule, the Shebali were considered second class citizens, rather than slaves.

It was during Melanith’s reign that the split between the sexes solidified. While the rulers of Dambrath had been females for over two centuries, it was more because of competence than gender. Melanith decreed that men could have no authority except over other men. The female-led hierarchy of Loviatar was quick to back this move.

Many of the bravest and best men of the kingdom perished in raids on Estagund, Durpar, the bandit tribes of Veldorn, and against the gnolls that had returned to the Gnollwatch mountains. Some even fought at the side of the drow, in their battle with the svirfneblin city Aventine. The deep gnomes were destroyed, but so were the



# Dambrath

Shebali. The drow and the Crintri were largely unharmed. For their aid, the Crintri were rewarded with a number of draw males to breed into their race. Melanith took a drow male as her consort to replace Sadalar, who had perished in the conflict. The drow, Nym Inthigg, fathered three daughters and a son. It was at this time that Melanith began the isolationist policy that Dambrath still follows today.

Melanith ruled for 156 years, her daughter Ausitil for 125. The current queen of Dambrath, Yenandra, who is known in Dambrath as the "Pirate Queen," is said to have sailed as far south as Zakhara, raiding and pillaging. Yenandra has been ruling for 71 years, and is beginning to show signs of age. She remains extremely popular, especially to the Crintri. Indeed, the Dambraii have enjoyed prosperity during Yenandra's reign. She has three ambitious daughters, Luatharyn, Meltruil, and Hasafir. Hasafir is deep in magical studies, while the other two are currently sailing as pirates.

## Government and Politics

Dambrath is ruled by the queen, who is also the high priestess of Loviatar. Her word is law. The current queen, Yenandra, is both loved and feared by the common people.

Day to day life in Dambrath is common and ordinary. The matriarchy is much more pronounced at the top levels than it is at the working woman's level. Men and women labor together, or train for the army together. Promotions come faster to women than to men, and to Crintri faster than to Shebali. Only at the higher levels must one be a female Crintri to advance.

Law in Dambrath is very structured, and justice is harsh and swift. The judges, called "Honglath," which is drow for "clear-thinkers," are Crintri females. They hear cases, and decide on punishments. Punishments for Crinti of both genders usually consist of fines, while Shebali males may well be turned over to the priestesses of Loviatar for slow torture. Shebali females will usually be given more lenient sentences than

Shebali males receive.

The decisions of the Honglath can be appealed, but unless one is a Crintri, the appeal is seldom even heard. Appeals are heard by the local "Greater Pain", the highest ranking specialty priestess of Loviatar. There are 12 Greater Pains. A greater pain is usually a priestess/mage of at least 12th/6th level. Above them are four Duchesses.

Land can only be owned by the Crintri. For legal purposes, a person must be able to prove themselves at least 1/32 drow or half-elf to be considered a Crintri. Physical signs are important; the pointed ears and dark skin that indicate drow blood are usually taken as sufficient proof of nobility. On the other hand, a half-elf who appears almost completely human is relegated to a lesser role in both politics and society.

Inheritance is passed down to the females, but does not automatically go to the oldest. Priestly and magical power are considered first, as is appearance. The female who is the most powerful as a multi-classed priestess/mage will inherit. Failing that, first priestly power, then mage ability, then appearance prevails. The decision is made by the local Honglath, after the death of the ruling mother. If there are no daughters, the eldest son is expected to take a wife immediately. His wife will then own the land. If the mother dies without arranging for this, the local Honglath usually attempts to arrange a marriage with a drow female. Of course, the lady of the manor is the absolute ruler of her house and lands.

The Honglath jealously guard their roles as justices. More than one imperious landowner has been stripped of her title and lands for meting out justice on her own. This is not usually a problem, for seldom does a Honglath rule against a Crintri landowner.

It is absolutely forbidden to teach a male any type of magic. The penalty for the teacher is usually death by torture, while the student is *feeble-minded* and used as a galley or mine slave for the rest of his life.

The worst crime a Dambraii can commit is



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horse theft. The theft of a woman's horse is considered much worse than murder. Should such a criminal live long enough to be tried, he can be assured of the worst punishments that the priestesses of pain have to offer.

## People and Customs

Dambrath is a rarity in that it is a society ruled by half-elves. Approximately 15% of the population is to some degree half-elven. Almost 90% of those trace their non-human heritage to a drow elf. The other 10% are the true nobles, those that can trace their heritage back to one of the original 112 half-elves that accompanied Cathtyr on her journey into Dambrath.

Another 70% of the population are the fair-skinned Arkaiuns, although many of those now

have darker skin and hair. A pureblood Arkaiun is, according to Crinti expression, "as rare as clear thought in a man."

The remainder of the population consists of halflings and demihumans. Gnolls are seen frequently as guards for manor estates. Half-orcs and orcs are also used, though their chaotic ways make them the choice of only the poorer Crintri.

Elves are not seen in Dambrath, Dwarves are not native to Dambrath, although a few dwarven traders do make their way south along the Trader's Way. They are almost exclusively confined to Ammathtar and Hezuth.



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## Languages

Most of the people in Dambrath speak Akalan, the original tongue of the Akaiuns. The "high" language of Dambrath is drow. The priestesses of Loviatar are all taught the "maidens' tongue", a language said to be sacred to Loviatar. Actually, it is a degenerate version of Thorass, the trading tongue of Amn and much of the Sword Coast. Someone who speaks Thorass can't make himself understood in the maiden's tongue. About 20% of the population, mostly those who deal with outsiders, also speak a bit of the common tongue.

## Social Customs

The influence of the Loviatar, the Maiden of Pain, is felt all through Dambrath. Amusements tend to be rough and dangerous. The officials of the government and the temples allow this, believing it keeps the masses happy. Day to day life, however, is much different.

A proper gentleman of Dambrath always holds the door for a lady, and she should always precede him down the street. In the wilds or on the road, the gentleman rides up front, to better shield his lady should trouble start. Since only females are allowed to be spellcasters, they usually need to be out of the immediate melee to be truly effective.

Priestess/mages and descendants of the 112 compatriots of Cathtyr form the upper crust of Dambrath society. It is considered a mark of honor for a female to have served in the army or with the fleet, and both are acceptable reasons for not being able to perform both wizard and clerical magic.

Although the society has much contact with the drow, it is not a carbon copy of drow society. On the ranges, every family member is important; a male is just as valued as a female. In the day to day work, men and women operate almost as equals. Of course, women are usually in charge. At religious and government ceremonies, the men fade into the background as the women take over. Parties on the range tend to be loud and

wild affairs lasting two or three days. In "society", a dinner is usually a competition to see which lady can wear the finest jewels, carry the best wands, or sport the most handsome consort. One drow-inspired custom is that one should never arrive at a party or dinner before sundown. Another custom in Dambrath is the habit of holding both hands out with the palms up when meeting a person of higher social status. This custom probably developed as low-ranking people held out their empty hands to show they carried no weapons.

Fair-skinned female half-elves are readily accepted, since their appearance could make them one of the "daughters of the first," as the descendants of the original 112 are called. Of course in 500 years, even half-elves can produce many offspring. There are 5,000 or more true daughters of the first, and twice that many who claim such heritage.

The most important custom of Dambrath traces back not to the drow or the half-elves of Loviatar, but to the original Arkaiuns. Every Dambraii citizen can ride by the time she is 5 years old. Males learn to ride by the age of 10. Roping and firing a shortbow from horseback are also learned at an early age.

## Religion

The official state religion is the worship of Loviatar, the Maiden of Pain. There are temples in all the cities, and shrines at most ranchos. The clergy preach that pain must come into all lives, and only through the knowledge of pain can pleasure be felt. Most Dambraii accept this stoically, enduring pain and savoring pleasure. The drow queen Lolth is also worshipped. The followers of the two have a grudging respect for one another. On the plains, there are still many Arkaiuns who call upon Malar the Beastlord, particularly in the Swagdar, where outlaws rule. There is a small, very determined sect of drow who worship Eilistraee, the goddess of good drow.



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## Money and Commence

Dambrath uses state minted money. The government mints two types of coins, silver shebs and electrum crints. Other types of money are accepted cheerfully, usually at face value. With the pirate fleets going out, Dambraii merchants often see foreign currency.

Trade is allowed, as long as it is good for both the people and the country. Horse trading is a fine art in Dambrath. Few are the Durparians who get the better of a Dambrai in a horse trade. The fact that Dambraii horses are the envy of the southern coast helps considerably. Other than raise horses, the Dambraii fish and dive for pearls in the bay. They also raise large herds of wilde rothe. The bluish wood from the Forest of Amtar makes excellent cabinets and decent arrow shafts.

Goods leave Dambrath on ships, and on wagons traveling the Trader's Way to Underhome and points beyond. Dambraii sailors ply their wares in Durpar, Estagund, Ulgarth, Luiren, Halruaa, and some even venture across the Great Sea to Zakhara. Such journeys are fraught with danger, but Dambraii horses fetch an unbelievable price in Zakhara.

It should be noted that Dambraii merchants are not foolish. Drow and dark-skinned half-elves do not accompany caravans leaving Dambrath.

Most of the country is settled in small ranchos, each held by one clan. A rancho can have as many as 100 people living and working together. Rancho families are led by the matriarch of the clan. A rancho may claim as many as 1,000 square miles of land, on which its herds roam.

Most ranchos have their own smithy, armory, and religious shrine. All ranchos have a horse-master. The responsibility for taking care of the garden, which provides the family with vegetables and fruits, usually falls to the children. Dambraii soil is wonderfully fertile, plants usually grow at an accelerated rate. One variety of white grapes grows particularly well. Dambraii are partial to Moktessa, the wine made from these grapes. It is palatable to both humans and

drow, and the demand always exceeds the supply. Thus, while Moktessa is a very good wine, it is virtually unknown outside of Dambrath.

## Cities of Dambrath

### Cathtyr

Cathtyr, the nation's largest city, is also the capital. Its location along Trader's Way, and the protection of the Melanith Bay make it the trading center of Dambrath. With a population of 50,000, Cathtyr may seem small when compared to some of the larger cities of Halruaa and Durpar. But the Dambraii consider it a metropolis. Anything in Dambrath can probably be had in Cathtyr, if the buyer has the money.

The trading fair is located on the northern outskirts of town. The city is walled, but the gates are wide, and seldom closed. The fair is actually outside of town, since the number of horses that are traded make it impractical to have the fair anywhere else.

South of the city are many miles of land that have been taken over by poor families, whose farming provides much of the food for Cathtyr.

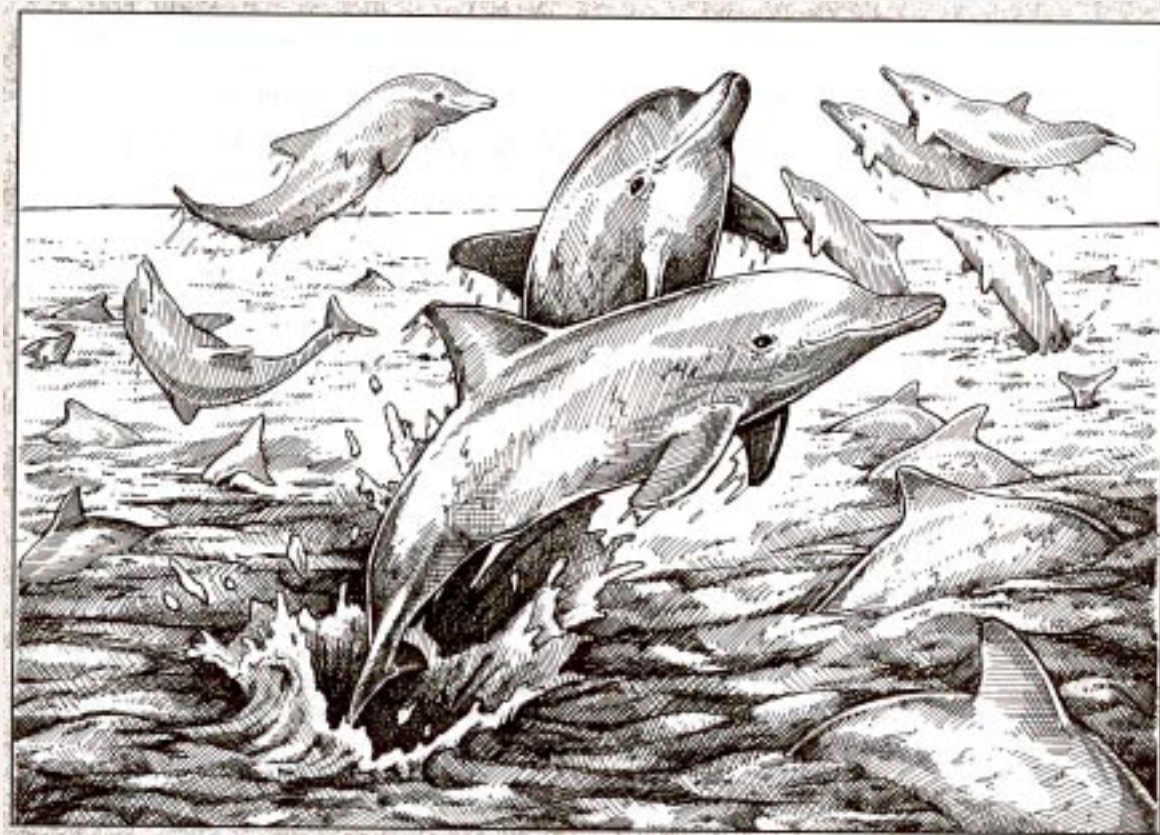
The inner city is a crowded, aromatic place. Horses of nobles are stabled all over the city. This guarantees that perfumes are a popular import in Cathtyr.

There are numerous temples to Loviatar scattered about the city. The largest temple is part of the central palace complex. There is also a temple to Lolth. It is a large building with buttresses carved to resemble spider legs, and a pair of glass "eyes" in front. The palace is huge, with a three-block-square, open-air park in the center, where the queen exercises and trains her horses.

A well maintained garrison of 2,000 troops is based at Cathtyr. Two-thirds of these are cavalry, and can move very swiftly to deal with trouble. There are also five heavily armed clippers, with spellcasters aboard, that patrol the waters in the bay. If the city is ever attacked, up to 1,000 lesser priests and mages can respond to the threat. It is this force, more than anything, that keeps Cathtyr



# Dambrath



safe and peaceful.

The average Crintri of Cathtyr has a nice home, with several magical conveniences. One of the signs of wealth is to be able to afford to have *faerie fires* cast each night to light the grounds and entrances. The poorer families must make do with *continual light* globes.

## Hazuth

Hazuth is situated to the north of the Melanith Bay, at the mouth of the River Ammath. It is a drop-off point for bluewood, and other goods from the northern half of Dambrath. It is not a huge town. The population only reaches 20,000 during the winter, when many boats put in for the winter rainy season.

Winter is the time the herds are brought down

from the north, and trading is at its peak. Traders from as far away as Westgate and Chondath come, almost all for the purpose of buying horses. The city has large, well-protected docks, and many ships lie in Melanith Bay during the rainy season. The town has a fair population of halflings, mostly tradesmen and craftsmen. They don't like the conditions in Dambrath, but there is profit to be made. No halfling ever let a bit of persecution stand in the way of profit.

## Ammathar

This city of 10,000 individuals is located west of the Granuin forest, along the Trader's Way. The duchess of the North, Tralia Falrith, rules here. Her influence is felt over much of the north of Dambrath. The city is much more tolerant than





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the rest of Dambrath. This is due to the influence of the traders from the north and the halflings in Luiren to the east. It is a popular stop-over for adventurers on their way to the Granuin Forest.

Shops featuring nearly all types of adventuring equipment are present, including an alchemist who sells magical potions. All items are three times the listed price in the *Players Handbook*, unless the purchaser is a Crintri noble. In that case the prices are half of listed price. A cut of all the inflated prices reaches the city coffers. Ammathtar is thus able to field a decent army (1,000 heavy cavalry, and up to 50 spellcasters). It is one of the cleanest cities in Dambrath. The ever-present horses do make themselves known but sanitation crews vigilantly work multiple shifts.

The duchess, a third cousin to the current queen, has designs on the throne. Even though she is only sixth in the line of succession, she has every intention of achieving the throne. She recently sent a group of adventurers to assassinate Duchess Luenath. Only powerful magic prevented her involvement from being discovered when they failed.

Duchess Falrith is a mage priest of 15th/16th level. She is said to have recently sent her consort, a drow male named Skield, to his death against a pair of beholders in Veldorn. Others say that Skield just got out while the getting was good. She has taken a new consort, a half-elf named Bristar Risingsun, a 10th-level lawful evil mage, who is not even a native. Whether he becomes a power in Ammathtar, or goes the way of Skield remains to be seen.

Ammathtar remains a peaceful trading city at least on the surface. It boasts the largest horse pens in the nation, which are located north of the city nest to the Traders Way. The pens can contain up to 5,000 horses. They are often full during the height of the trading season. Traders come with many types of goods. Ammathtar supplies the rest of the country with many hard to get goods, such as metal weapons from Underhome and tropical fruits from Luiren.

Ammathtar is also the northern defensive bor-

der of Dambrath. While anyone is permitted into the city patrols make sure that only authorized foreigners travel farther into Dambrath. Authorization for individuals usually, requires a bribe of 100 gold pieces to the official in charge of such passes. A party of adventurers is likely to be referred to the Duchess herself. Since no one is allowed into Dambrath simplex to "see the country," she is very persistent with her questions. Such parties are either turned to her own uses, or sent east to the Granuin Forest, "where the monsters and treasure literally grow on trees."

## Guilmarl

Guilmarl, located along the coast, is the southernmost city in Dambrath. The city is lashed by storms during the three-month rainy season. The population, which averages around 5,000, tends to decline during the rainy season. Wealthier residents spend the winters in Luenath or Prastuil.

When the rains subside, Guilmarl is a safe haven for pirates and merchant ships. They can sail south to Zakhara and the islands of the North, or west to Halruaa. These areas, however, are not the favorite targets of either the merchants or the raiders, so Guilmarl is a small city that shows every likelihood of growing smaller. The presence of Kethid, the Great Swamp only 45 miles to the west, makes the air humid and even worse smelling than in other Dambrath cities. The prevailing west winds bring an odor of decay on the worst days. With all of this, many non-residents wonder why the city still exists. There is a simple answer; Guilmarl is situated on the banks of some of the finest pearl beds in the Realms. Over one half the population makes their living diving for, polishing, or marketing pearls.

There are fewer Crintri in this city than any other. Only about 300 Crintri nobles live in the city. As the Great Swamp continues to get closer, more and more leave the city for good.



# Dambrath

## Herath

Herath is located along the headwaters of the Dolphin's Climb river, along the south ridge of the Gnollwatch mountains. It boasts a population of 18,000, and has the largest infantry in Dambrath. Herath is perhaps the wealthiest city in Dambrath, since the state mints for the electrum crints and silver shebs are here. Most of the metalworking shops in Dambrath are also located here.

Nearly all of the dwarves in Dambrath live here, and it is every clanleader's hope to get a dwarf-trained smith for her rancho. Most of the dwarves are occupied with smithing, and have all of the apprentices they can use. It is not at all unusual for a houseleader to pay up to 1,000 gold pieces to a dwarf to secure a place for one of her sons or servants as an apprentice.

The city has many skilled armorers and smiths. The best known non-dwarves are the Yamack brothers, two pureblood Arkaiuns. They have the largest shop in town. They employ up to 35 smiths and 100 apprentices at a time. The brothers specialize in horseshoes, barding, and other supplies for the cavalry. They and their staff are always busy. They can usually find room for special requests, provided the client is willing to pay extra. Armor or weapons can be had for standard price. The purchaser must be willing to wait for up to two months. Speedier deliveries require higher payments in proportion to the time saved.

Herath's army consists of 500 cavalry troops and 2,500 footmen. The bulk of them are occupied with guarding the silver and copper trains coming from the mines. Duchess Selanith, ruler of Herath, also employs shock troops of 1,000 gnolls, and 40 hill giants. These special troops are loyal to her.

The duchess takes her cut of all trade in the area, and is one of the wealthiest persons in Dambrath. Her estate is vast. She is said to own 10,000 horses and a dozen ranchos. She is ambitious, shrewd and powerful, but not foolish. She intends to be queen someday, but her heritage is against her. She is only 1/32 drow and resembles

a human more than a half-elf. She has taken a drow consort, Rualn, so her heirs are safely Crintri.

Selanith is a cruel duchess, and is extremely fond of contests wherein the loser dies. Jousting, mounted archery, and other contests of equestrian nature are as popular here as they are elsewhere. In Herath, however, the contests are to the death. Selanith's favorite game is one in which two mounted archers circle the arena and fire at each other until one can no longer ride. The horses always receive *protection from normal missile* spells, while the contestants do not.

## Prastuil

Prastuil is situated at the mouth of the Dolphin's Climb River, at the headwaters of the Bay of Dancing Dolphins. Originally just a trading spot, Prastuil is the oldest city in Dambrath. It has a population of 30,000, which swells to 50,000 during the winter rainy season. Many ships put in here for the winter for refitting. Fishing boats and pearl-divers can still go out, for the storms of the Great Sea never reach the city or the bay.

Prastuil has the most mixed population of all of the cities of Dambrath. One can find gnolls, halflings, Crintri, Arkaiuns, dwarves, drow, and even an occasional swarthy Zakharan. Prastuil is also the most beautiful city of Dambrath. Long ago the nobles took up the custom of having estates outside of town, where their prized horses are stabled. Most nobles also have manor houses in the city proper. These conditions, plus some of the lowest trading taxes in the country make Prastuil a popular place for trade and residence.

The city can field a force of 1,000 elite cavalry, several dozen spellcasters, and 10 to 40 ships, depending on the time of year. The warchief and effective leader of the city is Herald Markin. He is completely loyal to Duchess Luenath, who is responsible for Prastuil and Luenath.

About a quarter of the raw ore from the nearby mines comes here. The smithies, though they are active, aren't nearly as large as Herath's. In addition, the city's proximity to some of the



# Dambrath

country's largest tracts of rangeland insures that horse trading is active here. The city has one the nation's largest facility for handling horses. They are second only to the huge horse fair of Ammathtar.

Entertainment is also at its finest in Prastuil. Bards can be found singing on the street corners almost every night. Wild parties lasting days are common during the short winter season. Many of the entertainments are cruel and disgusting, but the Crintri, who are in abundance in this city, have a taste for such entertainments.

## Luenath

Luenath is located on the north shore of the Bay of Dancing Dolphins, at the mouth of the rivet Caraguir. It is the second largest city in Dambrath. Its Duchess, Merial of the clan Luenath, is the second most powerful woman in Dambrath.

Luenath is the home of the largest fleet in the Dambrath navy, though many of the ships act as pirates and privateers. The constant stream of booty and plunder coming in from the privateers makes Luenath a good place to get many hard to find goods. Unlike many of the other cities of Dambrath, the trading fair is located within a few blocks of the docks. Merchandise is usually sold as it is brought off the ships. The priestesses of Loviatar are always present. They insure that Luenath and Loviatar get their cut. The taxes, however, are not outrageous. Depending on the type of plunder, as well as the nationality and sex of the captain the taxes range from 5 to 25% of the total take. Privateers who are sworn to the service of the crown are allowed to keep half of all the booty they recover, which makes these sailors some of the wealthiest people in Dambrath. Many a rancho, fallen on hard financial times, has sent a daughter to sea. The booty she brings back can save the rancho.

Luenath has the traditional large estates within the city. The streets are wide and open, and no walls encircle the city in order to better to accommodate a sweeping cavalry charge. The forces of Luenath include 2,000 cavalry, and 10

warships that patrol the bay around Luenath. The warchief is Grenai Markin, younger brother to the warchief of Prastuil. Grenai is the more charismatic of the two brothers, although Herald is the better commander. Grenai is also the consort of the duchess Luenath. He is likely to either rise quickly or fall just as quickly, for the duchess is one of the harsher nobles of Dambrath.

Many Crintri winter in Luenath, which is the best place to see the dance of the dolphins. At dusk, the dolphins in the bay gather for their dance. The dance is a complicated game that the dolphins have developed over the years. The intricate jumping and weaving together seems to trigger a response deep within an observer, eliciting pleasure just from watching. Up to a thousand dolphins may be seen at one time. The bay teems with the fish that they like. Spearing dolphins is a crime punishable by slow torture in Luenath, as in most other places in Dambrath. Anyone who has watched the wondrous, hour-long event understands why.

## Hethar

Hethar is located on the south coast of the Bay of Dancing Dolphins, in the center of the Hethar Peninsula. It is the most combat-ready city in all Dambrath, since it has the responsibility of protecting the nation's entire southern coastline.

Hethar's forces number 5,000 warriors. At any time half of them are on patrol or on duty at the southern ramparts of the peninsula. Hethar has a few warships. Their main task is to defend the coast against a landing.

The warchief of Hethar is Fiella Markin, the third member of her family to have reached the rank of warchief. Fiella, like her brothers, is loyal to the duchess Luenath. She is also fiercely loyal to queen Yenandra. Fiella is a fighter/mage of 10th/12th level. She has overcome her lack of wisdom and priestly skills with a driving determination to be the best Crintri she can. This makes her both brilliant and cruel, a risk-taker who succeeds.

Hethar is first and foremost a military city.



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Shops for armor and weapon repair, smithies, and leather workers abound. Hethar possesses the only active field artillery smiths in all of Dambrath.

The city has responsibility for defending the southern shores, and it does so by stationing troops along the series of sharp cliffs along the southern shore, called the Ramparts of Dambrath. The Ramparts run in two strips. The longest one, to the west of the narrowest part, or the neck, is almost 150 miles long. The shorter, to the east, is just over 100 miles in length. Swift-moving mounted women patrol the length of the cliffs. From atop the cliffs they can see several miles out to sea. When incoming ships are spotted, messengers are dispatched to the nearest signalling station. These stations are located every ten miles along the coast. Every station has some method of communicating magically with the patrol outposts. Within six hours, at least 300 mounted troops, armed with shortbows and short swords, can be in place on top of the cliffs. Within twelve hours, ballistas and catapults can be brought in. By the time a fleet of ships can land and unload a force of invaders, they can be met by several thousand well-armed, well situated defenders. The neck is the weak point in this defense. Fallia has solved this problem by concentrating most of her outposts in this relatively narrow area.

This active defense is the main reason that Dambrath has only had to defend against one invasion. This occurred 190 years ago, when Ulgarth tried to invade in order to steal as many Dambraii horses as possible. The invaders were decimated, and the few prisoners were turned over to the priestesses of Loviatar.

## Elveswatch

Elveswatch, a small city of 5,000, is located at the southeastern tip of the Forest of Amtar. It is through this city that most of the famed bluewood of Amtar moves. The ranchos of the northern half of Dambrath purchase metal goods and other supplies from this town. Elveswatch is a

city of transients. No one actually wants to live in Elveswatch because of the near-constant rain, and numerous attacks by the wild elves of the Forest of Amtar.

The city has been plagued by these attacks throughout all of its history. The attacks have not stopped the felling of trees. The forest is so vast that in over 400 years of logging, they have not made any substantial inroads into the forest. In fact, the forest has expanded. The city now sits between two arms of the forest.

It rains nearly every day of the year in Elveswatch. Since horses don't do well in the rain forest, all patrols must go on foot. The threat of being posted to Elveswatch has been used on many a soldier, with great effectiveness.

Elveswatch has a troop of 1,000 infantrymen and 500 cavalry, augmented by 500 hired gnoll mercenaries. Almost every season, a patrol is lost to the elves of the forest. The city itself is frequently attacked by a small army of these wild elves. The attacks of the elves have brought many drow to the city. More are present in Elveswatch than any other place. The largest temple in Elveswatch is dedicated, not to Loviatar, but to Lolth. Of course, the high population of drow insures more attacks by the wild elves.

The high profit from the bluewood keeps the city thriving. There is no official intention to abandon the city, however much the military residents might wish it. Quite a few halflings live in Elveswatch. Most of them are skilled woodcarvers and carpenters. Bluewood furniture is considered a mark of wealth, and the demand always exceeds the supply. There is plenty of raw bluewood, but there are never enough skilled woodcarvers and carpenters to keep up with the demand. More information on bluewood can be found under the entry on the Forest of Amtar.

## Villages and Ranchos

There are a number of small villages and trading outposts in Dambrath. Most are merely wide spots in the road, a place where wine is served and horses shod. The largest such outpost is Far

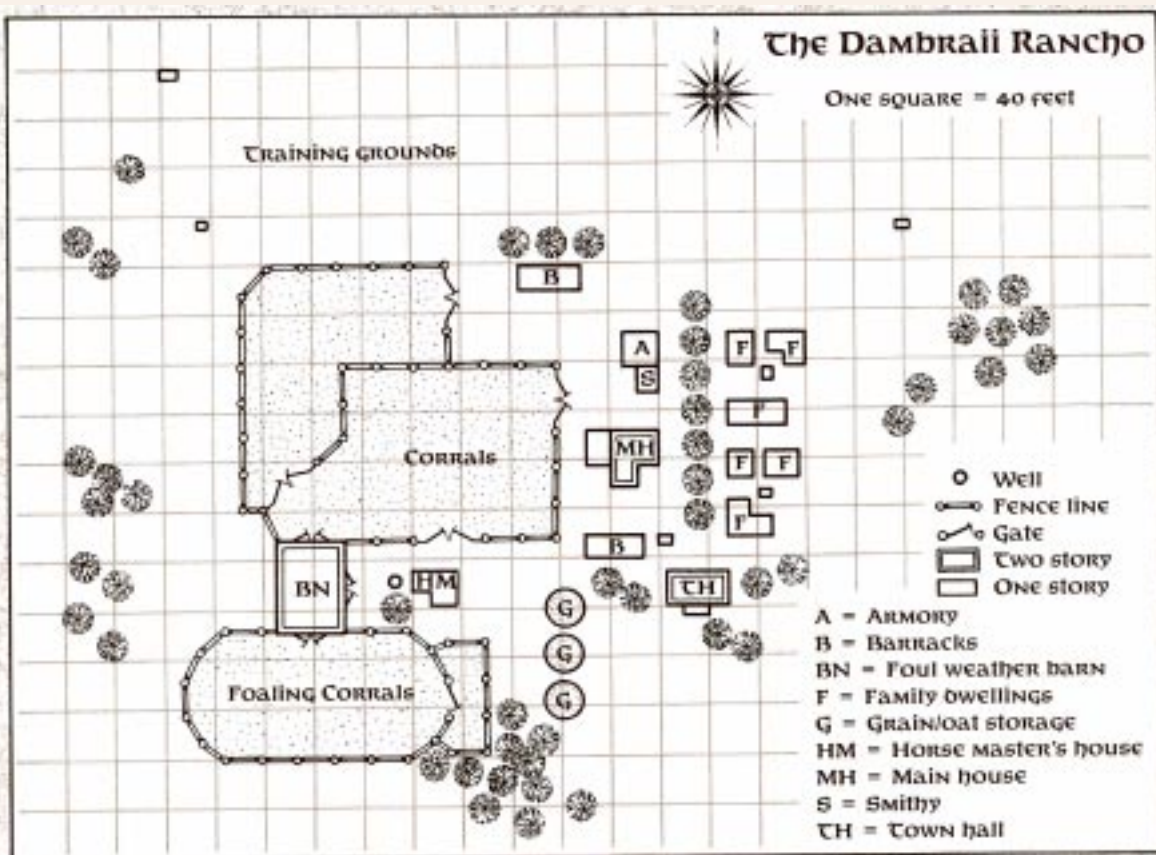


# DambraTh

Outpost, on the tip of the entrance to the Bay of Dancing Dolphins. This outpost has 500 cavalry and 20 warships. It is charged with defending the bay from incoming attackers. Ships are boarded and searched. As long as they are legitimate traders, they are allowed passage. Since all warships carry a spellcaster, the captain may be questioned magically. If he fails the test, his ship will be confiscated. Such spoils end up in Lueth, further enriching the Duchess.

The standard rancho is home to up to 100 members of a clan. It boasts a smithy, a stable for the nursing of sick or injured horses, a barracks for the men, private cottages for married couples and single women, and a large manor house for the Crintri owners. Everyone on a rancho, from the youngest walking child to the eldest resident,

can ride. Everyone over the age of 10 can use a bow or other weapon. If bandits or raiders attack, the rancho can be mobilized in mere minutes. They either respond to the attack, or ride for aid if the bandits are too numerous. Most ranchos are located within a few miles of another rancho. They long ago learned to help defend each other against raiders. A group of bandits, intent on plundering a deserted rancho, may find themselves facing the combined forces of three or four ranchos. This may be as many as five hundred determined horsewomen, men, and children, all willing to fight to the death to protect their homes.





# Dambrath

## Places of Interest

### The Forest of Amtar

The Forest of Amtar is a huge place, nearly half as large as all of Dambrath. It forms almost the entire northern border of Dambrath. The Forest is a lush, tropical place, where the temperature rarely falls below 90, even at night. Humidity is high, and insects and plant life abound. The most striking feature of the forest is the trees. Over half of the trees in the forest are the fast growing mathiri trees, more commonly known as bluewood. The wood is actually ivory colored with faint blue streaks, but, with polishing, it has a deep luster that resembles the glow of a polished gem. It is prized for making furniture because it is easy to cut, yet durable. A skilled woodworker is required to bring out the true beauty of the wood. The demand for such furniture always exceeds the supply.

Amtar is filled with life. All normal tropical animals of the forest can be found here: jaguars, tigers, gorillas, wild boars, and parrots, macaws and other tropical birds. It also supports a large population of carnivorous apes. The apes are abundant in the northern part of the forest, but can be found elsewhere. Choke creepers and giant snakes are common and the rhino beetle is also present.

On the east edge of the forest, three bandit bands have their hideouts. They prey upon travelers along the Trader's Way, which runs along the forest for a distance of several hundred miles. One of these bandit groups consists of almost one hundred orcs, led by an ogre magi called Tandi Earsgone. Another is a small group of outcast Arkaiuns, intent on bettering themselves through theft. Neither is much of a threat, leaving well-guarded caravans alone. Of more concern are Dracil's Raiders, a group of 10 evil adventurers, all of at least 8th level. Dracil is himself an outcast NE dwarven fighter/priest of 9th/10th level. The party boasts two mages, and another priest. The Raiders also have a number of magical items that aid them in their raids. Half of the band wears

*elven boots.* Dracil himself carries a *short sword of speed*, which is intelligent and allows him to fly for up to one hour a day. The Raiders pick their tights carefully. Large well-defended caravans are left alone. Smaller, poorer caravans, such as one carrying grain or leather goods, may be stopped and a tariff exacted. The raiders understand that if they shut off trade entirely, the "easy pickings" would dry up.

The south center of the forest, almost to the southern edge, is the domain of the wild elves. This large tribe of elves has successfully raided the Dambraii for hundreds of years. They are never a big enough nuisance for the city to spend much effort to eradicate them. The problems with finding them in the forest have also prevented any major military undertakings in this regard. It has long been a hobby of the Crintri and the drow to go out at night from Elveswatch, hunting the wild elves. The hunters often find themselves to be the hunted. The ancient enmity between the elves and the drow insures that neither side will ever call a truce.

The wild elves call themselves the Trunalor, or "star people". They have a legend that they were set down in this forest by the hands of the gods themselves. They are led by Ferla Tree-climber, a shaman (priest mage of 6th/7th level), who has been their leader for over 300 years. The total population of the tribe is small, not more than 500. Ferla knows that he can never mount a direct attack against the hated drow and their allies. Any party entering the forest (particularly from the south) without at least one true elf among its number is likely to be attacked. The wild elves seem to have the motto "Attack now, and don't ask questions later."

On the southwestern edge of the forest lies a citadel known as the Gate of Iron Fangs. It is a place of ruins, many times entered and pillaged. There are still plenty of monsters here, ruled by a glabrezu named Quinix, who is detailed more fully in the "Gate to Elsewhere" adventure in Chapter 6.



# Dambrath

## *Kethid, The Great Swamp*

Kethid is a large swamp on the southwestern corner of Dambrath. It is a sweltering place of cypress and thick moss. Except in the rainy season, temperatures frequently hit 110 and the humidity never drops below 90%. During the rainy season, the humidity rises to 100% while the temperature averages only 90. The place is a nightmare of giant leeches, giant toads, snakes, lizardmen, shambling mounds, tasloi, and bully-wugs. There are rumors of a great green dragon who has hidden his lair underwater, deep in the swamp. The wyrm, Latovenomer, has been sleeping for the past sixty years, and is due to awaken soon.

Many myths surround Kethid. One of the most popular claims that lights from the sky descending into the swamp. Some claim that these lights are aid from the heavens called by the the dragon. Others say that beings not of this world live in the swamp. This is closer to the truth than they know. The lights from the sky are spelljamming ships.

The swamp is also the home of one of the most prolific mercenary companies of the realms. The Servants of the Royal Egg, a company of lizardmen, contracts soldiers to anyone with the money to pay. The field commander is Sladis, while the tribe is led by the Lizard King Ghassis. Ghassis is willing to rent his soldiers to anyone. His contacts allow him to get replacements from the egg ships of space almost at will. He doesn't care if the lizardmen come back; there are plenty more where they came from. There is however, a slightly higher fee if they don't come back. Commanders wanting "ballista fodder" are advised to say so up front, so a better price can be negotiated. More on the Servants of the Royal Egg can be found in the "Gold & Glory" publication from TSR.

## *Hills of The Dead Kings*

The Hills of the Dead Kings is the name given to the range of hills which connect to the Gnoll-

watch mountains. Together they bisect Dambrath. It was formerly known as The Hills of the Kings, but that was changed when the priestesses of Loviatar came. It is a relatively safe place in spite of its name, many halflings live in the eastern part of the hills. There are plenty of streams and grassy knolls. Deep within the hills are the tombs of the Reinhar. Eight of the Reinhar, all but Reinhar the Foolish, are buried here. The tombs have never been found, according to popular knowledge. Actually, all but two of the tombs have been found and plundered by Crintri adventurers. They were wise enough to keep this silent, knowing how upset the Shebali would become. The two unplundered tombs are those of Reinhar I, and Reinhar V, an unimpressive king with a taste for silver jewelry.

Reinhar I is not buried in his tomb. His body was lost in Halruaa. The tomb that was erected in his memory is said to be defended by several deadly guardians, including a stone and iron golem. Legends say that Malar the Beastlord himself granted the protection to the tomb of his greatest hero. The guardians are actually a stone lion and an iron tiger, with all of the normal powers of golems.

## *The Swagdar (Outlaw Waste)*

The Swagdar is the last free place in Dambrath, so say the nomads who roam this 150-mile stretch of tall grasses and hidden valleys. The bandits who live in the region claim that the original Arakaiun way of life is preserved in the Swagdar.

The area is home to numerous small bands of raiders who eke out a living raiding the ranchos of the western Fornaluil range and the northern Conaluil range. They also raid the mountain outposts of Halruaa, and even venture after caravans leaving the Gnollwatch mountains. These bandits, all inveterate horse thieves, are reviled by the common Dambraii. Such bandits know the consequences if they are caught, so battles are fierce and lethal. Little quarter is asked or



# Dambrath

given, although bandits do not kill children. Rather, youngsters are carried off to be raised in the true Arkaiun way. The bandits are quite numerous. In fact, the total bandit population nearly matches the forces of the largest cities of Dambrath. As yet, no single leader has been able to unite them, although many self-proclaimed leaders have died trying. The bandits have returned to the worship of the Beastlord.

## The Gnollwatch Mountains

The Gnollwatch mountains are a small range that bisects Dambrath. The southern slopes have several rich silver and electrum veins. More veins are discovered every year. In spite of the conflicts with monsters and outlaws, the area is actively mined. The peaks of the Gnollwatch are also the coolest places in Dambrath. They are the only area in the country to receive snowfall.

The mountain is home to numerous tribes of gnolls. Some of the tribes have friendly relations with the Dambraii, others do not. A few giants make their homes in this range. Rumors abound of a great and terrible silver dragon that makes its lair somewhere in the mountains. The rumors of the dragon are false, but there are plenty of other monsters to keep unwary adventurers on their toes. A colony of flinds makes its home deep in the mountains.

The drow city of T'lindet is located several miles under the center of the gnollwatch mountains. Due to the open trade with Dambrath above, there are many roads from the drow city to the surface. The largest road begins in a large cave ten miles north of the city of Herath. It is clearly marked by hundreds of years of usage.

## The Bay of Dancing Dolphins

The "treasure of Dambrath," as it was called by the Arkaiuns, is a wondrous sight. Numerous dolphins swim with grace and poise through the bay's clear waters. Because of their large numbers, normal sea menaces like sharks and sahuagin are almost nonexistent.

Since the waters are crystal clear, the floor of the sea, even if it is hundreds of feet down is visible from the surface. The dolphins are pampered by the citizens of Dambrath. This is a strange love for people who worship the Maiden of Pain. Dolphins were originally protected three centuries ago by order of Queen Melanith. Such an order would not normally remain popular for so long a time, but many of the citizens have had a relative saved by actions of helpful dolphins. Another source of the Dambraii's deep affection for the sea mammals is the Dance of the Dolphins.

At dusk, the tens of thousands of dolphins in the bay gather for their dance. This is not a real dance, but a complicated game that the dolphins have developed over the years. If seen from overhead, the dance all fits together, over the whole of the bay. The few sages who have studied it theorize that the dolphins are performing some sort of ritual. Others say they are actually attempting to communicate with someone, perhaps the deity of the dolphins. Most people don't worry about the reasons for the dance; they just enjoy watching the dolphins.

The grace and beauty of the dance is pleasing to viewers of all ages. Many people believe that watching the dolphins every night wards off depression and other mental illnesses. Some even speak of catatonic people cured by watching the dolphins. This is not likely, but watching the dance does instill a feeling of well-being in the watcher. It is one of the most beautiful sights in the Realms, and few but the Dambraii have ever seen it.





# Dambrath

## NPCs of Dambrath

### Queen Yenandra

#### Great Pain of Loviatar, and Sovereign of Dambrath.

Half-drow female 18th-level mage, 19th-level specialty priestess (Loviatar): Str 11, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 17; AL LE; AC 2; MV 12; hp 102; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 (scourge +2); SZ M; ML 18. Spells: Wizard 5/5/5/5/5/3/3/2, Priest 11/11/9/9/6/4/2

Where Found: Cathtyr

Queen Yenandra is the high priestess of her religion, as well as the ruler of the country. She is the fifth queen of her line to rule, and traces her origin back to Cathtyr, the founder. She has been ruling for 70 years, and her edge is beginning to leave her. She knows that before long one of her daughters will challenge her for the crown, and will probably defeat her. She will take no action against her daughters to head off this challenge; this is how she came to rule. She feels that it is fitting that the crown be passed this way. Yenandra will fight as best she can when the challenge is finally issued, but until then she is proud of her daughters. She ruthlessly puts down any attempt to weaken either Dambrath or her family's hold on it.

### Merial

#### Duchess of Clan Luenath

Half-elf female (1/16th drow) 15th-level mage/-12th-level priest (Loviatar): Str 9, Des 12, Con 15, Int 17, Wis 36, Cha 14; AL NE; AC 4; MV 12; hp 85; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2 (whip): SZ M; ML 16. Spells: Wizard 5/5/5/5/5/2/1, Priest 8/7/5/3/2.

Where Found: Luenath

Merial, formally referred to as Luenath, is said to be the second most powerful women in Dam-

brath. She controls three large cities in her domain with an eye on the masses. She understands both pain and pleasure. For her, they are often the same. Luenath has always felt that she should be the queen instead of Cathtyr. Right now, however, she is too concerned with the daily pleasures and pressures of managing for three cities to have much time for plotting against the throne.

Merial works constantly, sleeping only one hour each night. Her servants are convinced her low need for sleep is magical; they are correct. She wears a *ring of sleeplessness* that allows her to maintain this grueling schedule.

The affairs of three cities are too vast for even one as driven as Merial. She has begun to trust tasks to her daughters, who do not share their mother's love of work. They in turn designate the work to lesser nobles in order to spend their days swimming with the dolphins, or riding the ranges.

Recently Luenath thwarted an assassination attempt. A group of young males presented as a gift from the Duchess of Herath attempted to slay her in her own bed. Her loyal acolyte, fatally wounded by the assassins, was able to warn her seconds before the deed. Luenath froze the intruders with her mightiest spell, only to see them mysteriously die before her eyes. She attempted to contact their spirits, but failed. Someone had destroyed the spirits already.

Luenath is too wise to immediately suspect the Duchess of Herath. She is conducting both magical and mundane investigations, but has gained little information so far. When she finally discovers the real culprit (Duchess Falrith of Ammathtar), her vengeance will be terrible.

### Tralia Falrith

#### Duchess of Ammathtar

Half-elf female (1/8th drow) 15th-level mage/16th level priest (Loviatar): Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 15; AL LE; AC 3; MV 12; hp 96; THAC0 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 (Dagger +2): SZ M; ML 15. Spells: Wizard 5/5/5/5/2/1, Priest 8/7/6/6/4



# Dambrath

Where Found: Ammathtar

Tralia Falrith is ambitious and powerful, with delusions of grandeur. She is intent on becoming the queen, and will stop at nothing to achieve her end. She can be kind and charming until her desires are thwarted. Then, her rage is terrible and murderous.

She is a fervent believer in Loviatar's destiny: the idea that women should rule the world. She thinks of all other cultures (except for that of the drow, for which she has great respect) as barbaric.

This belief does not stop her from dealing with outsiders. She is often mistaken for a kindly leader, a perception she encourages. If the PCs pass through Ammathluir, they have a chance of meeting Falrith. She has observers who do nothing but watch for powerful adventurers. If the party contains someone of 6th level or higher, she has a base 50% chance of hearing about them. This chance is modified by the party's actions. Ostentatiously displaying magical power, or exhibiting trophies of powerful monsters they have slain raises the chance to 90% or even higher. Depending on their power and alignment, she will attempt to enlist them in her service either openly or through trickery.

## Selanith

### Duchess of Herath

Half-elf female (1/32 draw) 12th-level mage/ 15th-level priestess (Loviatar): Str 12, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 14; AL LE; AC 4; MV 12; hp 80; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2 (whip); SZ M; ML 15. Spells: Wizard 4/4/4/4/1, Priest 8/8/6/6/4.

Where Found: Herath

Selanith is the richest woman in Dambrath. Her control of the mines combined with her ownership of many ranchos and horses make her very wealthy indeed. Although she is ambitious, she keeps the welfare of her country close to heart. She realizes that trickery and deceit may be dis-

covered. Therefore, she makes open, obvious moves to cement her power.

Selanith is both cruel and lavish. Her favorite sports are those in which the loser dies, and she sponsors many of these deadly tournaments each year. There is never a shortage of entrants for the games, since the duchess rewards the winners lavishly with wealth and power. Many an army commander has gotten her first break after winning in the games of Herath.

## Catharyn

Half-elf female (1/4 draw) 7th-level mage/10th-level priestess (Loviatar): Str 30, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 16; AL LE; AC 6; MV 12; hp 50; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2 (whip); SZ M; ML 16. Spells: Wizard 4/3/2/1, Priest 6/5/3/3/2.

Where Found: The Great Sea

Catharyn is the eldest daughter of Yenandra. She currently commands the Queen's Fury, the proudest ship in the fleet. Catharyn has been away from Dambrath for almost a year. She is currently returning to Dambrath, leading four ships laden with booty. Her ships have been raiding as far west as Nimbral, out on the trackless sea. Catharyn is her mother's pride, as cruel and ruthless a daughter as a priestess of Loviatar could want. Catharyn's proudest boast is that she's never taken a prisoner. Her flag, a dolphin leaping over a ship, is enough to strike terror into the heart of any ship captain in the Great Sea.

## Baltor

12th-level human male druid (Silvanus): Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 15; AL N; AC 5; MV 12 (swim 30 in dolphin form); hp 60; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8 (bite as dolphin); SZ M; ML 14. Spells: 8/7/6/3/2/2

Where Found: The Bay of Dancing Dolphins



# Dambrath

Baltor is the only druid currently living in Dambrath. He was born in Cormyr, and studied under the druids in the Hullack Forest. Upon gaining his shapeshifting ability, he resolved to fly to the ends of Faerun. While passing over Dambrath, he witnessed the dance of the dolphins. It entranced and intrigued him. He returned to his superiors, asking to be assigned to watch over this natural wonder.

Baltor has spent the majority of the last 30 years as a dolphin. He has been attempting to decipher the meaning and the purpose of the dance. Although he has been unsuccessful so far, he is confident that another 20 or 30 years should bring success.

Baltor keeps a careful watch on activity in the bay. If the PCs run afoul of weather or pirates, he may come to their aid. Baltor will be more inclined to aid PCs who are priests of a nature power. Naturally, a fellow druid is almost guaranteed a visit. Baltor rarely goes ashore, and has little information about the workings of Dambrath society. He does, however, know quite a bit about their pirate activity, which he has been watching since he arrived.

## Dambrath's Horses

No mention of Dambrath would be complete if some attention was not paid to the prize of Dambrath, her horses. A Dambraii steed is prized, with good reason, all through the Shining South. Most Dambraii horses that leave the country are considered the equal of any to be found elsewhere. In truth, player characters who manage to get their hands on a Dambraii horse will find it tough (1's or 2's on Hit Dice count as 3's), fast (add 1 to its movement rate), and easy to train (subtract from 1d4 weeks from any trick or maneuver to be taught to it).

Only the poorest horseflesh actually leaves Dambrath. Someone facing a troop of Dambraii cavalry quickly learns that the best horses stay in Dambrath. A cavalry troop on Dambraii horses can move at a speed that is unheard of by any other cavalry troop. A troop can be packed and

mounted in less than a minute. The horses all average at least 6 hit points per die, and add 25% to the normal movement rate. They are all battle-trained, and very dependable in combat. Dambraii riders are almost never thrown at least while their horses still live.

The horses of Dambrath are smaller than usual. Large warhorses don't do well in the heat. A Dambraii horse is always spotted, generally white on black, or black on white. Browns and grays do exist, but are rare.

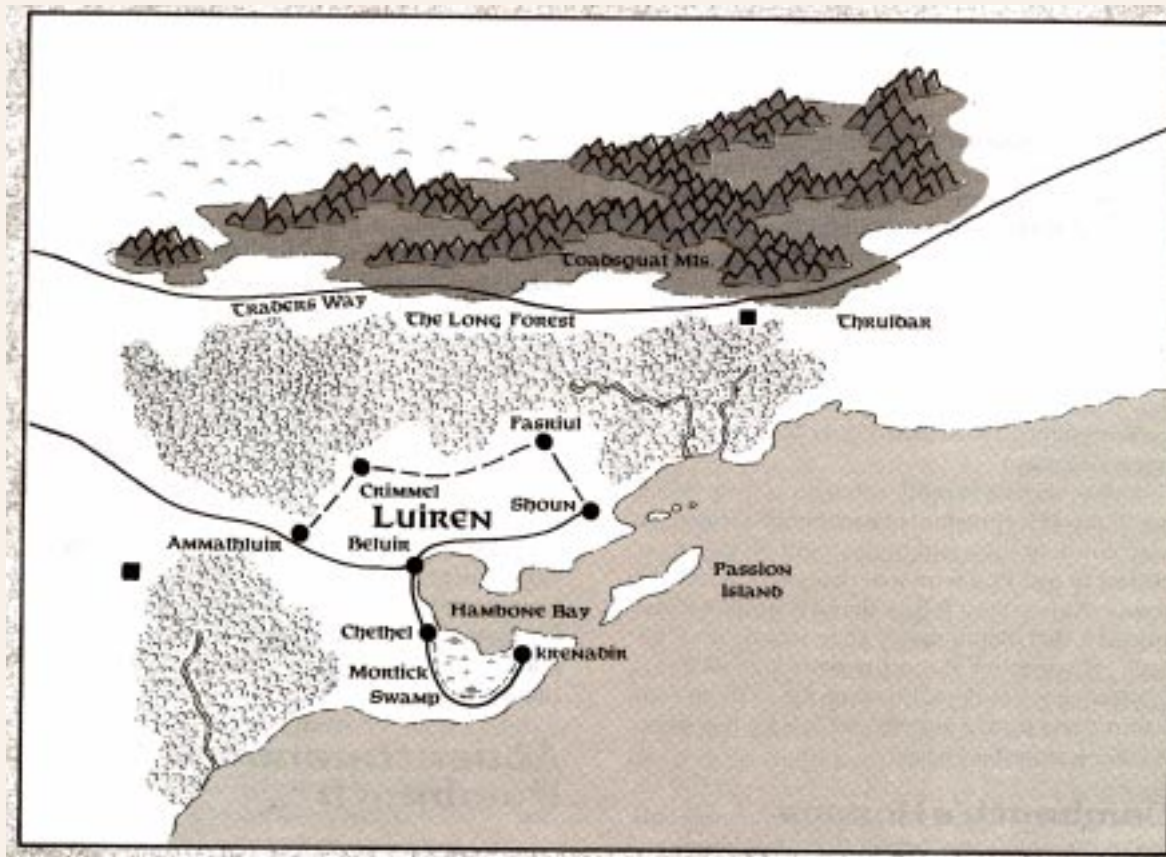
It is interesting to note that the superior qualities of Dambraii horses do not last outside their land. Perhaps this is proof that the arkas grass (which grows only in Dambrath) was indeed created for horses. The horses bred from a Dambraii steed are excellent animals, but do not have the special abilities of a Dambraii horse. Apparently, the grass is the key to developing a superior animal. Horses fed the arkas grass during the first years of their lives become superior animals. This is a little known secret outside of Dambrath.

## Adventurers in Dambrath

Dambrath has many places for adventurers to explore, provided they can get into the country. The Gnollwatch Mountains, the Great Swamp, and the Forest of Amtar ail provide many exciting adventures for the brave or the foolhardy. Getting back out of the country may be even more of an adventure. Dambraii are very resentful of anyone "robbing from their culture." Needless to say, elves have a very short life expectancy in Dambrath. All other races are tolerated. A dwarf may have trouble if he claims to be an adventurer. If, however, he says he is a smith, he is welcomed with open arms.



# Luiren, The Land of The Halflings



## General Description

Luiren is a small, heavily wooded land between the matriarchy of Dambrath, and the trading country of Estagund. The land is bordered on the north by the Toadsquat mountains, and on the south by the Great Sea. Populated almost entirely by halflings, Luiren is famous for many things: its foodstuffs, its brewing, and its intricate woodcarving. It is a rich country, and one capable of defending itself against invaders and pirates.

## Geography and Climate

Luiren is located on the coast of the Great Sea, just south of the Toadsquat mountains. The northern half of the country is covered by the Long Forest, a 90-mile-wide band of trees that runs east to west for over 300 miles. To the west, the Long Forest is filled with monsters. On the east it is a vibrant jungle, inhabited by normal jungle animals. The summer heat is intense. The temperatures often rise to 100 or higher; only the ever-present breezes from the sea keep the country livable. During the winter the rains bring trade and land travel to a standstill. The roads become sink-holes after three months of daily rain. This weather is excellent for the fruits that are grown in the plains south of the Long Forest.



# Luiren, The Land of The Halflings

## History of Luiren

The halflings of Luiren claim that it is the original homeland of halflings in the Realms. Although other halflings may disagree, it is true that halflings have lived in Luiren for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years.

Luiren's history is one of conquerors. Throughout the centuries the halflings have been conquered by the barbarians who used to inhabit Dambrath, by the kingdom of Estagund, and even once by the monsters of Veldorn. In every case, the invaders were eventually defeated because they made the mistake of underestimating the halflings due to their small stature. A good bit of mischief, mayhem, and general trouble-making by the halflings also helped end the occupations.

For example, when the barbarians of Dambrath invaded, many halflings were carried off as slaves. The rest of them merely ducked into their holes, and avoided the barbarians as much as possible. Within a few years, the priestesses of Loviatar had seized control of Dambrath. When the barbarians withdrew to help their homeland, the halflings went back to their normal lives. Many of the slaves escaped and returned to their homeland. Others stayed in Dambrath to live and work.

Currently the halflings of Luiren are enjoying unprecedented prosperity. The trading nation of Durpar is their biggest customer, and their biggest competitor. The halflings of Luiren are bright enough to play on this relationship. Luiren, through its close ties with Durpar, has protected itself against another Dambrath invasion. The rulers of Dambrath know that if they begin to expand to the east, they will arouse the ire of Durpar, Var and Estagund. The threat of a trade embargo and/or military consequences have kept this aggressive nation away from the Luireners.

## Government and Politics

"As important as the Prince of Luiren," is a common saying in Luiren. Since there has never been a prince of Luiren, this means that what-

ever is being referred to is not very important. Luiren is, in effect, a peaceful anarchy. There are no organized government agencies. The halflings not only wouldn't stand for it, none of them would want to serve on such an agency. All government functions are handled on a town by town basis. Wide variation is possible, but most of the towns are run by a mayor, a number of warders, and a council of Elders. The elders, anyone of at least 90 winters, make the decisions for the town. These consist chiefly of hiring new warders. They also elect the mayor from among their own number.

Laws are loosely interpreted, and only capital crimes are actively prosecuted. A thief may be stripped of goods and turned out into the wilderness with nothing but the clothes on his back. A con artist or fraud often finds that his confidence game or scam has been turned against him. The halflings of Luiren are used to dealing with Durparian merchants. A cheat or fraud has little chance of bettering them at trade.

Someone who kills a halfling had better flee immediately or he'll find that halflings are not as helpless as they appear. Such criminals are dealt with summarily. A rope in a lonely tree is all they can expect.

Warders are responsible for keeping the peace, and defending the town from monsters and bandits. A warder is usually a fighter/thief of 3rd/3rd level. Larger towns have more powerful warders. Warders usually wear no uniforms. A brown cap with a feather in it signifies a warder in most villages. Warders are not too concerned with honor and forthrightness. They are very concerned with not getting hurt while fulfilling the duties of their office. Not surprisingly, most warders are proficient with short bows, slings, darts, or other missile weapons. With the bonus halflings receive for thrown weapons, and their intimate knowledge of their home terrain, these troops of warders can be very hard to overcome.



# Luren, The Land of The Halflings

## People and Customs

Halflings make up 95% of the population. The rest are almost all humans. Since Luiren halflings think of gnomes as busybodies; not many are found in Luiren.

There are a few small tribes of dwarves in the Toadsquat mountains. Elves live in the Long Forest, but they have little to do with the halflings.

Humanoids do not exist in Luiren in any great numbers, except for the ogres of the Toadsquat mountains. Their relationship with the halflings is not a friendly one.

## Social Customs

The halflings of Luiren have few laws, hut many customs. A halfling is expected to feed his invited or uninvited guests, and feed them well. Many of the richer halflings keep a first class cook on the payroll at all times. Some even take the time to learn how to be a gourmet cook themselves. One of the most sought after claims to fame is the invention a new taste sensation that sweeps the country. The recipe alone can make the inventor rich. He is much in demand at festivals and parties. "Only the baker makes the bread right," is an expression that carries a lot of weight in Luiren. It is widely believed that only the inventor can truly do justice to his invention.

The small folk of Luiren are always polite, even to someone they may have to shoot in the back later. It's just simple logic. If a huge brute is pushing around halflings, they'll call him by whatever title he wants. It doesn't make his armor any tougher, or make his back a less tempting target.

Other customs include the spring and fall festivals. After the rainy season ends, the halflings have the spring festival. In the fall, after the harvest is all in, a huge three day festival is held. Many halflings have observed that at this festival, "The food and drink fall from the sky." Most visitors have come to believe that this is one of the wildest festivals in the Realms.

The small folk of Luiren are small only in

stature. They are not afraid to compete with the traders of Durpar, and ship their goods to a wide area. Although they do not possess the infrastructure to ship all over the Realms, Luiren stout is popular all along the Shining South. Luiren spring cheese has been heard of as far away as Waterdeep.

When in Luiren, if a person is open, friendly, and not too attached to his money, he'll get along just fine. The Luireners treat others as they are treated. Since most of the big folk are trying to take advantage of them they do the same.

"Big folk" in Luiren often have a difficult time finding lodgings. Along the Great Trade Way, inns which cater to both folk are common. Away from the Trade Way, almost everything is halfling sized. This makes it tough for "big folk" to find a good inn with beds over four feet long. Most visiting "big folk" sleep in the stables.

Luireners have a number of popular expressions which sum up their outlook on life. Some are in use in the other countries of the Shining South as well. The words "vellam" and "bouqtha" are used to represent money and food. "Vellam" is obviously a derivation of the Durparian Vellim, or trade bar. "Bouqthi" (pronounced book-thi) is a fruit pastry. Its derivative, "bouqtha," refers to good food of any type.

Some common halfling expressions include:

"Once the bouqtha is on the table, the rest is just keeping score" - halfling view of money.

"Stew's ready, shall I give it to the dogs?" - means that supper is ready, usually followed by a stam-pede toward the dining room.

"The dogs are finished, do you want what's left?" - to a halfling who was late for supper. This expression doesn't get used much.

"I've got a deal for you that even a Dambraii noble couldn't turn down." - Halflings think of Dambraii nobles as incredibly arrogant and stupid. This expression is used to represent a deal that even an idiot wouldn't refuse.

"The vellam is on the table" - This phrase is used to indicate that the halfling has offered all he's going to for an item, or that he is telling the



## Luren, The Land of The Halflings



truth. Neither use indicates that the halfling really means it, but it is used frequently.

"As smart as a human" - an extreme insult.

"Brought home the vellam" - made an extremely profitable deal, or was extremely lucky.

"When in Durpar, keep your hand on your pouch. When in Halruaa, sell them dirt and call it a spell component. When in Dambrath, leave." - old saying that represents the Luireners' view of the three nearby countries.

Another custom of Luiren concerns names. Many halflings take names representing either their trade, or types of food. The Baker family is widespread. There is even a very successful branch of the family in Durpar. Other common names are Carver, Alemaker, Brewer, Vintner, Forestkin, Sandwich, Pastrri, and Clambake.

### Religion

There are several gods that are popular with Luireners. Tymora, greater power of luck, is the most prominent deity in the land. She's closely followed by Silvanus, the Oak Father, and Yondalla, the protector of halflings. Since most Luiren halflings are not very religious, none of the revered deities expect severe piety from the halflings. Of the small number of halfling priests in the land, the most powerful is only 10th level.

Following the coming of the avatars, new specialty priests of several halfling deities appeared in Luiren. Two of these new priests are presented on the inside cover of this book. These specialty priests are native to the Luiren area only. Once the number of such priests increases, some may begin to adventure. For now, though,



# Luiren, The Land of The Halflings

these new priests should only be found in Luiren.

## Money and Commerce

Luiren is a busy place. Crafts and foods are shipped out of the country to cities all along the Shining South. The goods that leave Luiren by sea are usually sold to Durparian merchants. The Durparians are happy to pick up loads of Luiren stout, salcakes, and an occasional wheel of spring cheese (also known as “cheeese”).

Luiren has no currency of its own. The most widespread currency is the Durparian vellim. Dambraii shebs and crints are also common, as is the Halruan electrum skie. Bartering is widespread; some of the more rural citizens of Luiren may go years without ever seeing a single coin. Others in the cities, have accumulated wealth to compare with some of the lesser chakas of Durpar. One prominent merchant, Gildmak Sholapur, leader of the famous brewers of Luiren Stout, owns the largest brewery in the Shining South.

The halflings of Luiren show an inventive bent, particularly with respect to food and drink. Luiren stout is a dark thick ale, popular all over the Shining South. It is even popular, though rare, in the dwarven city of Underhome. Bouqthi is a very popular pastry in Luiren, but little is exported since pastries do not travel well. Bouqthi is made by using a sugared dough, filled with the stalks of the red rhubarb plant that grows well along the south edge of the Long Forest. There are perhaps a hundred different recipes for this popular pastry. Discussions on which bouqthi recipe is better commonly escalate into brawls, especially if both recipes' creators are present.

Salbread is another taste treat from the inventive folk of Luiren. It was invented for sale to the sailors and other travelers. It is a crusty travel bread that stays edible for weeks. It is more flavorful than the average journeybread, and is particularly popular with Durparian merchants. It is baked in square pans, and packs easily and conveniently. One of the reasons it is popular with

sailors is that the recipe involves a touch of lemon or orange peel. This bit of added nutrition means that the bread can actually help sailors to fight off scurvy, or at least help to prevent its development. This also gives it a tart flavor that does not grow as tiresome to the taste buds as that of ordinary journeybread.

Fruit is another Luiren export. The lands between Beluir and Chethel have many tropical fruit plantations. They grow bananas, papayas, pineapple, oranges, passion fruits, lemons, and a myriad of other fruits. Most are consumed in Luiren, but ships from Durpar and Halruaa take on loads of green bananas and other fruits.

Perhaps the most notable invention of Luiren, at least among halflings, is Luiren spring cheese. Also known as mind cheese, or cheeese (yes, there are four e's in the spelling), this hard cheese is excellent when melted into a fondue or sauce. When consumed in its raw form, cheeese is intoxicating and habit forming to halflings.

Whenever a halfling consumes more than four ounces of raw cheeese, he suffers a -2 penalty on all proficiency checks and combat rolls and a -20% to all thief abilities. If eight or more ounces are consumed, the halfling must make a saving throw vs. death magic or pass out for 1d10 turns. Whenever it is consumed in its raw form, the halfling must make a Constitution check or crave more cheeese within the next 24 hours. Failure to get it causes the halfling to lose half his hit points, and suffer from severe pain and cramps for the next 24 hours. Heated cheeese loses its intoxicating effects and is safe to consume. Luiren spring cheese is also a vital ingredient in the special recipes used in the medicinal cooking proficiency detailed at the end of this chapter.

## Cities of Luiren

Most halflings of Luiren live in comfortable caves, with small (halfling-sized) doors and windows. The underground location helps keep the temperature comfortable. Over three-quarters of all dwellings in the Luiren cities are of this type.





# Luiren, The Land of The Halflings

Inns and meeting houses, as well as dwellings for the "big folk," are above ground. So are most stores, bakeries and other businesses. A dwelling below ground is called a "halfole." All rich halflings live in halfoles.

Nearly every small village or hamlet has its own halfling whistler. This is a halfling bard who can summon animals, and control weather and plants by means of the songs he whistles. In the last few years priests of Yondalla have been increasingly evident in the land, working to defend Luiren from outside interference.

## Beluir

The largest town in Luiren, Beluir is a sprawling collection of buildings, halfoles, and inns. The population is a bit over 15,000, which includes residents of the nearby plantations and farms. Beluir is located on the west end of the Hambone Bay.

The mayor is Calcitro Burrow, a halfling fighter of 8th level. Calcitro carries a *dagger of severing* (similar to a *sword of sharpness*). He is a fighting legend in Beluir, having single-handedly slain two raiding giants. The Burrows family owns the largest fruit plantation in the area. They also own the town's best inns: the Friendly Burrow, the Red Burrow, and the Cold Duck.

The town is well-defended. The Warde's troop in Beluir consists of more than 400 warriors. These stealthy wardens are all specialists with slings. An invading group of monsters or bandits may be subject to a withering cross-fire before they ever know that they have been surrounded.

## Ammathluir

Ammathluir is located south of the Long Forest, on the western edge of Luiren. Some of the best woodcarvers and craftsmen in the Shining South live in Ammathluir. Caravans make their way down the southern fork of the Great Trade Way, bringing metal goods and leather from Dambrath. They return with loads of Salbread,

crafted wood items, and Luiren Stout.

Most of the residences in this border town are halfoles. Fewer than 50 buildings are above ground. This makes travelers believe they have entered a very small town, when the population is actually over 10,000. The halflings here are very active traders and craftsmen.

Ammathluir is the home of more than a dozen halfling whistlers, and at least one 7th-level specialty priest of Yondalla. Because whistlers can influence animals, they are credited with protecting the city from the frequent wild animal attacks. There is a small temple to Yondalla in town built into the side of a hill.

## Chethel

This town is located in the hills above the Mortick Swamp, at the west end of Hambone Bay. It has a population of 8,000 or so, mostly grain and fruit traders. Chethel also has several large docks. Of all cities in Luiren, this is the most comfortable for the big folk. Almost 10% of the population is human or half-elven. Most of the ships in Luiren sail from here. The trading is fast and furious in the market of Chethel. On a typical day characters may meet merchants from Ulgarth and Durpar, or even a Halruaan trader. Many goods enter and leave the country here. The most prominent export is Luiren Stout, for the famous Sholapur family has its main breweries in Chethel. They employ almost a thousand workers. In fact, grain must be imported from Durpar to keep up with the demand. Inns are common. Some inns are sized for all races, but others are sized for halflings only. Due to the proximity of the dangerous Mortick swamp, PCs may meet many of the adventuring halflings of Luiren in this city.

Tymora and Yondalla both have shrines in Chethel. The leader of the Tymora congregation is a 10th-level halfling priestess, Janalea Baker.

## Fasriul

Fasriul is north of Shoun, near the Long Forest, and north of some of the best farmlands in



# Luren, The Land of The Halflings

Luiren. Its chief claim to fame is the fields of red rhubarb that grow here, a vegetable that is traded all over Luiren. The city can claim only 3,000 residents, most involved with farming and baking. A small group of 40 warders watches the forest to the north. The mayor is Silari Carver, a wealthy landowner and farmer. Silari is an 8th level priestess of Yondalla, who no longer practices in the faith. She has found that she is far too busy with her farms and businesses. Fasriul is a growing town, the population used to be less than 2,000. The increased exports of foodstuffs to Durpar and Halruaa are responsible for this growth.

## Krenalir

Krenalir is located on the east end of the Mortick swamp, served by a loop in the Great Trade Way. It has adequate docks, but most traders sail for Beluir or Chethel. The Krenalir Peninsula, as the narrow land east of the swamp is called, is a fertile citrus area, and many fruits are grown here. In the winter, the rain-lashed peninsula is almost deserted.

The population ranges from 5,000 during harvest time, to only about 1,500 during the winter. All of the halflings who can afford to, generally winter with relatives in other cities for the rainy season.

The mayor of Krenalir is Hudkin Moadi, a halfling who despises adventurers. He has sent more than one group to their deaths in the Mortick swamp. Hudkin attempted to become an adventurer, but found that life on the trail was not for him. His burrow is extensive, since his family is one of the largest in Krenalir.

The warders of Krenalir are used to the distrust of Hudkin; they ignore it because he pays well. There are 100 warders active during the harvest season, but most are laid off during the winter, and spend their winters patrolling the Long Forest for the cities of Fasriul and Crimel.

## Shoun

This city is located on the eastern coast of Luiren, and is the closest port to Passion Island. From here cogs sail to the Passion island, returning with many citrus fruits. There are many bakeries in Shoun, and all are well frequented by the locals. The expression "as fat as a Shounite" has come to symbolize the average resident.

Shoun is home to some of the great dairies. Herds of goats are kept north of the city. It is legend that a Shounite invented Luiren spring cheese.

The mayor of Shoun is also the richest merchant in the city. Melino Richtoes is a fabulously wealthy dairy owner. Although he owns almost 10% of the businesses in town, he is a generous sort. He is also a rogue of 14th level, who has turned to the lawful good teachings of Yondalla. He uses his rogue skills to defeat the enemies of his chosen power. Residents say that Melino is a much better mayor since he found religion, and that Shoun is more successful than ever.

## Crimel

Crimel is a small city of 1,000, located under the eaves of the Long Forest. Its residents are mainly concerned with harvesting wood from the forest under the watchful eyes of the priests of Yondalla, who are there to see that the logging is done in accordance with nature. The priests also help defend the village from the frequent raids by marauding monsters and bandits.

The leader of Crimel is Silvo Carver, a well-to-do merchant who owns many of the herds of cattle and sheep which graze south of town. There is a small garrison of warders here. It consists of 50 woodcrafty halflings, with several priests of Tymora and Yondalla assisting. A halfling priestess of Sheela Peryroyl lives in the Long Forest not far from Crimel. Nola Treestump is a priestess of 8th level. She is responsible for keeping the nearby forest clear of evil influences.



# Luren, The Land of The Halflings

## Places of Interest

### The Long Forest

Stretching over 300 miles, the Long Forest covers almost half of Luiren. Its east end is particularly dangerous, filled with bandits, stirges, huge spiders, flying snakes, rhino beetles, and other jungle monsters. The forest gets safer the farther west one travels. Nola Treestump, a halfling priestess, has the western end of the forest under her protection. Several bands of monsters have begun to infiltrate her domain, however.

The Long Forest is on a ridge below the Toad-squat Mountains, which makes it a bit more temperate than the normal woods of the Shining South. Oaks, maples, rowans, and other northern trees can be found here, although not in great numbers. The majority of plant life is typical of the Shining South. Kudzu trails over everything, while cypress and fruit trees abound.

### Granuin Forest

The Granuin Forest is completely untamed. It is the home of at least one tribe of yuan-ti, as well as a beholder that lurks deep in a forest stronghold. Dark trees also make their home here, having migrated from the Wood of Dark Trees in Durpar.

The Granuin Forest is a gloomy, mysterious place, and the inhabitants prefer to keep it that way. Various traps line the trails, placed to kill or capture the unwary. If the characters meet an intelligent monster, there is an 80% chance he serves either Siliss, the yuan-ti leader, or Xianthrope, the beholder.

### Mortick Swamp

The Mortick Swamp was aptly named. It is full of giant ticks, spiders, wasps and other insects. There are also many giant frogs which prey on the insects in the swamp. Rumors abound about ruins filled with treasure which leads adventurers to continually enter the swamp. There are no

such ruins, but there are plenty of monsters to keep treasure hunters busy.

## Luiren NPCs

8th-level halfling male fighter: SW 12, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 10; AL LG; AC 4; MV 6; hp 62; THAC0 13; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d4+1 (*dagger of severing* +1); SZ S; ML 14.

Where Found: Beluir

Calcitro is a fighting legend in Beluir. Almost 20 years ago, a pair of raiding hill giants attacked a caravan where Calcitro was a guard. All of the other guards were slain. Calcitro and the caravan drivers were able to kill the giants and deliver their wagons. He is a staunch defender of his town, and his family.

The Burrows family owns a number of inns, as well as the largest fruit plantation in the area. He takes it upon himself to oversee the establishments personally.

Calcitro is often encountered in inns and cafes; his thirst and appetite are almost as legendary as his fighting prowess. Unsuspecting opponents by be fooled by his size and weight. He looks like anything but an effective fighter. Calcitro cultivates this look. It has given him a bit of an edge in many fights. He is an extremely effective fighter, and always looks for a winning edge.

His prized possession is a *dagger of severing* which has the special abilities of a *sword of sharpness*.

### Melino RichToes

14th-level halfling male thief: Str 10, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 11; AL LG; AC 5; MV 6; hp 51; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 (*dagger* +2); SZ S; ML 12.

Where Found: Shoun



# Luren, The Land of The Halflings

Melino has recently found religion, apparently having experienced a calling from Yondalla. Prior to his change, he was one of the greediest halflings in Shoun, as well as a very successful merchant. Now he uses his rogue skills to help protect his town. All of the inhabitants of Shoun are pleased with the change.

Melino frequently adventures these days, which has helped him lose some of the roundness so typical of halflings. A party with news of a threat to the city of Shoun is sure to find in him an eager volunteer.

## Brac Bristletoes

8th-level halfling male fighter: Str 10 (24 with *girdle of storm giant strength*), Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 12; AL CG; AC 4; MV 6; hp 65; THAC0 13; #AT 24; Dmg 1d6 (throwing axe): SZ S; ML 13. Specialized in throwing axe.

Where Found: The Realms

Originally from Beluir, Brac is now a well traveled halfling. He still returns to his homeland on occasion, although he claims he comes back only to get a well cooked meal. Brac is an exceptional chef, with a double proficiency in cooking. Brac is a carefree halfling, just out to see the world. Seldom caring where his next meal will come from, Brac will cheerfully head down an unfamiliar road without a copper in his purse. He readily trusts folk, but over the past several years he has learned a small amount of caution. Once he gives his trust, he is fiercely loyal to his friends, eager to repay any injustices done to them.

Brac began his travels at an early age. After arriving in Waterdeep without a copper to his name, he agreed to participate in a halfling-tossing contest to earn enough money for his room and board that night. Two burly fighters paid him to toss him from one end of the barroom to the other. One of the observers decided to get in on the action. He easily tossed Brac through the wall of the Inn.

By the time Brac regained his senses and stumbled back to the inn, a full-scale bar brawl had erupted. Brac, seeking to repay the fellow who had forced his ungraceful exit, had a perfect opportunity. As the human fighter was fending off the attacks of a party of adventurers while holding a struggling barmaid under one arm, Brac climbed atop a table and walloped him from behind. Brac and the adventurers agreed to split the fighter's goods with each other. Brac took the fellow's *girdle of storm giant strength*, while the adventurers divided the rest of the loot. Brac traveled with these adventurers for several years following the incident.

Several months after he had acquired the *girdle*, it was stolen from him. Brac eventually traced it back to its original owner. Brac and his companions pursued him, and eventually found what Brac believed was his *girdle*. Unfortunately, it was a *girdle of masculinity/femininity*. "Brackette" was able to later recover his (her?) original *girdle*. After several years of adventuring as "Brackette," he was able to acquire a *wish* from an archmage, which returned him to his original gender.

Brac currently travels the Realms attempting to see as much of the continent as possible. While traveling, he often hires himself out as a chef to various inns and finer restaurants, but he never stays more than a week in any town. Brac has recently acquired an ancient tome entitled *The Fine Art of Cooking and Seasoning Red Dragon*. He is currently seeking a band of (fool) hardy adventurers to help him gather the main ingredient for this new recipe.

## Flynagin Nightshabow

13th-level halfling female thief (swashbuckler): Str 13, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 16; AL CG; AC 0; MV 6; hp 49; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*rapier* +1): SZ S; ML 15. Thief skills: PP 95, OL 75, FT 60, MS 95, HS 95, DN 95, CW 80, RL 15.

Where Found: The Shining South



# Luren, The Land of The Halflings

A true swashbuckler at heart, Flynagin, or Flyn to her friends, is a happy-go-lucky sort who always seems to find more trouble than she expected.

A proud daughter of a proud family, she left home to adventure after running rampant through her home village. She loves to play (mostly) harmless practical jokes on anyone she sees. This is one of the reasons she decided to leave her home town quickly.

While she was adventuring, she traveled several years in the company of a female half-elven ranger who was a Harper. Developing a good friendship with her, Flyn soon became a trusted ally of the Harpers. They occasionally send her into various locales in the Shining South to glean information or recover stolen articles.

She possesses several magical items including a *rapier +1* that was especially created by dwarves at the request of the Harpers. In the hands of a halfling it functions as a short sword in regard to weight and speed. Flyn received this sword as a gift from the Harpers for past deeds. Flyn thinks that either Khelben Blackstaff or Elminster himself might have enchanted the blade. She also possesses *bracers of defense AC 4*, a *ring of invisibility*, and *boots of speed*.

Flyn enjoys causing confusion that leads to barroom brawls. She uses her tumbling ability to avoid most of the fights as she takes advantage of the bedlam to gather a few valuables for herself. One of her favorite tactics is to hide in shadows and use her *ring of invisibility* to sneak up behind a burly character, then slug him. She then either dodges back into the shadows, or reactivates her *ring of invisibility*. She usually gets her victim to blame a bystander for the attack. If she does get caught, she can usually charm her way out of the "silly misunderstanding."

She is fiercely loyal to her few friends. She treats any insult to them as an insult to herself. She will calmly calculate a way to pay any transgressors back for what they have done. The pay-back usually costs the perpetrator extreme embarrassment as well as a great deal of money.

## ADVENTURERS IN Luiren

Adventuring in Luiren is virtually unrestricted. Halflings don't really care who comes into their country. As long as visitors don't cause trouble, and have plenty of money to spend, they are welcome. Fighters, bards, thieves, priests (of good or neutral deities) are all welcome. Mages are treated with a bit of reserve; most of the halfling's exposure to magic has come from the illusionists of Durpar and the reclusive mages of Halruaa. The average halfling's attitude toward mages is that they are a bit crazy, and their magic doesn't work nearly as well as they say. Most mages are welcome, at least until they begin to destroy things.

## New Non-Weapon Proficiencies

These two proficiencies are native to halfling priests of Luiren. They jealously guard these secrets. Outsiders seeking to learn these proficiencies will have a difficult time finding a mentor to teach them. If the search is successful, the would-be student will pay dearly for the secrets.

## Healthy Cooking

Priest, 2 slots, Wisdom 0.

Prerequisites: Herbalism, Healing, Cooking

With the proper training, the cook can create a stew that speeds healing. Those who learn the healthy cooking proficiency may brew a stew in 1 hour that adds +1 to the healing provided by rest. Thus, a PC who has had 24 hours of complete rest recovers four hit points instead of three. A PC who has camped overnight on the trail receives one point instead of none. A successful proficiency check by the priest is necessary for the accelerated healing to occur. If the check is failed, the stew is still edible and nutritious, but it lacks the balance of ingredients necessary for healing.



# Luren, The Land of The Halflings

At least one full dose of the stew (about two cups for a man-sized creature) must be consumed each day the creature is to be healed. No more than one hit point per day can be gained, no matter how much stew is consumed.

Healthy cooking is a prerequisite of medicinal cooking, and the two cannot be taken at the same time. At least one level must be gained between learning healthy cooking and medicinal cooking.

## Medicinal Cooking

Slots: 2

Class: Priest

Ability: Wisdom

Modifier: -2

Prerequisites: Healthy Cooking.

Medicinal cooking is the fine art of cooking for true healing. The secrets of cooking in this manner are closely guarded by the halfling priests who share them. This proficiency can be found in priests of many religions, but they are always halflings.

One thing that is known by most outsiders is that medicinal cooking involves the use of Luiren spring cheese. When used in this fashion, cheeese does not have the intoxicating or habit-forming effects that the pure cheeese does; it simply acts as a curative. Medicinal cheeese stew affects halflings and non-halflings in the same way, although the latter may find the taste a bit strange.

Since healthy cooking is a prerequisite, and the two cannot be taken at the same time, no halfling priest of less than 3rd level can possibly learn this. Most are 6th level when they do. A mentor must be found to learn this proficiency, and such persons have more students than they desire. Most students need six to eight weeks of daily instruction to master this art.

Medicinal cooking allows the student to prepare recipes that stimulate healing, as well as those that actually cure various diseases (even some of the magically caused ones).

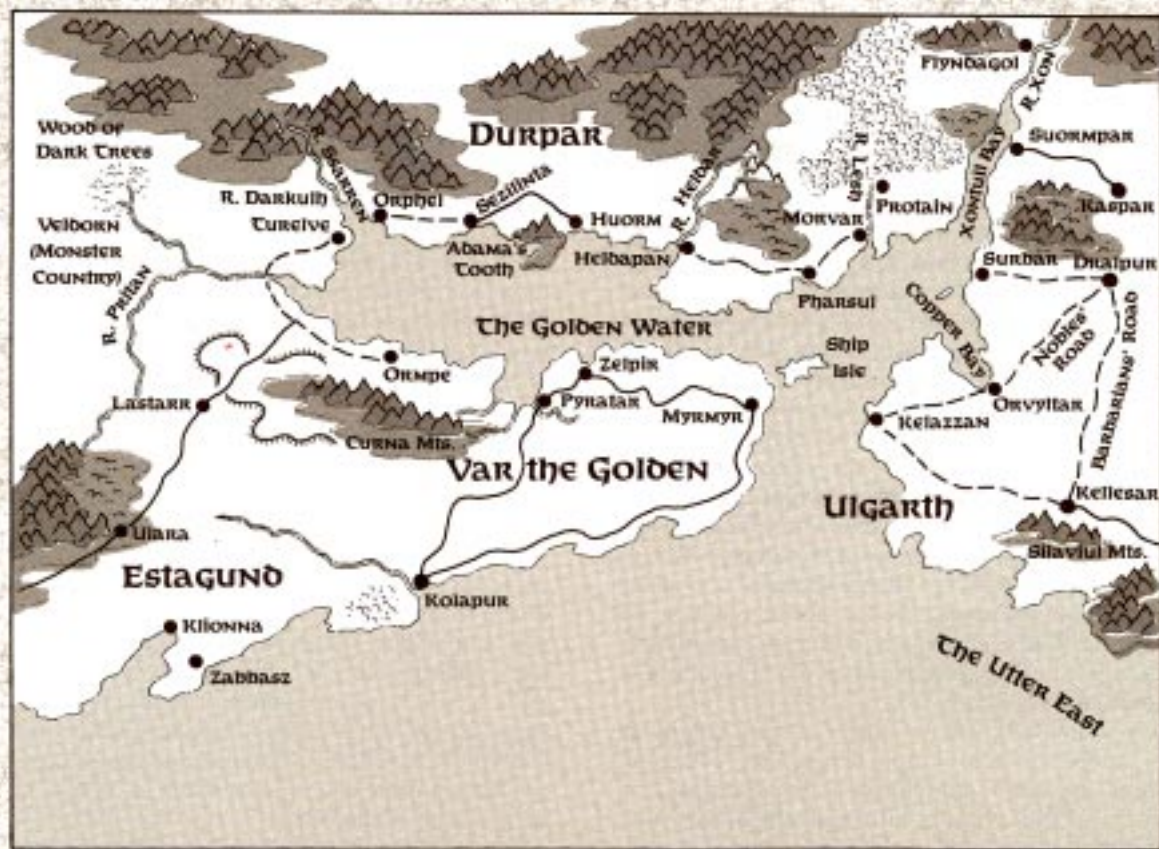
At the time the student gains this proficiency, she or he is able to prepare an improved version of the healthy stew, granting imbibers two extra points of healing from rest.

After advancing two more levels, or in year's time (whichever happens first), the student can make soups that cure normal diseases like measles, mumps, whooping cough, or malaria.

After another year, or two levels, the student can make soups that heal fatal diseases like smallpox, or even the bubonic plague. It can also heal the diseases inflicted by means of a *cause disease* or *harm* spell. It cannot cure lycanthropy or mummy rot, but it is effective against almost everything else. The only other disease which has eluded the halfling priests is the one which escapes all other healers as well. The common cold still resists curing, although cheeese soup does relieve the suffering somewhat.



# Durpar, Estagund, and Var The Golden



Durpar, Estagund, and Var the Golden are collectively known as the Shining Lands. Durpar has controlled the other two countries for so long that all share the same way of life. The Council of Merchants located in Heldapan rules over the Shining Lands. In other countries, the term Durparian refers to any of the residents of the three countries. Residents of all three countries have one major trait in common; they can all bargain a person's shoes out from under them.

## General Description

Durpar and Var the Golden are the names given the two nations to the north and south (respectively) of the protected sea known as the Golden Water. Estagund lies on the southwest edge of Var, with the halfling lands of Luiren to the west.

The north border is the Dustwall Mountains, and the great Dust Desert, the Raurin. On the east, firmly defended outposts at the river Xon mark the borders with Ulgarth.

## Geography and Climate

"Here the Adama has touched. We will abide here. All is part of the one, but this is the best part." — Satama, founder of the cult of the Adama.

The Shining Lands are located at the bottom of the southern-central portion of the continent, at the north shore of the Great Sea. They are the last civilized area before one reaches the Utter East. The lands are hot and fertile. Winter rains are mild, except along the coast of the Great Sea.



# Durpar, Estagund and Var The Golden

The inhabitants truly consider it the land of gold.

The dominating feature of the Shining Lands is the huge bay, referred to as the Golden Water, which gave the lands their name. A high content of minerals gives the water a golden sheen at sunrise and sunset. The waters are abundant with fish, both for food and for game, as well as other treasures of the sea such as pearl beds and coral reefs. The reefs are predominantly red and purple, and Durparian coral jewelry is popular in and out of the Shining Lands. The country's most profitable export, however, is the coffee that is grown here and nowhere else.

The northern half of Durpar is dominated by the Dustwall Mountains. They protect Durpar from the howling sandstorms that rage across the Raurin. Legend says these mountains were raised during the cataclysm that destroyed the great Raurin empire. Adama's Wrath, the tallest peak, towers some 22,000 feet above the plains of Durpar. The average height of these mountains is 15,000 feet, making it one of the tallest ranges in the world.

Var the Golden is a country of rural beauty. It is flat for miles, and most of it is filled with millions of acres of golden wheat. Estagund shares some of this terrain, although the Toadsquat mountain range forms the western border with Luiren. These mountains, which average 6,000 feet, are similar to the mountains of Curna, since they have no peaks higher than 7,500 feet.

There are two other features outside of the Shining Land that influence the countries. The Raurin Desert, north of the mountains of Adama, dominates the terrain for hundreds of miles. It forces the Durparians to travel far out of their way to reach the city of Solon and the countries of Murghom and Semphar. The Raurin is a wasteland of sand and dust, inhabited only by wandering tribes of bandits and mongrelmen.

To the south is the Great Sea. In ancient days, this trackless sea was thought to lead to the lower planes. The thought of new lands and new profit led Durparian merchants to discover the land of Zakhara. Thus while most travel in the Great Sea goes west to Halruaa and beyond,

more is being learned about the currents and killer storms of the Great Sea.

## History

### Durpar and Var the Golden

Durpar and Var the Golden share a common history. Over three thousand years ago, these countries were both subject to the great kingdom of Raurin. When Raurin fell in 2488 DR, the countries of Durpar and Var barely survived the destruction.

Rioting, mass destruction, and hatred of nobility were rampant. The country descended into barbarism for over two millennia. Finally, after most of the barbarian tribes were wiped out by the then great empire of Mulhorand, a leader emerged. Satama, a mere trader, experienced a divine revelation. He formulated a new philosophy. All things in the world were connected, and were part of a single creation spirit. All of the gods of the Realms were merely parts of the same entity. Soon all the Shining Lands embraced the teachings of Satama, and the seeds of civilization were laid in what came to be known as the Lands of the One.

Since the Lands of the One had many natural resources, trade with Mulhorand and Luiren became a way of life. Merchants were honored above all. In time, the Maharajah of Durpar and the Rajah of Var were replaced with a Council of Merchants. The leading merchants of the lands each had a voice on the council. During that time the land suffered occasional raiding attacks from the horsewomen of Dambrath, and had many skirmishes with the neighboring countries of Estagund and Ulgarth.

In 1023 DR, after an armed peace had been worked out with Ulgarth, the council of merchants decided that something needed to be done about the raiders from Estagund who were hurting trade with other countries. War was an inconvenience, but interrupting trade was life-threatening!

Jeradeem, the richest merchant in the lands,





# Durpar, Estagund, and Var The Golden

was given power to negotiate a settlement. During these negotiations he proved, at least in the eyes of the Durparians, that he was the master trader of all time. Estagund had just tried a foolish invasion of Dambrath. The vengeful female leaders of that land wiped out nearly every able-bodied fighting man they sent. The monsters of Veldorn were causing problems, and Estagund was going through a famine.

It was here that Jeradeem showed his fine merchant's instincts. He could not pass up such an advantage. He began bargaining for the most outrageous trade of all time. He met with the leaders of Estagund, a fearful king and his nobles. He explained the advantages of Durparian life, even the philosophy of the Adama, the oneness of all things. He bargained for days, until finally the king made the trade. He purchased the country of Estagund for the countries of Durpar and Var at a price of 24 gems. From Durpar he secured a promise of protection, and help integrating Estagund into the Durparian way of life. Thus were formed the Shining Lands.

Within a hundred years, the three countries shared a common way of life. With the added strength and resources of Estagund, Durparian merchants increased their trading range. They roamed as far east as Kara Tur, as far north as the Sea of Fallen Stars, and west to Dambrath and Halruaa. At the present time, with the newly discovered lands of Maztica and Zakhara beckoning, the future looks bright.

## Estagund

Estagund history follows a different path than those of Durpar and Var. The Gunders were conquered in 551 DK by Reinhar I, warchief of the Arkaiuns of Dambrath. It regained its independence when Reinhar was slain by the Halruan archmage Mycontil. After regaining its independence, the country soon degenerated into a group of small independent city states.

Small skirmishes between the city-states, and with Var continued for several centuries, until a king once again united the country. King Bonrial

was a skilled ruler, and Estagund began to prosper. His descendants were not as good, and in 1053 DR, King Selkarin was in an ambitious mood. He had failed to conquer Durpar, and Veldorn resisted his challenges. An avowed woman hater, Selkarin turned his attentions to Dambrath. He led a large fleet to attack Dambrath along the southern coast. His forces were beaten back with extreme losses, including his own life. Selkarin died childless. His brother, Seltarir, was crowned king. The new ruler faced a country with most of its young fighting men gone. In addition, he had a new problem to deal with: famine. The famine was caused by a blight that wiped out nearly all the year's crops in Estagund. This made him eager for the trade of Jeradeem. Contrary to popular rumor, he did not trade away the country for 24 pearls. Instead, Seltarir received diamonds worth almost a million gold pieces. The sudden wealth gave him an instant seat on the council of merchants. Chaka Seltarir is still the richest chaka in Estagund. In the years that followed, the Gunders began rebuilding their lives with a vengeance. Now, they compete on equal footing with the merchants of Durpar and Var. (For an explanation of chakas, see "Social Customs," page 58.)

## Government and Politics

"All crimes are but one; theft. Stealing a man's money, health, pride, life, or goods are all equal crimes in the eyes of the Adama." — A maxim of Jeradeem.

Durpar, Var, and Estagund are ruled by a council of the eleven richest merchants in the Shining Lands. The decision of who qualifies as the richest is done by simple arithmetic. Whoever acquires the largest fortune is accorded the spot. Due to shifts in wealth, several seats on the council change each year. There are about thirty merchants who jostle for the bottom six rungs of the council.

Kara Jeratma, head of the Jeradea chaka and great-granddaughter of the incomparable Jer-



## Durpar, Estagund, and Var The Golden



adeem, is the current chief of the council, just as every preceding head of her family has been for nearly two hundred years. The next four rungs of the council are held by Morcin of the Chaka Turamir in Huorm, Galduck of the Chaka Semanra in Pyratar, Halafin of Chaka Seltarir in Estagund, and Blynn the Wild, of the Baroda chaka of Turelve. All are incredibly wealthy, and their families are involved in nearly all of the businesses of the Shining Lands.

The Gemstone chaka, an extremely rich family of dwarves from Ormpe, is the council's first non-human member in almost 30 years. The Gemstone chaka was known as the Ironspur chaka until two years ago. A rich emerald strike in the mountains of Curna raised them from a moderately successful chaka to the eighth richest in the lands.

The business of the Shining Lands is business. Fraud is as serious a crime as murder. Both crimes impinge on the natural order of life in the kingdoms. Criminals are not executed, not even for the most heinous crimes. Capital punishment is seen as a serious offense against the Adama. Fines and forfeiture of goods or freedom are common, and terrible punishments. Those who use force against others are either restrained, or magically prevented from harming others again. Those who cheat or deceive in trade, or, worst of all, steal from others, can be faced with complete financial ruin. Three years ago one of the council members was convicted of selling faulty merchandise. The resulting fine dropped the chaka off the council and into obscurity.

In all cases a person is given only one chance.



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Repeat offenders find themselves restrained. In the case of a capital crime, the restraint lasts the rest of their lives. These depraved individuals are required to work out their lives in the mines, or on farms to offset the expense of their upkeep. A thief convicted a second time faces the loss of a hand. Such a mark usually means exile. "No one trusts a man with one hand."

The local governments are run much the same as the national ones. Each city has its Council of Merchants of the eleven richest merchants. Taxes are low, Durparians see bureaucracies as contrary to profit. Most cities have only the basic services such as police and fire fighting squads, clean up services, and record keepers. If a service can be handled by a private chaka, such services are contracted out. The Taramir chaka, for instance, offers garbage collection in many of the cities. The Chaka Firmstand in Zelpir has been responsible for protecting the city for over 80 years. Such chakas have a very lasting commitment to their jobs. Should the Chaka Firmstand attempt to take over, rather than defend the city, the loss of honor would doom the chaka to instant obscurity.

The leading merchant of a city is called the Nawab. He is responsible for appointing judges, hiring guardsmen, collecting taxes, and managing the other functions of the government. He is not expected to pay for these services himself. The taxes are a percentage of any profits the merchants in the city make. These funds pay for the services mandated by the council. Only the full council can make decisions on tax rates, new laws, and other broad decisions.

As in other lands, the people can make their will felt. If the judges and police are fair and the citizens are comfortable, the change to a new Nawab is accomplished with little upheaval. If the citizenry is unhappy sweeping changes in the council are made. Since profit is a driving force in this land, Nawabs can and do award city contracts to their own chakas. This can backfire. A Nawab needs to be sure his chaka can do at least as good a job as the competitors before he awards the contract, or his business could be-

come the victim of a widespread boycott.

A boycott is the citizens' method of voting. A chaka without customers will soon lose its place on the city council. Of course a large percentage of the local citizens has to be stirred up before such a boycott is effective. The priests of Lucha are particularly effective at organizing such actions. They are always watchful for a chaka abusing its power in such fashion.

Taxes are generally low since they do not promote trade. The only tax that the merchants consider fair is a sales tax. This is commonly one percent on all sales done in the city. All accredited merchants respect this tax. It pays for protection as well as the city services. Out of the taxes collected, 25% goes to the national government. The rest is used at the local level.

## People and Customs

"The shape and color of a being's body makes no difference to either the Adama or to the final tally of his gold." — A maxim of Jeradeem.

All races are part of the Adama, and are welcome in Durpar. Since Durparians believe that profit can be made from anyone with money, no Durparian merchant would blink if a dwarf or an orc walked into his shop and began to bargain.

The population is about 70% human, with halflings, dwarves, and half-elves making up the bulk of the rest. Elves are rare, for they do not prefer the competition for wealth that consumes the rest of the Durparians. There is, however, a small tribe of elves in the Ajmer Forest. They are devoted worshippers of the Adama. This tribe includes some of the most powerful priests in the land. Gnomes can be found in increasing numbers. The emerald find by the Gemstone chaka has caused an influx of gnomish gem workers. Two years ago, there were only a few gnomes in the land. Now they are a common sight in Ormpe.

The average Durparian is dark-skinned, almost ebony from exposure to the sun, and is around 5 1/2 feet tall. Other human types are



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common, since many folk have immigrated to Durpar.

## Languages

“Trading requires communication. Make sure you can speak to him before you show a man your wares.” —A maxim of Jeradeem.

Language is an important part of trade, and Durparian merchants are among the most polylingual of the Realms. For game purposes, assume that any merchant the characters meet speaks common, elvish, Thorass (the trading tongue of Amn), Akalan (the language of Dambrath), Midani (Zakharan common), dwarven, halfling, and at least three others. The other languages known depend on where the merchant does his trading. These could easily include hill giant, orcish or kobold. The “official” tongue of the lands is common, although meetings of the Council of Merchants can be carried out in any of a dozen languages. Most of the council members prefer to speak Thorass, since the council recognizes only the rich merchants of Amn as potential competitors in the world trading market.

## Social Customs

“When a man is among his friends, he should enjoy his wealth. When a man is trading, he should trade.” — A maxim of Jeradeem.

Durparians are very enamored of wealth, but this is tempered by the teachings of the Adama. Durparians believe that showing off wealth that one does not possess is inappropriate, as is hiding one’s wealth. Therefore, both men and women are fond of wearing the richest clothes, gems, and accessories that they can afford.

Parties are frequent, lavish affairs which are generally just a front for more business. At these parties a shrewd trader can pick up a tip that could make him a huge profit later. Every sizable merchant chaka has at least two or three such festivals every year. Entertainments tend to be

lavish, since they are an indication of how well the merchant chaka is doing. In day to day business, however, the feeling is a bit different. “A comfortable customer is ready to buy” is another maxim of the great Jeradeem. Durparian merchants go far to make their customers comfortable. Many merchants either have some illusion abilities, or employ someone who does, to present an atmosphere likeable to the customer. It would be an extreme offense against both the law, and the Adama, to use illusions to misrepresent the actual items for sale. A merchant that makes his customers comfortable by way of magic is following accepted and expected business practices. A drow who comes into a rich merchant shop may end up doing his business in a darkened room, with illusions of drow sculptures all about. A dwarf would be led to a room appearing to be a beautiful cave, gemstones gleaming from the walls. Whatever a merchant can do to make his customer more pliable will be done.

The basic social unit of the Shining Lands is the *chaka*. A chaka consists of a single extended family. The larger chakas, however, may have dozens of different families allied to them. The leader of the chaka, whether male or female, is usually the eldest family member. The best traders are usually out on business. If a younger sibling heads the chaka, it is because the older, more experienced sibling is usually off trying to make a huge deal for an immense profit.

Durparians show respect for each other by bowing. Indeed, who bows first and how deeply is a fine art in Durpar. According to strict social custom, the one closer to the Adama, or the richest, should bow first and more shallowly. The poorer, or most unenlightened, should bow last and deeper. The Adama requires respect when a Durparian meets a stranger. At these times, the average Durparian will wait to allow the stranger to bow first. This custom is not used by Durparians outside the Shining Lands. When traveling, a successful Durparian merchant will adopt the common form of greeting for the customer he is dealing with. “No man pays well a stranger, a



# Durpar, Estagund, and Var The Golden

friend is trusted. Greet all as friends, and you'll soon be on your way home with your pockets full," is a maxim attributed to Jeradeem.

It is seen as a spirit-raising gesture to donate to the truly poor. A few vellims given to the needy, however, may cost the chaka a seat on the Council of Merchants, so most chakas do not give money. Instead, chakas take in at least one or two destitute people each year, and attempt to find productive work for them. This custom helps reduce the number of slums and homeless in the Shining Lands. A surprisingly high number of such unfortunates become productive family members. All are accorded the status of a regular chaka member. An old beggar woman adopted into a chaka won't become head of the chaka, but she may be put in charge of the household.

Another maxim of Jeradeem reads "A thief leaves you with nothing to sell. Be prepared to defend your wares, for there are many who covet them." Most Durparians can defend themselves if need be. The average Durparian merchant away from the Shining Lands is, at least, a 4th-level fighter, a 6th-level thief (trader kit-see "Adventurers in the Shining Lands"), or a 5th-level mage. Most mages from the Shining Lands are illusion specialists. Not only is illusion magic quite effective, it is seen as a lesser offense against the Adama to slay someone with illusion magic, rather than with destructive magic. Victims of illusionary magic do not really die from the spell effect. Rather, they die from their belief in the effect (see PHB p. 82). If a victim dies, that is fate. The Durparian merchant lays claim to all the goods of his attacker, and leaves him lying in the dirt. Such is the way of Adama, to let those who harm others take their own chances.

## Religion

"All gods are but part of the Adama. Do you hate your wife because she is a woman and you are a man? Hate not then those who worship a different aspect of the Adama." — From the teachings of Satama.

Durpar is probably the most tolerant of religion of any country in the Realms. Even evil gods can be worshipped, although those that demand human sacrifice are suppressed. The only religion actively opposed is that of worship of Mask, the patron of thieves.

The philosophy of the Adama, or "the One", is a vital part of Durparian life. The Adama is the world spirit that embraces and enfolds the divine essence that is part of all beings; gods, men, animals, plants, rocks, and all of their existence. Therefore everything is a manifestation of the Adama. Adama has no temples or priests in the common sense, for he is worshipped through his manifestations.

The philosophy of the Adama teaches that a man must be born many times before he can truly embrace unity with the Adama. Each reincarnation will reflect the man's previous life. Therefore, he must strive to better and improve himself during his lifetime. This is one of the reasons why killing and theft are considered such serious crimes. Such actions can condemn a person to be reincarnated as an animal in the next life.

Since all deities are considered aspects of the Adama, there are many with large followings in the Shining Lands. The largest are the sects of Lucha, she who guides; Curna, goddess of wisdom; Zionil, patron of inventors, craftsmen and creators; and Torm, the god of duty. Waukeen, god of trade, used to have a significant following. With the uncertainty of the god's fate in the Time of Troubles, most worshippers and even some priests have been accepted in Lucha's temples.

## Money and Commence

"Quality goods always sell." — A maxim of Jeradeem.

A fiercely competitive people, the natives of the Shining Lands have channeled their warlike tendencies into a form of competition acceptable to the Adama. They are intent on becoming the best traders in the world.



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At the heart of the Durparian success is the Adama, the belief that one must do one's best. No Durparian would consider selling merchandise that wasn't of the finest quality he could obtain. If an item is less than perfect, he is required to say so. All trades must be conducted under fair conditions for both sides. Of course, different things are valuable to different people. As long as no fraud is involved, a merchant will try to get as much as he can for an item.

Commerce in Durpar is the driving force of the country. Most chakas of the Shining Lands have either a caravan, a trading ship, or several of both. The caravans roam far over the Realms in search of rare items to trade. The merchants believe that "the farther one travels, the higher the profit." In the past 50 years or so, the ships of Durpar have begun to travel far. Five years ago one returned with news of Zakhara, an entire civilized land several thousand miles to the south. Three years ago a fleet of six ships returned with news and goods from the land of Maztica. King Azoun's defeat of the Horde on the Golden Way has opened up trade with the east again. The merchants of Durpar are not letting these new trading fields go untouched.

Since Durparian merchants trade with the farthest corners of the known Realms, almost any item one desires can be found in the markets of the cities of the Shining Lands. Scrimshaw carvings from Icewind Dale, over 5,000 miles away, and exotic feathers from Maztica can be found in Durpar. Of course the price of such items is outrageous.

The average Durparian business is owned by a chaka. All members of the chaka work in some fashion, even in a small business. A large chaka is involved with many businesses. Different families within the chaka are usually responsible for different businesses. Every chaka desires to have a master trader in their folds. A master trader is someone who has returned with ten caravans, all of them profitable. The most notable master trader at the current time is Kara Jeratma, now serving on the council of merchants. She returned from Maztica three years ago, with ships

laden with new and exotic goods. As head of the Chaka Jeradea, she is currently the major power in the land. Her daughter, Nadimi Jeratma, recently departed for Zakhara. She took a fleet of twenty trading ships. No word from her has been received yet, but great things are expected.

Merchants in Durpar hate fraud and deceit, and are skilled at recognizing it. Any sort of currency is welcome in the Shining Lands, but it is usually judged at the proper value. A Waterdhavian harbor moon is worth only two gold pieces outside of Waterdeep; that is what it is valued at in Durpar. A coin that appears to be gold but with less than a full gold content will eventually be discovered and honored for what it is worth. Passing counterfeit or gilded currency is a serious crime in the Shining Lands. Beyond that, money is money. Merchants are willing to take gems in trade. Most traders are proficient in appraisal. If not, they know someone who is. Of course, a fee is usually added, since the merchant will have to deal with a gem merchant to get his money.

Many new and previously unheard of products are coming out of Durpar. The Durparians realize that the best way to get control of a new market is to create it. Traders have begun large-scale exporting of the coffee grown in Durpar. This drink, which until recently has only been known in the southeastern lands, is becoming popular throughout the Realms.

The Durparians also make a number of items themselves. In fact, most of what Durpar trades is grown or made in the Shining Lands. Large caravans of grain and soft goods go north to Mulhorand, Unther, and Underhome. The invention of the field glass, a lens ground by gnomish smiths in the city of Ormpe, has given trading ships a huge advantage over pirates. These glasses are being exported for sale to ship captains along the Sea of Fallen Stars and the Sword Coast. Such a device is not magical, but does double the range of normal vision. A ship's lookout with this device can spot an unknown ship long before its lookout can spot them.

Other new products include ketjap, the com-



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bination of mingari and fruits of Maztica. Mingari, a potent spice similar to cinnamon (and grown only in Ulgarth), and Curna emeralds, emeralds with a turquoise glow inside, are currently very popular among the rich of Calimshan. The Gemstone chaka of dwarves has sent several caravans on the long dangerous trek. The first has already returned, laden with silks, gems, and other goods from Calimshan.

Durparian merchants nearly always get the best of any deal. They do so because they always operate from a position of strength. They're superlative bargainers, as well. Every family or chaka has at least one member with a proficiency in bargaining, and usually one with appraisal skill as well.

The ability to read and write is common. Durparians have the highest percentage of literacy of any large nation in the Realms. A master trader can often pick up a new language, including reading and writing, in a very short time. A caravan going to trade with the Dwarves of Underhome may speak nothing but dwarvish the last week of the trip in order to get used to the language. Durparian merchants strongly believe that conversing with a being in his own language is the proper way to trade. This effect is summed up at the end of this section where the new proficiency, Linguistics, is presented. It is the ability to learn to converse in a different language in a short time. Most master traders have this proficiency, as well.

If PCs wish to travel all the way to Durpar to buy something, they can probably find it. Just consider the place of origin and rarity of the item, and increase the price proportionately. A 100 gp scrimshaw carving from Icewind Dale may be priced at 6,000 gold pieces in Heldapan. A dozen exotic feathers from Maztica, worth 5 gold pieces in Helmsport, can cost up to 1000 gold pieces each in Durpar.

Durparian merchants love to bargain. Bargaining is the consuming passion in their life. All of the bargaining tricks used elsewhere in the world are known here. Every trick that does not involve fraud is used. One Amnish merchant

said, as he exited a wine shop, "Eight hours of bargaining to buy a single bottle of wine, and still I was bettered. This is a wonderful land."

## Cities of Durpar

The cities of the Shining Lands are both numerous and prosperous. While there are few (if any) slums, large, impressive marketplaces abound. Most of the markets have regular stalls, with awnings for shade. The cities are usually well defended, although none have large standing armies. Members of the merchant's guild are obligated to supply guards in the event of an attack on the city. Chakas near the borders usually pool their forces to create a guard force somewhat larger than that of the cities.

## Heldapan

Heldapan, the largest city in the Shining Lands, is the capital of the region. This Durparian city, which boasts a population of 50,000, is home to the powerful Council of Merchants. It has the largest trading market to the east of the huge markets of Amn. Literally anything in the world can be found here.

All of the "Chakas of 31," the leading chakas in the Shining Lands, have at least some sort of headquarters in Heldapan. It is here that the decisions of the council are handed down and here that the biggest deals are made.

The town boasts huge docks, capable of handling over a hundred ships at once. The docks are always busy. Ships can sail the Golden Waters, even during the rainy season, so trade continues undiminished.

## Pyrtar

Pyrtar is the capital of Var the Golden and the second largest city in the lands. It has a population of almost 45,000. The city is completely shielded from any of the winter storms, and the fishing is bountiful. The docks in Pyrtar are just as large, and just as busy as those of Heldapan.



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The vast wheat farms of Var lie to the south.

The incredibly wealthy Semenra chaka makes its home in Pyratar. They are involved in nearly all of the businesses in the city. They own thousands of acres of wheat fields, and many herds of aurochs and sheep. They are the leading supplier of wool in Durpar. In addition, they have a skilled family of gemcutters in their chaka.

The city is also the home of a growing sect of Mask worshippers, who are trying to take over first the city, and then the entire nation. The sect preys on caravans from Zelpir and Kolapar, since any robberies in the city would certainly bring the attention of the local Council of Merchants. The leader, Kelsipal, of Chaka Turamir, is a master trader, and above suspicion. He is also an 11th level priest of Mask, with every intention of advancing his patron deity and his personal power.

## Klionna

Klionna is the old capital of Estagund, and the home of the extremely wealthy Seltarir chaka. It is a large city with over 25,000 residents. The Seltarir chaka got its start when the founder, the former king of Estagund, sold the country to the great Jeradeem. Instead of being hated for it, the Seltarir chaka is seen as having rescued the country from poverty.

The city is situated on the somewhat protected Bay of Kings, away from the brunt of the winter storms on the Great Sea. Many fishing boats go out on the Sea from Klionna. The Seltarir chaka employs ten warships of its own, in addition to the five the city has on patrol, to prevent raids from the pirates of Dambrath. As the port closest to Dambrath, the city is still subject to overland raids almost every year. It has a standing force of 1,000 crossbowmen and 20 illusionists on call at all times. The mages range from 6th to 12th level, so the city is very well defended.

## Ormpe

Ormpe is the fastest growing city in the Shining Lands. The city began as merely the location of ironworks, but in the past two years it has nearly doubled its population. Over 20,000 people now reside there. This rapid population growth has far exceeded the merchant council's expectations. Of all cities in the Shining Lands, Ormpe is the only one with large slum areas. The Quarter of No Hope, as the slums are called, are not actually within the city walls at all. Almost 5,000 residents live just outside the stonework. Most eke out a living as migrant grain workers. Many continue to try for a high-paying mining job. Unfortunately for the slum residents, the Gemstone family, the leading chaka in the city prefers to employ dwarven miners and gnomish gemcutters. They and the Finglefall chaka have signed a trade alliance. Anyone who wishes to work with the famous Curna emeralds must have connections with one of these two chakas.

Ormpe has a high population of demihumans, particularly dwarves and gnomes, with many halflings as well. The Baker chaka of halfings has one of its largest outlets in Ormpe. In a rare burst of generosity they have made all of their day-old goods available at no cost to the poor in the Quarter of No Hope.

## Myrmyr

The city of Myrmyr is a middling town of about 10,000 residents. Myrmyr is primarily concerned with defending the Golden Waters from pirates, so that they can ship huge loads of grain to other countries in the Shining South. The grain markets in Myrmyr are second in size only to those in great Pyratar. Myrmyr also has the best shipbuilding facilities in the Shining Lands. The wealthy Sholapur chaka owns much of the island of Ships, and has its shipyards located there. Wood from the Ajmer Forest is brought from Morvar. Here the craftsmen of the Sholapurs fashion it into the best merchant ships in the nation.





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The Jaipur chaka, which owns many thousands of acres of farmland, is the most successful sea trading chaka in the Shining Lands. They were one of the first families to cooperate on the expeditions to Maztica, and have been enormously successful. The Jaipur chaka is hoping to challenge the Baroda chaka next year for the fifth seat on the council.

## Zelpir

Zelpir is a smallish city with a population of 8,000, situated on the south coast of the Golden Waters. It is known for intricate jewelry, and clever mechanical gadgets which rival the Lantannan works of the Gondsmen. Here one can buy water clocks, wind up toys, and the valuable field glasses. Zelpir also ships much grain north across the Golden Waters, where it is loaded onto caravans bound for Mulhorand and Unther.

Zelpir's location — it's the closest port to Haldapan — makes it the natural place from which landowners ship their grains north. It is a growing city, but the merchants are careful about who gets established there. Anyone wishing to open a business in Zelpir must have a license granted by the city council.

## Sezilinta

Sezilinta is a city of 17,000 located on the northern coast of the Golden Waters, southeast of the Giant's Belt mountains. It has many ironworkers and silver smiths, for the mountains yield plenty of raw ore for the craftsmen. Sezilinta is also known for the fine cotton cloths it produces. The farms north of Sezilinta grow mostly cotton and flax, used to produce linen. A large number of weavers live here, producing much of the cloth that is shipped north to Mulhorand and Unther. The clocks of the city are the smallest on the Golden Waters. Ships prefer to make for Huorm to the east, or Turelve to the west. The first is closer to Haldapan, the second is closer to the caravan routes north and west.

## Turelve

The jumping off place for the caravans north and west, Turelve is a large city of 30,000. It is a favored trading spot, located on the west end of the Golden Waters, at the mouth of the River Sarren. Through this city flow many of the goods that are exported from the Shining Lands.

The border with the monster-filled lands of Veldorn make this the most precarious place to live in the Shining Lands. The caravans to and from the city are frequently raided. Turelve has the largest standing force in Durpar, almost 2,000 well-armed horsemen. Several companies of halfling slingers man the city walls. This is paid for, in part, by a caravan tax. For five percent of the value of their caravans, merchants can join a city-sponsored caravan, and have guards protect them until they are well past Veldorn.

This tax causes much grumbling, but nearly all sensible merchants pay it. The risk of losing their investment is too great not to pay.

## Morvar

Morvar has the broadest racial mix of any city in the Shining Lands. Dwarven and gnomish smiths, halfling craftsmen, elven and half-elven bards and woodworkers, even the occasional orcish guard can be seen mingling with the swarthy Durparians and the lighter Ulgarthians.

The city is large, with a population over 20,000. Morvar has extensive smithies and weaving facilities. It is here that the cotton grown south of the Ajmer forest is brought. The wood from the forest also ends up here, where the great sawmills of the Karakil chaka shape it into boards for shipment to other parts of the Shining Lands. Morvar also has a good trading relationship with merchants in Surbar, in neighboring Ulgarth.

## Orpher

Orpher is located on the northwestern coast of the Golden Waters, on the mouth of the River Sarren. Its largest merchant chaka is not actually



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a chaka at all, but an adventuring company, the Trollslayers. The company has merged with several other smaller families, and has become a powerful trading chaka. Without the continuing treasures recovered from the ruins of the Raurin desert and the lairs of giants in the Giant's Belt mountains, the chaka would not long stay in power. The soirees given by the Trollslayers are some of the most elaborate in all of Durpar.

The current leader of the chaka, and Nawab of the city, is Jekhal Windsinger, a priest of Torm. He runs the city very well, and is also doing his best to diversify and invest their wealth. The other members of the original Trollslayer company don't agree with his policies.

## Flyndagol

The northernmost city of Durpar, Flyndagol is the nearest to the Raurin desert, and is the hottest and most uncomfortable city in the Shining Lands. It is also the first line of defense for Durpar against both Ulgarth and the orcs of the Mountains of War. Flyndagol trades with the elves of the Ajmer forest. Many fine woodworkers live in Flyndagol.

The daily heat has given this city a different daily schedule than the rest of the Shining Lands. Most businesses open after the main heat of the day, and stay open through the best part of the night. Streets are lit by *continual light* spells. Most businesses also have such effects, since even the mild heat given off by a lantern can make a building seem unbearable.

Flyndagol has a standing force of 1,000 troops, most posted along the border. Orc raids are frequent. The elves from the forest have worked out an alliance with the city, providing archers in case of actual attacks on the city. In return, Flyndagol patrols aid the elves with particularly troublesome monsters in the Ajmer forest.

## Thruldar

Thruldar lies on the borders with the halfling land of Luiren. As one would imagine, the Baker

chaka of halflings does a thriving business in exotic foodstuffs here. The population of Thruldar is almost one-third halfling. Most inns have special facilities, such as lower tables or higher stools.

Thruldar has a thriving business in woodworking, so many halfling craftsmen reside here. Wood from the Long Forest is shipped all over the Shining Lands and Luiren. The forest is vast and, in the east, untamed. Monster's and bandits prey on caravans as they pass along the great Trade Way. Most of Thruldar's standing forces are used to guard caravans along this road. The road runs under the shadows of the forest for only a few dozen miles, after this travel is relatively safe. One-third of the 300 members of Thruldar's guard force are halflings.

The town also has several forest patrols, led by the half-elven ranger Sulima Fastwood. These patrols roam the forest, driving out monsters and hunting down bandits.

The Cochin chaka has their headquarters here. Almost half of this small town of 9,000 are occupied with working for, or with, this chaka. Their huge warehouses dominate the town. Sawmills and woodworking shops abound. The town is a festive place. Tymora, goddess of luck, and Silvanus, god of the forest, have the largest temples here.

## Lastarr

Lastarr is a booming town of 10,000, where anyone can come to trade. Of course, most Durparian merchants will deal with anyone whose money is good, but Lastarr takes this to the extreme. There are few other places in the Realms where one might bump into a beholder coming out of a shop, or a vampire requesting a night appointment with a tailor. Such things are commonplace in Lastarr.

Lastarr was once part of Estagund, but when the great trade of Jeradeem took place, Lastarr refused to be part of it. The city seceded from the Shining Lands, and became an independent city. With the philosophy of the Adama so strong in



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Durpar, the city has never been retaken. It enjoys an open trading status with all nearby cities. It is here that the monstrous inhabitants of Veldorn, to the northwest, come to shop.

Lastarr is open to all, and business must not be hampered by unseemly quarrels between potential customers. Just because a drow elf and a high elf walk into a shop at the same time is no reason for a fight. It's bad for business. Therefore, Lastarr has the most active police force of any in the Shining Lands. Over 20 patrols of 10 men are out at all times. Each group has a mage, usually an illusionist or enchanter, and a priest, usually one of Lucha, for the god of guides is favored in Lastarr. The patrols are also likely to have an ogre or a cyclopskin with them. These creatures tend to impress the wilder customers.

Foods from Luiren, horses from Dambrath, and goods from the caravan raids all find their way here. Most merchants in Lastarr do not ask where a seller obtained his goods, since such inquiries are considered bad form. Doing so might be dangerous to the merchant. Because of this no-questions-asked policy, merchants here buy goods for much less than they would elsewhere in the Shining Lands, and then resell these goods for a very high profit.

## Places of Interest

### The Golden Waters

This huge lake is a wondrous place, source of many of the riches of Durpar. There are abundant food fish, including one particularly succulent variety of red snapper, which is harvested in large numbers by the fishermen of the cities on the lake. It is home to many other fish, and is protected from the winter storms that hit the Great Sea.

The water has a very high mineral content. At sunrise and sunset, the lake water has a golden glow, which gives the waters their name. The majority of cities in the Shining Lands cluster around the lake. Cooling breezes begin to blow in off the lake about an hour before dusk, and

drop the sweltering temperatures in the surrounding cities by 20 degrees or more. The beauty of the lake and mild nights make living along its shores enjoyable.

The lake has a number of small islands. The largest, called Isle of Ships, holds the Sholapur chaka's massive shipyards. Other islands are used as shipbuilding facilities, but none are as large as the Isle of Ships. One of the islands, little Karatol island, is made exclusively of purple coral. It is the source for much of the Durparian coral jewelry that is being shipped out of the country.

### Ajmer Forest

Home of the only sizable group of elves in Durpar, the Ajmer Forest is a tropical rain forest. The elves there have adapted to a rough style of life, with only such luxuries as they can trade for with Flyndagol.

The elves embrace the way of the Adama, with especial care for the forest. Trees are not cut down wantonly. Loggers are expected to show some thought in exactly which trees are cut down. In return, the elves condone limited logging. Mahogany, in particular, is a frequent bone of contention between the loggers and the elves. It is the most valuable wood that the loggers can take, but it takes the longest to regrow.

The southern forest is home to many monsters. The forest is home to thousands of monkeys, tigers, ocelots, jaguars, and a couatl that lives on the southeastern edge of the forest. There is even a rumor that a rakshasa noble has headquarters within the Ajmer.

### Curna Mountains

The small mountain range of the Curna mountains is the location of the richest emerald find in recent history. The now wealthy Gemstone chaka was once a small chaka of dwarven miners. They discovered tracings of an old map that led them to large clear emeralds. Such emeralds, which have a turquoise light in the center, are



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known as Curna emeralds, not only because they come from the Curna Mountains, but also because the Gemstone chaka are devout worshippers of Curna. In addition to the emerald mines, the library of the priests of Curna is located in the mountains of their god. The library is a huge complex, since, eventually, all records of all important business transactions in the Shining Lands end up here. There are many scholars lodging in Ormpe, or at the hostels surrounding the library.

The upper mountains are home to leucrotta, manticore, a medusa with a magic fetish, and two very large rocs. Other than the rocs, who prey on the shepherds south of Pyratyr, the monsters keep pretty much to themselves. Most Durparians feel that the mountains are sacred, so mountain climbing in this range is usually frowned upon.

## Wood of Dark Trees

The Wood of Dark Trees is not a typical tropical forest. To start with, the forest is infested with flying snakes, a dangerous species with an acid spray. Flying snakes are a danger anywhere in the Shining Lands, but they are thick in the Wood of Dark Trees.

Yet another danger of the wood is the mated pair of chimerae who consider this small wood their own property. The flying snakes have learned to leave them alone. The pair even have snakes guarding their lair.

The trees in the Wood are also strange. The wood is a steamy rain forest, but the trees all have a dark, almost black bark. The wood is normal cypress or palm, but the bark is discolored. Moss does not seem to grow as quickly on these trees as other forests in the Shining South. There are many legends about logging or adventuring companies entering the forest, only to be surrounded by hostile animated trees. Most caravans give the Wood a wide berth. The wood of Dark Trees is thought to be where an evil mage created the Dark Trees, a new monster presented at the end of this book.

## The Dustwall Mountains

The Mountains of War, or the Mountains of Adama, as they are also called, are a high range that form a barrier between the Raurin desert and north Durpar. No one has ever climbed Mama's Wrath, the tallest peak in the range.

Orcs are numerous in the Mountains of War. Their total population exceeds that of the Shining Lands. No one is sure what their numbers are, but with these chaotic creatures, a possible attack force of 5,000 orcs is an optimistic guess. They are said to be preparing for a major attack. This is enough to worry the leaders of both Flyndagol in Durpar, and Suormpar in Ulgarth. The two cities are currently hiring mercenaries, in preparation for the attack.

The mountains also have rich iron deposits. There is quite a bit of mining by dwarves who aren't afraid of the orcs. These mines have barely scratched the surface of the mineral potential here, but the orcs control over 95% of the mountains. Even the dwarves are not foolish enough to push into an orcish homeland.

The mountains are also home to vast numbers of ogres, giants, wyerns, and cyclopskin. Several rakshasa, intent on carving out an empire with their orc slaves, have set up residence here.

## Toadsquat Mountains

Ogres dominate in the "Little Mountains," as the Toadsquat range is known. Silver mines also abound here. The dwarves who work the mines have cleared the tribes of ogres away from the routes to the mines in the eastern range. These roads are patrolled by dwarves, and have remained safe for fifty years.

An ogre mage named Kalispar has started organizing the ogres on the western side of the range. Since his attacks have been directed at Luiren, the dwarves have not had to deal with him yet.



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## Adama's Tooth

Adama's Tooth is the name given to the single high peak that overlooks the city of Huorm. This mountain stands by itself, towering 21,000 feet above the plain, which brings an early dusk to the city of Huorm, some 25 miles away. It has rich iron and copper deposits. Recently, the Salipur chaka has tried two ventures on Adama's Tooth. The first was the opening of copper mines, some ten years ago. That venture has been very successful. The second was an expedition to bring ice back from the peak, and ship it packed in magical containers to other cities in Durpar and Var. That venture proved to be a colossal blunder, and has been dropped.

The upper slopes of Adama's Tooth are home to the only known tribe of yeti for several thousands of miles. They prey on the mountain goats that are common on the upper slopes. Lower down pines trees grow. These are harvested and brought down the mountain with difficulty. The expense of shipping pine from the north makes the troubles seem small by comparison. Even though the yeti snatch a few loggers every season, the logging continues.

## Veldorn, Land of Monsters

Veldorn is a land dominated by monsters, and is primarily tribal in organization. It does not have formal boundaries, but, instead, a collection of small city-states stretch west and north to the beginnings of the Shaar, and the Wood of Dark Trees.

The original premise of Veldorn was that any beast-chieftain, as the leaders are known, could set up and run his area as desired. Anyone who incurs the wrath of one beast-chieftain incurs the wrath of all. The chieftains raid the caravans along the great Trade Way, and bring their goods to Lastarr.

The leader of the land is a centuries old vampire named Saed, a psionist of great skill. His primary duty is to settle disputes. There are few other government activities in Veldorn. Saed

resides in Vaelan, the capital of Veldorn, a small city filled with undead, orcs, and gnolls. He is respected and feared, even by his chief rivals, Xaoch and Veoyh, a pair of beholder twins who rule Xiltor, a city south of the Wood of Dark Trees. Xiltor is home to several tribes of kobolds, and a large group of ogres. The twins also employ a black dragon as their aerial fighting force. The dragon is Kelpacitus, a young adult who is just hoping to gain treasure.

There are other cities in Veldorn. No one claims to have knowledge of them all, although Saed probably does. It is known that one is ruled by a red dragon, who is served by several pyrolisks. Another is inhabited entirely by yuan-ti. Flying snakes are common throughout the land, and herds of auroch and wild rothe are culled for food. More on Saed's city can be found in the "Dark as Dark" adventure in Chapter 6.

## NPCs of Durpar

### Kara Jeratma

#### Leader of the Council of Merchants

14th-level Human female illusionist: Str 7, Dex 16, Con 9, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 18; AL LG; AC 5; MV 12; hp 39; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff): SZ M; ML 16. Spells 6/6/6/5/5/3/3

Where Found: Heldapan

Kera is the richest woman in Durpar, and one of the richest in the Realms. Her chaka, the largest in Durpar, is worth tens of millions of gold pieces.

Kera is a vibrant, beautiful woman. She uses this to her advantage. Many traders do not believe that a woman so beautiful can bargain so successfully. They soon learn, usually at great expense, that they are quite wrong.

Before rising to lead her chaka, Kera led over 20 caravans to faraway lands. She is one of the most successful traders in the history of Durpar. Chaka Jeradeem has over 5,000 members, and Kera can call upon any of them. Kera is a staunch



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supporter of the Adama. Although she never misrepresents anything she is trading, she knows every trading trick in the book. She has even made up a few new ones. The primary reason for her success is that she takes the time to prepare properly. If the PCs are involved in a trade with Kera, she does everything possible to make them comfortable. She will know their preferences in food and drink, and as much as she can learn about their background. The PCs may be amazed at her knowledge, but it is just good business.

Kera speaks over 20 languages, and prides herself on being able to converse with anyone who understands the precepts of trading.

### Lata Hism

4th-level half-elf female thief (trader): SW 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 14; AL NC; AC 8; MV 12; hp 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SZ M; ML 12.

Where Found: The Shining Lands

Lata is a tropical trader. She is an expert in all forms of gems and jewels. When encountered she is looking for a deal. She is perfectly willing to buy or sell. She does not lie about the value of gems; she knows exactly what they are worth. She can even identify rare gems from halfway across the world.

Lata is very polite. She has her eye on becoming a master trader. With a little luck, she may



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someday make it. Lata is a wandering trader, allied to the incredibly wealthy Seltarir chaka. She does not mention her affiliation unless necessary, since she would like to succeed on her own reputation.

## Jromin

7th-level elf male priest (Curna): Str 13, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 15 ; AL LN; AC 6; MV 12; hp 42; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff): SZ M; ML 18. Spells 5/5/3/1

Where Found: The Ajmer Forest

Jromin is the spiritual leader of the elves of the Ajmer Forest. He is a devout priest of Curna, greater power of wisdom. A saying among the elves is that Jromin is the reason there are no druids in the Ajmer Forest; "He won't stand for anyone that sloppy in his woods." This is a bit extreme, but Jromin does consider the forest his personal responsibility. He can be extremely vicious to defilers of the forest. Anyone who enters the Ajmer Forest is probably being watched by Jromin. He is very crafty in the woods. Unless the party begins to chop down trees or wantonly slaughter wildlife, they'll never see him. Jromin is a sworn enemy of Crimonil, whom he believes to be an evil human mage.

## Crimonil

Rakshasa male: Int 12; AL LE; AC -4; MV 15; HD 7, hp 47; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/2-5: SA illusion; SD +1 or better magical weapon to hit; MR special; SZ M; ML 16; XP 4,000; MC 1. Spells: Wizard 4/3/2, Priest 3 first-level.

Where Found: The Ajmer Forest

Crimonil is a typical rakshasa. He is power hungry, cruel, and extremely intelligent. He intends to bring the entire forest under his sway.

Crimonil typically appears as a human mage, an act he has nearly perfected. He has entrapped

and killed many a lone human mage. Crimonil is very fond of traps that allow the victims to believe they have a chance to escape. Many of his victims have escaped through superhuman efforts, only to find that those efforts were all in vain.

## Bilaska Sementir

12th-level human female thief (trader): Str 12, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 17; AL LN; AC 5; MV 12; hp 50; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (short sword +1): SZ M; ML 14.

Where Found: Prastuil

Bilaska is a master trader, and she's quite proud of it. She can be encountered anywhere in the Realms—anywhere that profit can be made. Her latest expedition recently, returned from Mztica. Her next is intended for Zakhara.

Bilaska will go anywhere to trade. Her most famous trade was with beings from the stars. Actually, she encountered a group of elves whose spelljamming ship had crashed. She could not speak their language, nor could they speak hers. Within a week, she had traded them supplies, weapons, food, and whatever else they needed in return from a dozen gems that are completely unknown in the Realms. It is this sort of opportunistic trading that makes a master trader. Bilaska has every intention that her chaka will one day be the most powerful in the Shining Lands. They are currently second, but with traders like Bilaska, they may yet reach their goal.

## Hobnap Baker

11th-level halfling male thief (fence): Str 9, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 10; AL CG; AC 4; MV 12; hp 52; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 (dagger +2); SZ S; ML 16.

Where Found: Heldapan

Hobnap is the head of the only thieves' guild in the Shining Lands. He is not particularly greedy,



# Durpar, Estagund, and Var The Golden

but he does love a good challenge. In fact, Hobnap cannot resist a challenge or a dare. "They said it couldn't be done," was his only reason for founding such a guild. He has pulled off a number of escapades which are gaining him more notoriety than he wishes. His most famous was sneaking into a meeting of the Council of Merchants two months ago. He came away with some valuable information, which he sold to the right bidder. Since then, the Council of Merchants has figured out that someone spied on them. If Hobnap is caught, he faces the loss of all he owns. Since Hobnap is rich, he has no intention of ever getting caught. He has the skills to pull this off, but not if he keeps up his flair for dangerous jobs.

Hobnap's guild is supposed to be honorable. That is, they do not steal from the poor, only from those who can afford it. While Hobnap sticks to this rule unerringly, some others in the guild have a more liberal attitude. They have taken to pilfering from caravans and entering citizens' homes at night. As soon as the Council of Merchants becomes aware that there is a thieves' guild operating under their very noses, a manhunt such as Durpar has never seen will ensue. Hobnap is no fool; by then, he'll be safely back in Luiren.

## Adventurers in The Shining Lands

The philosophy of the Adama is improving oneself to the fullest until ready for the next step. This means that adventurers are welcome and respected. The ready cash that adventurers usually carry also makes them welcome.

As is to be expected, magic is both accepted and much used in the Shining Lands. The Gathering of Magicians, a school for mages, is located in Heldapan. It is a favored place for illusionists to study. There is a currently a two-year wait for admittance. As in all things in the Shining Lands, "Money can make openings where there were none."

All non-evil religions are tolerated in the Shin-

ing Lands. Most priests can find at least a shrine to their deity in most of the major cities.

Fighters and rangers are valued as guards and guides, no chaka can have too many defenders. Rogues are not popular. The only active thieves' guild in the lands is located in Heldapan. Rogues are still common, but nearly all of those rogues native to the Shining Lands prefer to use either the adventurer kit, the investigator kit, or the trader kit, presented here.

## New Thief Kit

### The Trader

**Description:** This is the crafty merchant, usually working within the law. The merchant is expert at appraising an item's worth, and knowing exactly how much profit can be made. Few get the better of a trader in a trade.

**Role:** The trader represents the adventuring storekeeper, the master trader, the individual who is much more than a merchant, given the things she or he's seen. Although she may be a crafty business owner who's never left her hometown, she is more likely to be a world-traveling caravan master, or the master trader representing her chaka in a faraway country. The majority of Durparian merchants one meets in foreign lands are traders.

A successful merchant requires a good mind to negotiate and evaluate goods, merchants must have an intelligence of at least 12.

**Secondary Skills:** The most useful for the merchant is trader/barterer, although jeweler, leather worker, mason, or teamster are all acceptable.

**Weapon Proficiencies:** Successful merchants must learn to defend themselves against all types of thieves. A merchant has available the normal range of weapons for thieves, but the light crossbow is the favored weapon of the trader. It can be stowed easily under the counter in one's shop, or under the wagon seat while on caravan. All traders must take either light crossbow, dagger or knife (thrown), or some other





## Durpar, Estagund, and Var The Golden

small throwing weapon which can be used both indoors and out. Other proficiencies are up to individual choice, but a trader seldom uses a large, ostentatious weapon.

**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Bonus proficiencies: (Thief) Appraisal. Recommended proficiencies: Information Gathering, Observation, Languages (as many as possible), Forgery (used to recognize false documents and counterfeit currency), Linguistics and Alertness.

**Skill Progression:** The trader has little need for many of the thief's skills. The trader concentrates on moving silently and hearing noises. These allow a trader to pick up information from other conversations that may be of aid in later business deals. Time on the trail can teach a trader the value of being able to hide in shadows effectively, and any sort of travel makes the Reading Languages skill very useful.

**Equipment:** There are two things vital to the trader: something to sell, and a place to sell it. The place may be as basic as the back of a wagon, or a tent in the marketplace. Many traders do not even own a set of lock picks, nor do they go in for fancy devices like climbing boots or grappling arrows. A trader usually is armed with a small weapon, either visible or hidden, depending on the custom of the trader's present location.

**Special Benefits:** Traders not only receive the Appraisal skill free, but get a +1 bonus to their ability with this skill. Traders can also choose a particular type of merchandise at which their appraisal knowledge is expert, such as jewels, gems, leather goods, spices, or some other broad field. In this field, a trader fails an appraisal only on a natural roll of a 20. The trader knows almost all there is to know about this particular type of merchandise. Identification of a brand new gem from a faraway land may be much more difficult. The DM should assign penalties based on the likelihood of the trader having ever heard of such an item before. Even when dealing with such rare items, the trader's estimate of their worth won't be off by more than 20%. Even without knowing exactly what it is, a trader probably has a good idea of what it should sell for. Traders

can choose one field of expertise for every four levels of experience. Note that this modification to the appraisal proficiency does not allow the trader to know all of the properties of a strange item, nor even to identify it; she just knows what it will be worth in this area.

**Special Hindrances:** A trader cannot resist a bargain. Successful traders would much rather buy something cheaply, than steal something outright. Therefore, any money gained through outright theft is worth only one experience point per gold piece, instead of the two points for normal thieves. This does not include the trader who helps a party fight off bandits, and is rewarded with a share of treasure found on the bandits. The trader receives full experience points, two times the gold pieces earned, for money gathered this way, or in trade.

**Wealth Option:** All traders start with twice the normal starting gold, 4d6x10. This may be spent any way the player desires.

**Races:** All races may take the trader kit.

**Notes:** It is not expected that all your players will immediately clamor to roll up a trader rogue. This kit is presented for those few enterprising characters who wish to try something different, or for the suffering DM. How many times have the players asked "What is he?", and the DM has had to respond; "A merchant. I guess that's a 0 level human, he probably has about 3 hit points, and uh, a longsword."

Durparian merchants have learned to defend themselves and their goods. If the PCs think that they can muscle a poor trader around, they're in for a surprise. The master traders mentioned in the description of commerce are at least 10th-level trader rogues; most are higher.



# Durpar, Estagund, and Var The Golden

**Linguistics:** New nonweapon proficiency

(General)

2 slots: Intelligence, +1 modifier

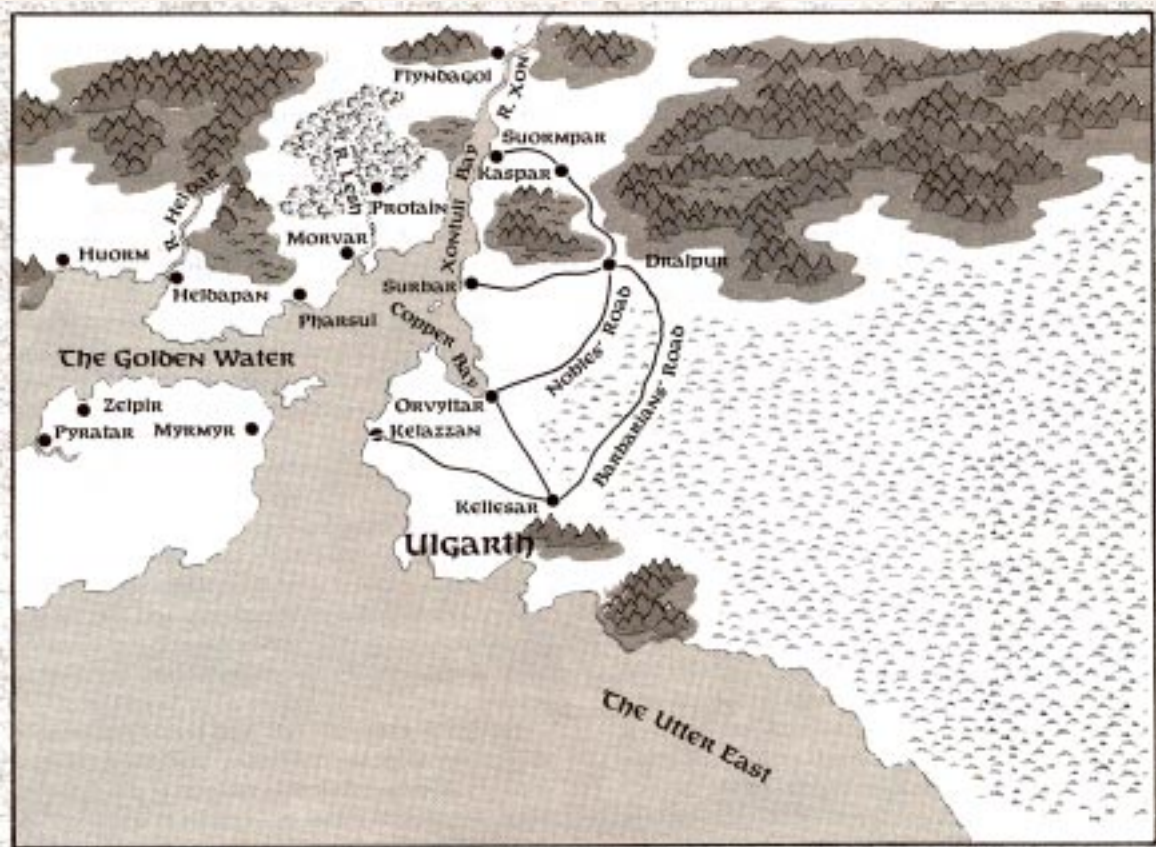
Recommended: Traders.

This skill is only available to someone who speaks at least three languages. The contrasts of the different styles of languages give the character knowledge to base this skill on. A character with this proficiency is adept at quickly picking up enough of a new language to be understood. Players who choose this proficiency do not select any languages. Instead, there are four open slots in this proficiency. The PC must spend a week in a location where a language she or he does not presently know is spoken. After this week, the PC makes an intelligence check to pick up enough of the language to be understood and carry on daily activities. Spending a week with a tutor also grants this roll. If the roll is failed, the PC can try again the next day, and each subsequent day until the roll succeeds. This allows the PC to converse, albeit with a terrible accent, in the new language. This is not a replacement for the normal language proficiency. Traders with linguistics can make themselves understood, and understand basic dialog.

A character may learn these languages "on the fly," so to speak, but may never have more than four at one time. If a character has used the full allotment for, say, dwarven, Thorass, orcish, and gnomish, and wants to learn to converse in far-off Zakhara, the PC must drop one of the existing languages. It should be the language that the character has not used in the longest amount of time. The dropped language is considered out of practice and forgotten. A player may take this proficiency more than once; each slot subsequent to the first adds two languages to the number of languages the PC can retain.



# ULGARTh



## General Description

Ulgarth shares a well-defended border with the trading countries of Durpar and Var the Golden. It occupies the east coast of the Golden Water, the bay from which much of its prosperity comes. Ulgarth is a peaceful nation, but it is well prepared to defend itself against either raids by Dambrath and the Horde, or the constant attempts by Durparian traders to control their economy.

## Geography and Climate

Ulgarth is located on the Great Sea, with Durpal to its immediate west, and the uncharted vastness of the barbarians to the east. The Great Sea

makes up a good part of its borders. The north is bounded by the Dustwall mountains.

Ulgarth is hot, but its proximity to the Great Sea and to the Golden Waters help to make it a livable place. During the day, the temperatures range from 80 to 100. At night, the temperature drops sharply down to 60 or less in the winter rainy season. It rains almost daily in Ulgarth. The crops and fields are very fertile.

Ulgarth is the only country in the Realms, where mingari, its primary export, is grown and blended. Ulgarth trades mingari with the Durparians, who ship it all over the southern Realms.

## History

Ulgarth was settled by the great empire of Raurin, in the height of its power. When the empire



# Ulgarth

was destroyed, it endured centuries of barbarism. Warchiefs united the country several times during this period. They fought many skirmishes with other barbarians, particularly those in Durpar and Var the Golden. In DR 202, the barbarian tribes were nearly wiped out by the forces of Mulhorand.

In 348 DR, a group of outlaws, fleeing the justice of the priest-kings of Mulhorand, came to Ulgarth. There they found a fertile, almost unoccupied land. They settled down, and began raising children and crops. This new society in Ulgarth gradually grew in power, while its neighbors Durpar and Var grew apace. But while Durpar grew as a result of its commerce and its philosophy of balance, Ulgarth concentrated on agrarian pursuits. The Ulgarthians developed a highly structured caste system of lords and peasants. In 1002 DR, the centuries long skirmishes between Durpar and Ulgarth came to an end, as the two countries finally reached a balance of power. There were too many centuries of warfare between the countries for them to completely trust each other. With their mutual border well defended on both sides, both countries have given up the idea of conquering the other.

Trade between the Ulgarth and the Shining Lands has become a vital factor to both nations. Ulgarth produces many of the items that Durparians trade throughout the world. In return, Durpar trades many exotic items to Ulgarth. Of course, the Durparian merchants usually get the better of any trade. The current king, Drasna the Fortunate, has continued on his predecessor's policy of non-aggression with the Durparians.

## GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Ulgarth is a monarchy, ruled by King Drasna Bluemantle in Orvyltar. It has a clear border with Durpar, across the river Xon and the Xonaluir Bay. The land is divided into six baronies, with each baron reporting directly to the king. Each baron is also responsible for providing troops for the country's army. The king maintains his own troops as well.

The current general of the Ulgarth forces is

Sinveri Trollkin, a renegade female elf from Dambrath. Although she is one-quarter drow, she is a devout worshiper of Tyr, the god of war and justice. She is an intelligent and able leader.

The barons have the option of serving as the ranking officers of their own contingents of troops, or of appointing field officers in their place. Only one baron currently leads his own troops.

Within their baronies, the barons' word is law. The barons are responsible for routine trials and punishments. Any freeman or serf can appeal, however, to representatives of the king, called the king's justices.

The king's justices travel about the kingdom. Even the smallest hamlets can count on seeing an officer of the king's peace at least once a year. Most towns have a king's man visiting once a month on a regular schedule. These officers are also responsible for holding trials and meting out punishments for any crimes against the country such as treason or espionage. Nobles accused of crimes must be tried before a king's justice.

Justice is generally fair and swift. The people are happy with their system, and King Drasna intends to keep it that way. He personally visits all six of the major cities in Ulgarth at least once a year. Anyone who is willing to make an appointment several months in advance can have his case heard by the king. The king's audience is sought by those who believe that they are the victims of unfortunate circumstances. King Drasna is known to temper his decisions with a liberal amount of mercy.

Unlike some of the other countries of the Shining South, Ulgarth does not use priests as justices. While many non-evil religions are tolerated, King Caladorn the Wise laid down the rule that priests were not allowed to be judges of a man's worldly behavior. Most justices are either retired army men, who have seen much of the world, or scholars, specialized in law. All justices, both king's and baron's, are allowed to call on both priests and mages to get to the truth of a case. Any such expenses come out of the king's treasury. This tends to make judgements both quick and fair.



# ULGARTh



Ulgarth has a very small prison population. Those who commit capital crimes, such as murder or treason, are sentenced to a quick death. Those who steal are reduced to serfs, serving the local baron. Minor crimes may also be paid for by a short stint in the military. A convicted man is given his choice of joining the army, or serving a prison term. Few choose prison, although the prison squads often end up patrolling the east borders, looking for signs of barbarians.

Once a man's term of servitude is up, his record is clean. No stigma is attached to a ex-convict, particularly if he has spent his sentence protecting Ulgarth. Indeed, several convicted thieves have risen to become nobles, with titles awarded for valor in battle. The current Baron of Suormpar is descended from such a convict. His grandfather was one of the most notorious ban-

ditions in the kingdom. He remained in the defense force after serving his sentence for banditry, and quickly rose to become the leader of the entire east defense force. He successfully resisted an attack by over a thousand horde barbarians. For this, the king granted him a barony. This sort of example helps convince convicts to serve a dangerous stint in the army, rather than in a safe, but uncomfortable prison.

## *People and Customs*

Ulgarth is predominantly human, although all good races are welcome. Elves and dwarves do not fit in well with the Ulgarthan feudal system. Halflings find the system restrictive, preferring the wide open trading of Durpar. A gnome or elf can draw attention, especially in the smaller villages



# Ulgarth

and hamlets. There are always a number of dwarves working and prospecting in the Galuil Mountains, although they usually do not stay long.

Goblinoids are not welcome in Ulgarth. Most nobles would rather run an orc through than talk to him. The orcs in the Dustwall Mountains are said to be massing for raids into Ulgarth. The Barons of Suornpar and Kaspar are recruiting troops for the upcoming raids.

## Languages

The common tongue of the Realms is the chief language of the kingdom. Common is the only language spoken by most of the population.

## Social Customs

Ulgarth has a feudal system. A man is born to his station, be it noble, freeman or serf. A man may, however, better himself; promotions for valor in battle have made freemen out of many serfs.

The country of Ulgarth is afflicted with a severe paranoia, caught between the trading giant of Durpar and the hordes to the east. They are fiercely nationalistic, and even the lowliest peasant believes that the Ulgarthian way of life is the best. If a man wants to improve himself, he can, and his success or failure is strictly a measure of his own ability.

Peasants are treated better in Ulgarth than most feudal lands. The king and his nobles realize that all citizens are important to the country's safety. Unlike many feudal societies, almost everyone is allowed to carry weapons. Many nobles have regular training sessions for their serfs, drilling them in various military skills. Even the nobles who are fiercely class-conscious follow this practice, merely because so many others do. It has the dual effect of keeping the peasants quiet, and providing a well-trained military force for Ulgarth. Many retired adventurers have found posts as weaponmasters for the nobles of Ulgarth. Those who can use and teach the art of swordplay are much in demand.

Ulgarth nobles are used to luxuries, and take

them for granted. Fine silks from Calimshan, rare and exotic fruits from Maztica, spirited horses from Dambrath, and many other luxuries make their way to Ulgarth, courtesy of the traders of Durpar. A lady is expected to appear in the finest clothes available. Many noblewomen, in battles to outdo one another, spend fortunes on clothes.

Ulgarthan women streak their hair with a chalky substance, called *fiertallin*, from the river Xon. The women use the white *fiertallin* to artfully streak their normally dark hair. This emphasis on hair fashion has made hairdressing one of the highest paying jobs available to common peasants. A master hairdresser is worth his weight in gold to the upper class women of Ulgarthan society.

The men also have a custom relating to hair. Ulgarthian nobles always appear clean shaven. They never sport beards or mustaches. Only those who can't afford to buy shaving equipment wear facial hair. Facial hair is considered the mark of a peasant. This custom is practical as well as social. In the heat of the summer sun, a beard is extremely uncomfortable.

The weather in Ulgarth has created another custom; knights do not wear metal armor. The heat and humidity make it a very uncomfortable experience. Many knights wear no armor at all. Others make do with leather, which is uncomfortable, but not life-threatening.

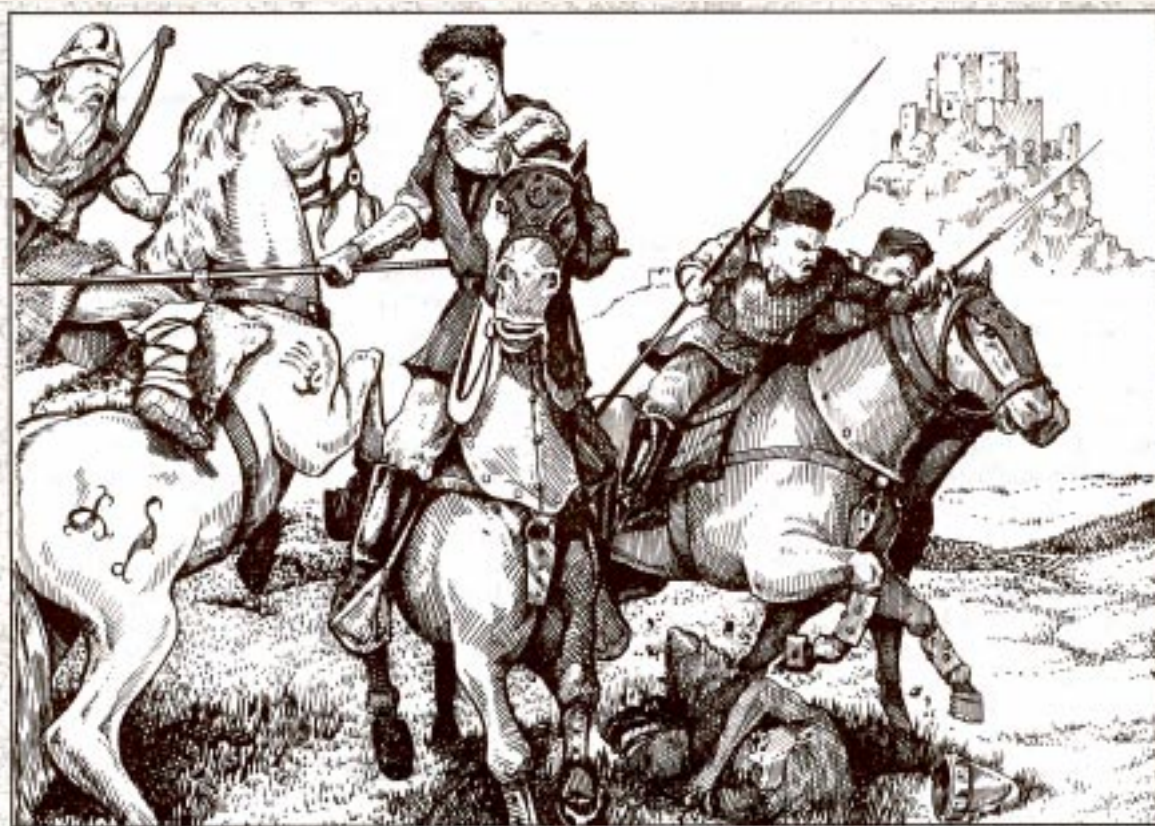
## Religion

As befits a nation where knights are the highest social class, the patron of duty is widely worshipped. All knights pay homage to Torm, and there are many priests of Torm in Ulgarth. The largest temple in the land is Torm's temple in Orvyltar, where the king himself worships.

Other deities are also worshipped; the most popular are Tymora, patron of adventurers, and Lathander, god of renewal and the dawn. Both have temples in most of the large cities. Their clergy get along well with each other and with the clergy of Torm.



# UlgarTh



## *Money and Commerce*

UlgarTh has the good fortune to be located next to one of the great trading empires of the Realms. Since UlgarTh is the world's sole producer of mingari (a rare spice only now becoming known to the rest of Faerun), they have a good relationship with Durpar, albeit across a heavily guarded border.

The basic unit of currency is, as in Durpar, the silver vellim. Although very little silver is actually mined in UlgarTh, the constant trading keeps the country well supplied with Durpar vellims. UlgarTh does mint its own gold coins, which are called liekos. A gold lieko is very similar to a standard gold piece, but it has a picture of King Caladorn the Wise on the front, and a mounted knight on the back.

Commerce in UlgarTh consists mainly of trading

with the Shining Lands. Mingari is shipped to Durpar. Many other products make their way back to UlgarTh. Danibraii horses are a must for any knight of renown. There is spirited business in the various spices, foodstuffs, and textiles that Durpar produces. Even though there are few, if any, merchants of UlgarTh who can get the best of any Durparian in a trade, the proximity of the Shining Lands cuts down on travel costs and overhead. This helps Ulgarthan merchants to get some of the best prices for Durparian merchandise.

## *OrvyLTar*

The capital of UlgarTh, OrvyLTar is the home of King Drasna's estates. It is situated on the pro-



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tected Copper Bay. The Golden Water loses some of its yellow sheen in this bay, and in the setting sun the water appears to have a coppery hue. Warships jealously guard this bay, UlgarTh's safest and largest port.

With a population of over 20,000, Orvyitar is the largest and most prosperous city in UlgarTh. Trade with the Durparian cities of Morvar and Pharsul is convenient and safe. Few pirates prey in the Golden Waters, and storms seldom threaten shipping.

Orvytlar has a force of about 500 men at arms, and 3 troops of cavalry, all mounted on Dambraii horses (see "Dambraith" page 41 for statistics on their horses). Drasna's father purchased three huge ballistae from the Durparians, which are mounted on towers overlooking the bay. They are lovingly maintained by one of the few dwarven nobles in UlgarTh, Stonemith Hammerhand, chief defender of Orvytlar. Several raiding pirate ships have been sunk by these devices before they sailed within a quarter mile of shore.

The business of Orvytlar is mainly trading. Through this city flows the mingari from eastern UlgarTh, and the iron and gold from the Galuil Mountains. In return, many of the staples and luxuries obtained from Durpar flow back out to the rest of the country.

## Kelazzan

Kelazzan is the southernmost city of the UlgarTh coast, and, as such, takes the brunt of the winter storms. It is a small town, and most of its occupants are traders or farmers. The mingari farms to the east provide much of its income. The clocks are large for a town of only 5,000 inhabitants. The Panglassest shipyards are the largest in UlgarTh. The city is well defended; up to 20 warships can put to the sea if necessary. The land force is small. The city is patrolled by 20 troops of 25 guardsmen each. The population of Kelazzan is predominantly human. Demihumans make up a mere 5% of the population. Baron Herokimal, a firm, but just ruler, has his manor in Kelazzan.

## Surbar

Surbar is a proud coastal city tucked safely in the coastline of the Golden Waters. It lies to the southeast of the Galuil Mountains. In the spring sunrise, the mountains are a beautiful sight. Surbar is the second largest city in UlgarTh, with a population of almost 15,000. Demihumans are common in Surbar, for much of the iron and gold from the mountains is shipped to the city. Shipping, weapon making, metal crafts, and spices all provide means for the Surbarians to make a living.

The city and surrounding area are ruled by Baron Kasnchil, the most corrupt of the barons of UlgarTh. It is well known that his justice is tempered by greed. The common serf believes his baron has made Surbar the most prosperous city of UlgarTh, and in that respect they are right. The baron's policy of allowing any type of trade to move through Surbar has made it a favored port for ships and trade. Even Dambraii pirates are allowed to make port in Surbar for resupply and refitting.

## Suormpar

Suormpar is the northernmost city of UlgarTh, sitting on the Xontuil Bay, in the shadow of the Dustwall Mountains. As with all cities along the coast of the Golden Waters, trade is a major part of their economy. The cosmetic fiertallin, gathered from the river Xon, 20 miles up the bay, is exported from Suormpar.

The baron of Suormpar is Redinald Rascalin, a descendent of one of the most powerful bandits in the kingdom. His grandfather was captured with great trouble, and offered a choice of prison or serving UlgarTh. Maelin Rascalin became one of the greatest generals in UlgarTh history, repeatedly driving back the barbarian hordes from the east. For this service the King awarded him a barony. His family is one of King Bluemantle's most staunch supporters. Baron Rascalin is painfully honest, a devout worshiper of Torm. He is a paladin of 10th level, a





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strange calling for a grandson of a bandit, but one for which he is well suited.

Currently Suormpar is preparing for an attack from the orc hordes in the Durparian mountains. All signs point to a raid from thousands of orcs. Mercenaries are in demand, as are armorers, weaponsmiths and others who can help the city prepare for an attack. The city is defended by a guard force of 200 archers and 500 footmen. The leader of the city guard is Hespal Nicort, a half-orc, who hates orcs with a passion.

## Kaspar

Located on the eastern edge of Ulgarth, Kaspar is responsible for the defense of Ulgarth from the hordes to the east. It has an outstanding military force to do it with. 10,000 residents make Kaspar a thriving city. Although Kasparians prefer to trade with the barbarians to the east, they maintain a vigilant guard against raids from them. Fertile mingari farms surround this city. Kaspar is considered one of the prettiest cities in Ulgarth. The baron, who has taken the name Montar Kaspar (defender of Kaspar), is a half-elven cavalier who loves nothing more than his horses. He has personally brought over enough Dambraii horses to outfit his elite cavalry company. His is the fastest company in the land. The swift Dambraii horses allow them to pursue or escape the barbarian hordes with ease.

Many farms lie west of Kaspar. This farmland, called the "bread basket" of Ulgarth, is also defended by the forces of Kaspar. In addition to the cavalry troops, the city walls are manned by a troop of 500 heavily armed (but lightly armored) soldiers. Many of these troops are criminals sentenced to protect their country. Baron Kaspar maintains a high level of morale with these men. The rate of desertion is less than 10%. He accomplishes this by using a combination of fierce discipline and trust, tempered with a bit of greed. The men are given the pick of the horses captured from the barbarians, and any treasure they might have is split between all the troops fairly. The defenders also like the fact that the baron

personally leads them into battle. Baron Kaspar, a 12th-level warrior, rides Firefiex, the fastest horse in Ulgarth.

## Dralpur

Dralpur is a mining city, situated on the eastern slopes of the Galuil Mountains (often called the Mountains of Gold).

The baron of Dralpur, Kevin Olwyson, is a retired ranger who used to roam the land of Ulgarth, the Dustwall Mountains, and the Utter East. He is very crafty, and his town has a small but effective guard force. Approximately 500 men serve this town of 8,000. They are a loyal group of talented warriors, for Baron Olwynson pays his men in gold, and he pays them well.

Many craftsmen also make Dralpur their home. Located on the slopes of the mountains, Dralpur is the coolest city of inland Ulgarth. Although the locally produced products are not a match for Durparian silks and textiles, Dralpur does make many of the items needed for Ulgarth daily life. All sorts of farm implements come from the smithies here, for shipment to the eastern mingari farms.

## Places of Interest

### The Galuil Mountains

The Galuil Mountains are said to be the most beautiful in the Shining South. They have earned this reputation because of their appearance at sunset. The sunlight reflecting off the Golden Waters makes the peaks glow with a yellow sheen, which makes them appear to be made of gold. In reality, they could be called the Iron Mountains, for much iron is mined here. There are gold mines on their eastern slopes. They are not particularly rich, just profitable. Up higher, in the hills and lower slopes, many citizens have settled. They either work in the mines on the eastern slopes, or bring lumber and fruit that can only be grown in the cooler climes down for trade. There are few monsters in the mountains. The Ulgarthi-



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ans have actively driven them out for the last two hundred years. No organized tribes or groups of monsters remain, although there has always been trouble with griffins raiding the horses of the plains. Little else is known about the mountains. No one has penetrated to the very center. This is just as well, for in the center of this small range, deep under the largest mountain, is a tribe of duergar. These duergar, unaware that the surface is inhabited, are mining the same veins of gold as the Ulgarthians. Unless one party or the other stops, they will meet each other in three years. Since the Ulgarthians employ many dwarves in the mines, this meeting is not likely to be a friendly one.

## NPCs of ULGARTh

### Drasna The Fortunate

#### King of Ulgarth

12th-level human male paladin (Torm): Str 17, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 17; AL LG; AC 2; MV 12; hp 98; THAC0 9; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4 (*broadsword* +1 *luckblade*): SZ M; ML 18. Spells: Priest 4/2/2

Where Found: Orvyltar

Drasna is called the Fortunate, not because he was born the son of the king, but because of his early adventuring life. He has many times faced monsters that should have easily slain him, but he always seemed to come out victorious. The reason for this is that he carries a *luckblade* and a *stone of good luck*.

Drasna is now very serious about being a good king. He visits all of the cities in his realm at least once a year. He holds grand ceremonies where he knights those who have proven themselves worthy. He also passes judgements for those who have requested it. He believes that the king's justice should be denied to no one. Drasna is an extremely popular king, most of his subjects believe firmly in the feudal system, since it produces rulers like Drasna.

### Landswith Meilin

Half-elven female 10th-level warrior/8th-level priest (Tyr): Str 17, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 13; AL LG; AC -2; MV 12; hp 70; THAC0 11; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4+1 (*bastard sword* +1, two-handed): SZ M; ML 14. Spells: Priest 5/5/3/2

Where Found: Wanders Ulgarth

Landswith is a typical adventuring knight. She seeks to right wrongs and do good deeds. She is unusual in that very few females are knights and even fewer half-elves.

Landswith always appears in full plate mail, which effectively hides her gender. She wants none of the concern or chivalry that knights must show to females. Her version of chivalry is shown to all she meets, save evil foes.

Landswith roams Ulgarth, looking for noble quests to undertake. She has traveled far to the south, and knows the Utter East better than any man. She fought the barbarian horde in the latest large raid on Kaspar. She is currently traveling north to Suormpar to fight in the coming war with the orcs of the Dustwall Mountains.

## ADVENTURES IN ULGARTh

Adventurers are not particularly welcome in Ulgarth. The Ulgarthian feudal system and strong reliance on national pride means that adventurers are usually viewed as common peasants or worse. If the adventurer is a native, or if he aids the country, for instance by fighting against the orcs of the Dustwall Mountains, he is accepted as an equal. Paladins are always welcome, thieves never are, and mages are feared a bit. Priests, particularly priests of Torm, are popular. Priests of other good Realms gods are also accepted.



# ULGARTh





# Adventures in The Shining South

## Gateway To Elsewhere

Gateway to Elsewhere is an adventure for 5-8 player characters of levels 9-11, with a total of about 70-90 levels for the entire party. The adventure introduces characters to the Forest of Amtar, near the country of Dambrath.

### Set Up

The party has been traveling in Dambrath, or along the Great Trade Way, when they are told a rumor of an ancient ruin, filled with danger and treasure. The ruin is said to be on the southwestern tip of the Forest of Amtar, but little other information is gained.

Alternatively, the party is in Dambrath, and overhears some young nobles talking of the treasure they recovered from the ruins known as the Gate of Iron Fangs. Further checking reveals the approximate location of the Gate. It has an evil reputation, in spite of the fact that a few people have come out with considerable riches.

### The Plot

The Gate of Iron Fangs is an ancient ruin, more than 2000 years old. Its three levels are all that is left of a huge tower. On the lowest level is a *gate* to another plane. The *gate* is unstable, and operates erratically. It is currently under the control of a powerful fiend named Quinix, a glabrezu of the Abyss. Quinix is intent on securing all of the power possible for his evil master in the Lower Planes. He is also doing his best to secure a bit of power for himself. He has only had control of the gate for a short time. It recently opened next to him in the Abyss, and he entered. Since he arrived, the groups that have come to plunder have rarely returned.

Quinix has captured a number of wild elves from the forest of Amtar. He is attempting to charm or otherwise subvert them to evil. The elves are resistant, and a number of them have already died in the process.

To further complicate matters, a party of Crin-

tri half-elves, with a drow fighter accompanying them, enters the ruins just before the party does. They will meet the party just before facing the glabrezu.

### Finding The Lair

The Gate of Iron Fangs boasts a number of ruins and dungeons, most of which have been cleaned out by adventurers over the years. Monsters still lurk in them. There are seven different ruined towers set in a roughly circular pattern. A wandering monster check should be made each time the PCs near one of the ruined towers. If the party has heard the nobles talking, they can follow the most recent tracks, which enter the ruin on the southeast. A successful tracking roll identifies them as the footprints of a troll.

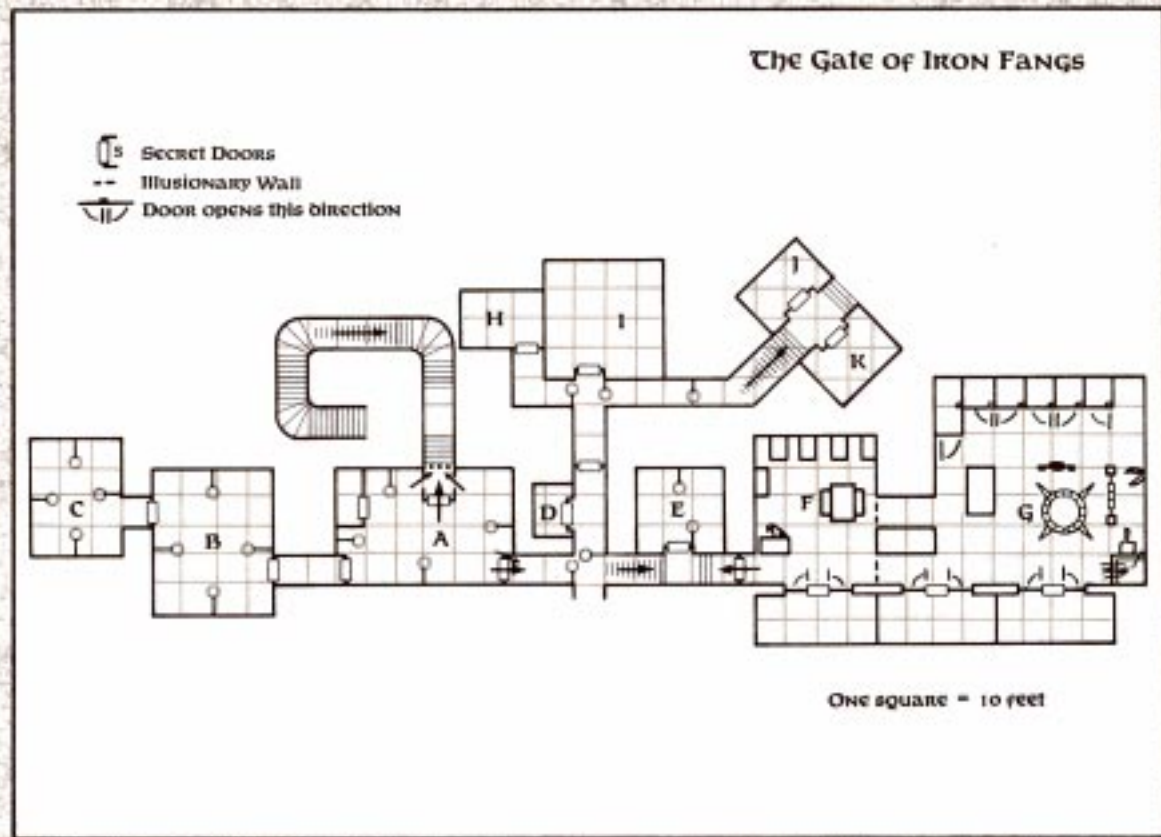
If the party does not search the correct ruin, they find empty rooms and a level or two of abandoned halls. For every turn spent searching there is a 10% chance (cumulative) that the party encounters a band of trolls.

**Trolls (4):** Int Low; AI, CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6, hp 40, 35, 28, 27; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+4, 1d4+4, /1d8+4; SA attack 3 opponents at once; SD regenerate 3 hit points per round three rounds after being wounded, fire and acid damage is permanent; SZ L; ML 14: XP 1,400 each.

The trolls generally react negatively to the party; only if the PCs claim to have been sent by Quinix are they accepted and left alone. Remember that trolls are not terribly bright. It should be possible for a clever party to trick the name of the master out of the trolls, but they don't just give it away. In combat, the trolls attack and fight to capture, although their natural ferocity usually takes over. Quinix is usually pleased to get one living captive from a band of trolls. If confronted with magical fire, to the extent that it kills one or more of them, the trolls must make a morale check at a +4 penalty to the roll. Failure means that they break off combat and flee back to Quinix to report. Clever parties can use this as



# Adventures in The Shining South



a means of finding the correct ruin.

If the PCs search the correct ruin, they still run into a band of trolls, but these do not negotiate. If the party has followed fleeing trolls into this ruin, the trolls stop fleeing and join in the fray, heartened by the reinforcements. Further searching after encountering the trolls leads the party to a stairway descending deeper than the other ruins. Just like the other ruins, the ruin housing Quinix is cleared on the first two levels. The chance of meeting more trolls is again 10% per turn of searching. It takes one hour to thoroughly search a level.

Each hour of searching the party also has a 50% chance of encountering a trap. The glabrezu has set many traps in the ruins. Roll 1d6 to determine the type of trap encountered:

1. Covered pit, fall 10' for 2d6 falling and spike

damage. Spikes are tipped with paralyzing poison, save at -2 or paralyzed for 1d4 hours.

2. Pressure plate releases paralyzing gas in a 20' area. Save versus paralyzation or become unconscious for 2d6 turns.

3. Pass by shriekers, who raise the chance for encountering a troll band to 75% while shrieking.

4. Stone blocks drop from ceiling, causing 4d6 points of damage to characters in 10' square area. Dexterity check allowed for 1/2 damage.

5. The party passes a pair of statues in a hall, or at the entrance to a room. The statues are of beautiful, smiling maidens. When a character passes between the maidens, they slam together, doing 8d6 points of damage to the lead character (dexterity check for 1/2 damage). The maidens then draw back, taking 1 round to reset the trap. The party must hurry to make it through. The maidens are



# Adventures in The Shining South

activated by a pressure plate. Passing without touching the floor does not activate the trap.

6. A 20' section of passageway is trapped. At the middle, a small, almost invisible trip-wire is located (-20% to find traps chance). If the wire is touched, portcullises slam down at the front and back. Characters caught underneath must roll a dexterity check or take 3d6 points of damage. The portcullises are heavy to lift them and escape requires a bend bars roll at -10% to the chance. If all characters are trapped, four trolls appear in 7- 12 rounds (1d6+6) to attempt to capture the PCs and take them to Quinix.

## The Lair

The third level of the ruins is the lair of Quinix and his servants. The winding stair exits at point A on the map, where a dozen trolls await. If the party has been involved in loud combat, or if any trolls escaped the party to warn Quinix, the trolls are ready and waiting. If the party has been silent, they have a normal chance to surprise the trolls.

Four of the trolls are on watch at all times; the others sleep on filthy piles of rags in room B. Room C contains their treasure, and the lair of their leader, the largest troll. If the trolls are alerted, all are present in the entry room; if not, the other eight respond in 1d3 rounds.

**Trolls** (12): stats same as above, hp 40, 37, 36, 35, 32, 29, 27, 25, 25, 24, 24, 23.

Treasure in room C: 4,000 copper, 2100 silver, 240 gold, 6 skydrop gems worth 75 gold each. The treasure is hidden in sacks under the filthy sleeping pile that the largest troll uses.

## More Guards

Having passed the trolls, the party can exit through the other door, to the east. They soon come to a three-way intersection, allowing them to proceed straight ahead, or turn north. Ahead they see a set of 12 stairs that climb up to a passageway. To the north the corridor continues for

50', and ends in a locked door.

Room D and E contain the second line of guards, two vrocks. Quinix expects the vrocks to be able to stop any invading characters. The vrocks were summoned by the glabrezu, and are waiting and watching for intruders. They are also charged with guarding the prisoners, who are located to the north. One vrock is stationed in room D, and one in room E. They are never surprised, so they wait to position themselves for good effect. They prefer to have one vrock step in front of the party and attack for one round. The other then moves in from behind.

**Vrocks** (2): Int High; AL CE; AC -5; MV 12, FL 18 (C); HD 8, hp 45, 40; THAC0 13; #AT 5; Damage 1-4/1-4/1-8/1-8/1-6 +7 (for strength); SA spores, screech, always attack first; SD +2 or better weapon to hit, never surprised, take 1/2 damage from magical fire, cold, or gas, no damage from normal fire, electricity or poison; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 17; XP 37,000

Vrocks are able to use the following powers, once per round; *teleport without error*, *darkness*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *mirror image*, *mass charm*, *telekinesis*. Once over three rounds a vrock is able to eject spores, which affect all in a 5' radius. Anyone in the spores takes 1d8 points of damage, and the spores implant themselves just under the skin and begin to grow. Victims take 1-2 points of damage per round, until at the end of ten rounds they are covered with thick, vine-like growths. *Bless*, *neutralize poison*, or holy water kills the spores, *slow poison* stops the growth.

The first vrock to appear has cast a *mirror image*; there are nine images of the vrock in front of the party. The second vrock attempts to attack with surprise, rending and tearing at a PC in the back. The vrocks are under the control of the glabrezu; they cannot *gate* in more tanar'ri, nor can they teleport away to safety. They must fight to the death.



# Adventures in The Shining South

## The Prisoners

If the PCs proceed north, they discover a pair of locked and barred rooms (T & U). Room T has only a dead body, a wild elf. Room U holds seven living wild elves, all much worse for their experiences here. Three of them have retreated into catatonia, due to the horrors to which Quinix has subjected them.

**Wild elf prisoners (7):** Int Ave; AL N; AC 10; MV 12 13; HD 1, hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; DMG 1-2; SD 90% resistant to sleep and charm; SZ M; ML 8; XP nil.

The prisoners were captured by Quinix, who hopes to win over the elves by means of magical charms. To date, the elves have resisted his efforts, and this has angered him. There were a dozen prisoners, but five of them have perished under Quinix' ministrations.

The prisoners are glad to be freed, but all they wish to do is leave the ruins, and disappear into the forest. If questioned, they can describe the glabrezu, although they don't know exactly what it is. They do know that they were taken up the stairs to the right, where Quinix has a torture room set up. (Room V) They have never been east of room E; they have no idea what lies beyond it.

The torture room contains many items of foul use, but little treasure. If magic is detected for a *dagger +1, +2 versus larger creatures* can be found. It is covered with dried blood. It was used on the elves, in an attempt to break their spirits with physical torture. The PCs may well believe it to be an evil weapon. Do nothing to discourage this. It is, in fact, merely a minor magical item.

## The Crintri Adventurers

Just before the PCs pass the locked door into room F, they can hear voices through the door. The language is drow; only those who speak the language (or use the appropriate magic) can understand the words. Apparently an alliance has been made, between someone speaking in a

deep, gravelly voice, referred to as "the most evil one," and a group of humanoids. If the PCs enter, they find themselves facing a group of dark-skinned half-elves, male and female, plus one drow male who is not immediately visible. If they enter while the voices can be heard, they also see Quinix. He screams at the Crintri to destroy these foul thieves who work against the Lady of Pain. Quinix then disappears, actually falling back through the illusionary walls to observe.

The Crintri are seated about a table, although the drow male is in the background, behind the fireplace to the north, out of sight. The room is lit by lanterns, which burn with a reddish light that does not hinder infravision. The crintri do not immediately attack. Their first move is to spread out, while a female wearing a symbol of Loviatar asks them to please pause and speak. This assumes the party does not have an elf with them. If the party has a female half-elf with them, change the word "shebali" (meaning "peasant") in the following sentence to "sister."

"Hold, shebali, for we should speak. Is it not that you would take treasure from this place? Perhaps the treasures may be won much easier than you imagined. I am Grata Silvermane, fifth daughter of Lady Silvermane, and I offer you wealth for taking service with me."

She folds up a sack, and pulls out a handful of blue gems, which sparkle purple in the lantern light. She offers the party riches to join them, for if they have made it this far, they must be tough. If the party has not seen Quinix, she tells them of the deal she has made with a "great power of evil, whose ends are not at cross purposes with ours." One of the drow males speaks up, "A fiend from the abyss, and one not to be taken unawares." He is told to keep quiet, and does so!

Grata wants the PCs to join her on a raid on the wild elves of the Amtar forest. They need to capture two dozen elves. Once they have the two dozen, they can slaughter the rest.

This ought to be about as far as the negotiations go. If the PCs have not objected to anything so far, start giving questioning looks to anyone playing a good character. The characters can, of



# Adventures in The Shining South

course, agree in an attempt to catch the Crintri off guard. Such an attempt fails, since one of the other females possesses a magical item that detects lies. Unless the PCs truly intend to go through with the slaughter of unsuspecting elves, they are caught, and the combat begins.

**Grata Silvermane**, priestess of Loviatar: AL LE; AC -1; MV 12; F11/P11; hp 66; THAC0 7; Dmg 1-6+3, #AT 3/2, S 17, D 18, C 15, I 13, W 17, Ch 17; Spells 7/6/5/3/2/1; SA spells, SD 30% resistant to sleep and charm; Items *scale mail* +2, *buckler* +1, *short sword* +2, *ring of protection* +1.

Spells currently carried: *Invisibility to animals*, *cause light wounds*, *cure light wounds* (x3), *command*, *combine*, *hold person* (x2), *silence* 15' radius, *heat metal*, *snake charm*, *know alignment*, *speak with dead*, *meld into stone*, *continual darkness*, *protection from fire*, *summon insects*, *cause serious wounds* (x2), *neutralize poison*, *flame strike*, *rainbow*, *blade barrier*.

Special abilities: may cause a pain touch, recipient must save versus spells, failure means he is racked by pain, suffering -4 penalties to attack roll and -2 to dexterity checks for 1 round per level of the priestess.

**Laszia Franilair**, priestess of Loviatar: AL LE; AC 0; MV 12; F7/P7; hp 46; THAC0 7; #AT 3/2; Damage 1-6+2; S 16, D 18, C 15, I 13, W 17, Ch 14; Spells 5/5/3/1; SA spells, SD 30% resistant to sleep and charm; Items *scale mail* +2, *buckler* +1, *short sword* +1, *ring of fire resistance*.

Spells currently carried: *cause light wounds*, *cure light wounds* (x2), *command* (x2), *hold person*, *silence* 15' radius, *heat metal*, *know alignment*, *negative plane protection*, *continual darkness*, *summon insects*, *cause serious wounds*, *poison* (reversed *neutralize poison*).

Special abilities: may cause a pain touch, recipient must save versus spells, failure means he is racked by pain, suffering -4 penalties to attack roll and -2 to dexterity checks for 1 round per level of the priestess.

**Crintri Males** (3): Int 12; AL LE; AC 0; MV 12; F6; hp 50, 44, 42; THAC0 14; #AT 3/2; Damage 1d8+ 1; SA nil; SD 30% resistant to sleep and charm; SZ M; ML 14; XP 1,400 ea; Items: *chain mail* +2, *shield* +2, *longsword* +1, *potions of healing* and *invulnerability*.

**Drow Fighter** (1): AL CE; AC 0; MV 12; F7; hp 45; THAC0 12; #AT 5/2 (3/2 with short sword, and 1/1 with dagger); Damage 1d6+3 with sword, 1d4+2 with dagger; S 16, D 17, C 11, I 14, W 13, Ch 15; Items: *chain mail* +2, *short sword* +2, *dagger* +2; SA spells, SD 90% resistant to sleep and charm, +2 to all saving throws vs. magic; MR 64%; SZ M, ML 14, XP 3,000. The drow has the following abilities once per day: *faerie fire*, *darkness*, *dancing lights*, *levitate*, *know alignment*, and *detect magic*. This drow is wearing normal magical items, not drow magic. He does not have drow poison with him either.

At some point during the combat, if the PCs are having an easy time of it, the glabrezu will step in. If the party is having a tough time, they should have a turn to recover from the Crintri while the glabrezu summons another vrock to aid him in the coming confrontation.

**Quinix (True tanar'ri, glabrezu)**: Int exceptional; AL CE; AC -7; MV 15; HD 10, hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 5; Damage 2-12/2-12/1-3/1-3/2-5; SA grab; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; MR 50%; SZ H; ML 17; XP 44,000.

Quinix has the following special abilities at 10th level of spell use, one at a time, one per round: *darkness*, *burning hands*, *charm person*, *confusion*, *detect magic* (always active), *dispel magic*, *enlarge*, *mirror image*, *power word stun* (7 times per day), *reverse gravity*, *teleport without error*, *true seeing* (always active).

Glabrezu are immune to all non-magical attacks like fire, gas, acid, etc. They are also immune to magical electricity, and take half damage from magical cold or fire.





# Adventures in The Shining South

Quinix does not intend to fight to the death. He would much rather surrender, and negotiate a deal that he can turn to his profit. If the PCs persist, Quinix teleports out to another location. This can serve as a possible hook for future adventures.

If the party is being overwhelmed, they call flee. Quinix will not pursue them. He is more interested in his research than in chasing any intruders.

## The Gate To Elsewhere

If the PCs search they should find the illusionary walls. The drow female was carrying a bag of 48 gems, worth 100 gold pieces each.

The *gate* is a circle on the floor, a shifting pool of colors that draws one's attention. Currently, the gate is open to the Astral Plane. The PCs can see a cloudy white haze. After an hour it shifts to a peaceful green forest (actually on the plane of Elysium). The gate can open to any plane the DM chooses. This can be used to launch players into an extra-planar adventure. If a DM is not prepared for extra-planar adventures, then the PCs will lack the device needed to activate the *gate*. Should any PC attempt to use the *gate*, it either does not affect them, or teleports them to another part of the Realms.

## Quinix's Treasure

Quinix's treasure is hidden in the eastern-most small room off the *gate* room. The door is locked and warded with a *glyph of warding* (fire damage 10d4, save for 1/2), and a *symbol of death*. Behind the door the treasure is piled in a heap on the floor. In the room are three flying snakes.

**Flying Snakes** (3): Int Low; AL, N; AC 5; Mv 9, Fl 21 (B); HD 1+4, hp 10, 8, 6; THAC0 19; #AT 1 + special; Damage 1-3; SA acid spray 10' for 1-4 points of damage to flesh, hide, or cloth; SZ S; ML, 12; XP 130. When engaged against a S-sized creature, the snakes can attempt to wrap their coils around a victim every other round. This

causes no extra damage but the victim's movement rate is lowered by 8, and his armor class is penalized by 6 (movement minimum 1, AC minimum 10). The snake must make a successful attack roll to do so.

**Treasure:** 3 sacks of 500 gold, 1 Curna emerald worth 5,000 gp, 200 platinum in a money belt, 3 *potions of healing* clearly marked as poison; 3 vials of poison, type F, marked as healing, extra healing, and flying; *bracers of defense AC 4*; *wand of fire* (12 charges); *ring of shooting stars*; and a wizard scroll with *read magic*, *detect magic*, *lighting sphere*, and *rapid reflexive response* scribed at 13th level. The last two are new spells found in this book. Check the section on Halruan magic for the spell descriptions.



# Dark as Dark

Dark as Dark is an adventure for 5-8 characters of levels 6-8. Total levels in the party should be about 40. This adventure is set in the beast-lands of Veldorn, described in the section on the nation of Ulgarth. Players will be dealing with undead creatures, including a vampire. A cleric or paladin with the ability to turn undead would be helpful, but not necessary. This adventure uses the Saed's city map on the cover of this booklet.

## Set Up

The party is in Lastarr, a trading town on the Durpar side of the border with Veldorn. They are approached by a Durparian adventurer, a fighter from the looks of him, who claims to know something that will benefit them. If they are interested, they should meet him at the Scurvy Trader Inn. Or....

As the party is rounding a corner, they see two men scuffling. One of them lurches back, and falls to the ground. The other looks over at the party, and then flees. The man lying dead on the ground is a Durparian merchant, but not a very successful one by his dress. Searching him yields a map to a location in Veldorn. The map is marked Vaelan, with a note that says, "Meet me at the Scurvy Trader Inn at dusk. Pigel." The PCs may keep the appointment in place of the dead merchant.

## The Plot

Saed, a vampire lord, is the beast-chieftain of Veldorn. He is going to be gone from his home city for a while, and Pigel has discovered this. In fact, Saed is going to be in Lastarr. This offers a perfect opportunity to sneak into his city and recover an heirloom of Pigel's house that was stolen by Saed over 50 years ago. The PCs meet Pigel and hear his offer. If they agree, they will travel across the monster country of Veldorn to Saed's city. There they can try to sneak in and recover the treasure. Along the way they'll face various creatures native to the Shining South, and have a

final showdown with the vampire that Saed has left in charge.

## The Scurvy Trader Inn

The Scurvy Trader is a dive of the worst sort. It caters to anyone who has the money for a cheap drink and no concern about the company. If the characters enter at dusk, there are only 10 customers, humans and half-orcs, in the place, but the inn begins to fill up quickly. The bartender doesn't know anyone named Pigel, nor do the customers. Asking anyone about Pigel is enough to alert Pigel that this is the party he is waiting for. He will move over to the PCs' table as soon as they sit down or intercept them at the door if they decide to leave.

He will introduce himself as Pigel Cochin, then say, "I assume you are here because you are willing to accept my offer."

The characters should have no idea what he's talking about. If they say they are willing to accept, he will explain that he has learned that Saed, the vampire who robbed his family of an important heirloom over 50 years ago, is going to be in Lastarr for the next few days. Pigel, who knows the way to Saed's city, believes that, with the party's help he could sneak in, recover his heirloom and be out in only three days. If the PCs want to know what's in it for them, he says only the gratitude of his family, the Cochin family of Thruldar. He will say it as though it should mean something. Any PCs who are familiar with Durpar or Luiren will recognize the name as that of a very rich family.

If this is not enough, he will offer them everything that is recovered except the family heirloom. The heirloom is an ornate scimitar with the hilt carved into the shape of a lion.

If this is still not enough, he can offer them each a *potion of healing*, and 500 gold marks. The potions will be paid in advance, the money will be paid only if the recovery succeeds.

**Pigel Cochin**, AL CG; AC 3; MV 12; R6; hp 50; THAC0 15; S 15; D 12; C 18; I 11; W 14; Ch 14;



## Dark as Dark

Move Silently 47%; Hide in Shadows 37%. Items: leather armor, *ring of protection* +4 to AC, +2 to saves, *longsword* +1, dagger, longbow, quiver with 20 sheaf arrows, trail rations, brown travel clothes, 25 silver pieces, 2 gold marks, 4 vellims (25 gp trade bars). He also carries 6 *potions of healing*, and a mage scroll which he can offer to sweeten the deal. The scroll is scribed at 8th level, and has *magic missile*, *locate object*, *burning hands*, and *stoneskin*.

If the PCs found the merchant's body, and ask Pigel about it, he will tell them that he was attempting to recruit adventurers to accompany him into the city of Vaelen. He has scouted the city before, and knows exactly where it is. He dares not try to penetrate Saed's stronghold without help. The PCs look like just the group he was looking for. The man he had been dealing with before had a decidedly unclean feeling about him, but Pigel is desperate. Actually, he is desperately trying to make a name for himself in his family, but he is afraid to admit it.

If asked about the sword, Pigel will almost explain why the sword is important, but he always stops short. The truth is, the sword is not terribly important to his family. It is an important symbol for Pigel, to prove his worth. It's also a *scimitar* +1 *flame tongue*.

If and when the PCs agree, Pigel offers to put them up for the night. He has a safe spot outside of town where the PCs can sleep. If they object, they can stay at the inn overnight. Pigel tells them where to meet him. He plainly considers their decision a foolish one. Let the PCs prepare for being robbed, set watches, whatever they like; nothing happens during the night. Pigel doesn't like sleeping indoors unless he absolutely has to, and thinks anyone who does so is crazy. The inn charges a silver a night for a dirty, bug-infested room. If the PCs have more taste, they can find a better inn up the street. It charges them a gold piece a night, but the rooms are clean. Pigel will suggest that any characters wearing metal armor had better get something lighter, or they won't make it.

In the morning the PCs and Pigel set out. If the PCs spent the night in town, he inquires about their health. He is surprised when the party tells him that they had no encounters during the night. He then remarks, "We had best get moving while our luck holds."

### Journey To Vaelen

The PCs have a rough two-day journey across Veldorn. Pigel, however, knows the country very well. He is constantly leading the PCs around obstacles and past homes of various monsters. Once he points to the north and remarks "Xiltor, where the beholders rule. Not a nice place."

About eight hours into the day, in the late afternoon, the party encounters a pack of flying snakes. The snakes swoop up from the left of the party; Pigel missed seeing them. Allow the characters normal surprise rolls. The snakes were in a nest only 15' from the party, and they immediately move to attack.

**Flying Snakes** (10): Int Low; AL N; AC 5; MV 9, Fl 21 (B); HD 1+4; HP 8 ea; THAC0 19; #AT 1 + special; Damage 1-3; SA acid spray 10' for 1-4 points of damage to flesh, hide, or cloth; SZ S; ML 12; XP 120. When engaged against a S-sized creature, the snakes can attempt to wrap their coils around a victim every other round. This causes no extra damage but the victim's movement rate is lowered by 8, and his armor class is penalized by 6 (movement minimum 1, AC minimum 10). The snake must make a successful attack roll to do so.

The snakes flee when more than half of them are slain. Snakes attempt to attack the face, to blind and confuse the foe. If a flying snake scores a natural 20, he has bitten the PC near an eye; that eye is blinded until a *cure light wounds* is received.

Towards evening the party comes across a copse amidst the unending hilly grasslands. Pigel offers to scout it out, allowing any PC who wishes to accompany him. Nothing is found by Pigel, at first. Any rangers or druids in the party have a



## Dark as Dark

25% chance of noticing the dark trees, others have but a 10% chance. If the dark trees are not noticed, they bide their time, waiting for all of the party either to pass through, or to settle down for the night.

If the party does not detect them, Pigel suggests making camp here. The PCs can indeed find a ring of trees with a sunken firepit. This place would be somewhat defensible, and out of sight. Pigel has been here before. There are three more trees in the copse than there were before, but Pigel doesn't notice that. Sometime during the night, around 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, the dark trees use confusion on the guards, and move in for the kill.

If the party does detect them, the dark trees attack with their confusion power first, then move in to mop up the PCs.

**Dark Trees** (3); Int low; AL NE; AC 0; MV 3; HD 10, hp 60, 55, 43; THAC0 11; #AT 2 or 1; Damage 3-18/3-18 or 4-24; SA confusion grab if both arms hit, next attack at +4 to hit (bite); SD blending; SZ H; ML 15; XP 12,000. Dark trees hate all life that walks on two legs, and will attack until dead.

When the incident with the dark trees is over, the PCs can settle down and try to get more sleep. The combat has awakened another group of flying snakes, and they attack about a half hour after the combat has ended.

**Flying Snakes** (10): stats same as above; hp 8 ea.

The night finally passes, and the PCs may continue on. The day passes uneventfully, but the pace is grueling. About mid-afternoon, all characters with a constitution of less than 12 must make a constitution check, or be forced to stop for rest.

Pigel chafes at any delay; he had hoped to be at the city by now. He does not wish to enter it by night, and Saed has ways of traveling very quickly. He could be back tomorrow. If the party chooses to continue, all those who failed their constitu-

tion check suffer a -1 to hit and a +1 penalty to AC in the upcoming encounters.

## The City of Vaelen

About two hours before dusk, Pigel leads the party to the top of a hill. Below lies a sprawling mass of trees and buildings. The city is apparently built into the side of a hill. A huge opening into the hill, large enough to admit two wagons abreast, hill can be seen.

Pigel suggests blending in with the populace. He has brought dirty old rags. With the rags, plenty of mud, and some white makeup, he can transform them into fake zombies. Should any PC be able to cast *wraithform*, that one could act as a leader. Most of the undead do not like the sunlight, so the party shouldn't be bothered in the outer city. Underground may be different, but the vampires will be resting. It's safer now than it will be in two hours.

Let the PCs disguise themselves as they wish, but Pigel reminds them that most undead are not fooled by *invisibility*. He recommends the zombie disguise, which is how he got into the city before.

If the PCs agree, have fun with this. Anyone who takes pride in their clothes is a target for Pigel, for the costume must be dirty, ragged, and worthless to satisfy him. Let Pigel have fun tearing sleeves off silk shirts, carving huge rents in cloaks, whatever it takes. Once the disguises are complete, Pigel leads the party towards the city. They have no encounters while in the outer city but you can read or paraphrase the following passages for effect.

"As you pass an intersection, you hear a scream to your left. Several blocks away, you see a goblin run out of a building. He is pursued and quickly dragged down by a pack of ghouls. You hurry along before the ghouls sense you."

"You shuffle down the street, nearing the great passage to the inner city. To your left six skeletons stand idle and unmoving. You feel their eye-holes on you as you pass by, but they make no movement."



## Dark as Dark

"You pass what seems to be a park, with many trees growing in it. You look again, and realize that most of the trees are stunted and dead, and that some of the trees resemble the dark trees you fought last night. You stumble along, doing your best to appear to be zombies. The dark trees watch you, but do not follow."

Use the above description to make the players nervous. Throw in other encounters such as a shuffling line of zombies carrying supplies, or a wight drifting across the street in front of them. Finally, they reach the entrance to the Inner City.

### The Inner City

The PCs enter from the top of the map. Their first obstacle is at the gate. Since no shipments are expected right now, the gate is closed. If they are masquerading as zombies, they should not be able to speak. On the other hand, they can see only zombies and skeletons on watch. A simple knock opens the gate, or a thief could use his hide in shadows and climbing skills to climb over and open the gate a crack. Failing that, normal zombies would just stand there until the gate is opened. The gate will open in about an hour, when another group of zombies is expected. No one pays any particular attention to the PCs, as long as they make no loud noises and do not draw attention to themselves.

Once inside, the characters see a long street ending in an open area, and an east/west street that leads to many buildings. Pigel tells them (in a whisper) that Saed's palace is beyond the town square.

On the way down the street, the PCs see a group approaching. A vampire, flanked by half a dozen zombies and a pair of wraiths, is approaching. If the PCs shuffle to the side, the entourage passes by with scarcely a notice. The vampire does give the party a piercing glance as he goes by. If they turn off, they can simply march up a side street with no trouble, but the vampire still watches them. Should the party attack the vampire, Pigel will leave them to fend

for themselves. If they duck into one of the abandoned buildings, they encounter a wight. This undead is close enough to sense their life force, and immediately attacks.

**Wight** (1); Int Ave; AL LE; AC 5; MV 21; HD 4+3, hp 22; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Damage 1-4; SA energy drain; SD immune to cold, hold, sleep and charm. SZ M, ML 14; XP 975.

**Zombies** (10); Int Non; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2, hp 10 ea; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Damage 1-8; SA always attack last in a round; SD immune to cold, hold, sleep or charm; SZ M; ML special; XP 65.

**Wraiths** (2); Int Very; AL LE; AC 4; MV 12, Fl 24 (B); HD 5+3, hp 40, 26; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Damage 1-6; SA energy drain; SD hit only by silver or +1 weapons, immune to cold, hold, sleep, charm; SZ M, ML 15; XP 3,000

**Kessar, Vampire** (1); Int Exc.; AL CE; AC 1; MV 12, Fl 18 (C); HD 8+3, hp 60; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Damage 1d6+4; SA Energy Drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to hold, charm, poison, paralysis, 1/2 damage from cold or electricity. SZ M; ML 16; XP 3,000. Kessar is wearing a *ring of fire resistance*, and a *ring of shooting stars*. He is suspicious of the party, but only attacks if attacked first.

The monsters, except for Kessar, fight to the death. Five rounds after combat starts, another seven zombies and two wraiths join the confrontation. Five rounds later two wights join the fray. Alternate this as long as the party wants to keep fighting. If they have started the battle in the street, Pigel shows up after 15 rounds, with a bundle tucked under his arm. He recommends that the party run for it.

The courtyard contains an altar, where Saed worships his foul deity. The altar is prominent, but is unoccupied at the present time. It radiates a very strong aura of evil. The courtyard is full of zombies, skeletons, wraiths, orcs, and kobolds. Even a pair of yuan-ti make their way across to join in any fights. As long as the PCs shuffle with



## Dark as Dark

their heads down, keeping to their zombie disguises, they will not be confronted.

### The Palace of Saed

The palace is an ornate, decaying place. Once beautiful, it still has silver worked into the gates, and marble statues in the courtyard, albeit covered with dirt and filth. The party can clearly see a line of zombies carrying boxes, marching around to the side of the palace. They are being commanded by an orc shaman, who orders them to the side entrance. If the PCs wish to follow, the orc shaman doesn't notice that his group of 20 zombies increased by a few. Counting was nearer his strong suit.

Once in the side entrance, the PCs can break off and duck into a storeroom without being noticed. Have them make dexterity checks, but even if they fail, only a zombie notices them, and he doesn't speak.

It is here that Pigel suggests divination magic, if the PCs have some. If not, he offers his scroll with the *locate object* spell, and a complete description of the scimitar. A scimitar with a lion pommel is probably very rare. If it can be located, the party can proceed in the right direction, at least. If this scroll, *clairvoyance*, or *wizard eye* is used, the scimitar is located hanging on the wall, in Saed's main throne room. It is less than 50' from the PCs' current location.

The PCs can make it to the throne room unopposed, for Saed is not present, yet. Pigel rushes over and grabs his family heirloom, setting off a loud clamoring alarm. If he is restrained, and traps are detected magically, the alarm spell can be detected and possibly neutralized. There are a number of other heirlooms on the wall: a spear, a two-handed sword, a shield, a mace, a hand axe, another scimitar, and a halberd. Only three of these radiate magic, should it be detected for. The spear is actually a *spear +3, cursed backbiting* planted here for just such an occasion by Saed. The mace is +1, +4 vs. good aligned creatures, the hand axe is a *throwing axe*

+3. All of the weapons have gems worked into the pommels; none is worth fewer than 1000 gold pieces. They may be worth more to collectors, but that kind of research is up to the DM and the players.

Removing any of the weapons from the wall sets off the magical alarm. If Pigel is allowed to grab the scimitar, the rest of the PCs have time to grab something and run as well. As long as they flee the throne room the round after the alarms go off, they can escape. If not, a dozen zombies (stats as above) attack, followed by waves of zombies, wights, and wraiths.

If this is the first disturbance the PCs set off, and they run immediately, they can make it halfway out of the city before the vampire appears before them. He calls twice the number of zombies and wraiths listed above to his side. As soon as the vampire is brought to zero hit points, and turns into a gaseous cloud, Pigel will urge the PCs to run. The PCs should probably agree. More zombies, and other dark shapes can be seen approaching. As the PCs move out of the city after defeating the vampire, they may confront a few zombies, or a wight or two. The opposition shouldn't be anything that the PC priests cannot turn or kill with little effort. Maintain the feeling that the PCs are being pursued by a horde of undead. If they stop, they will discover that they are being followed by most of the city occupants.

Once out into the city, the sun will be a half hour from setting. It keeps most of the darker undead back, and the zombies are too slow to keep up with the PCs. Allow them to escape, but have the PCs attacked again at night by a group of undead. Pigel strongly suggests moving through the night. If the PCs agree, have them make constitution rolls. Those who fail have passed out, and must be carried. Pigel is strong enough to carry someone, and does so if necessary.

After five hours of travel, Pigel calls a halt. The PCs may encounter undead, at the DM's option. This encounter should be just enough to challenge combat. After two days of hiding and running, the PCs return to Lastarr. There Pigel will



## Dark as Dark

make arrangements for any payment that is due the PCs, and then leaves for home to present his trophy (which he will still carry). Pigel can return to lead the PCs into other troubles. He knows Luiren, Durpar, Veldorn, and the surrounding country as well as anyone. He is always trying to prove himself in ever more dangerous adventures. For instance, he's heard that a rakshasa noble is hiding out in the Gundar Forest. Anyone interested?

### *Other Adventures in The Shining South*

A rakshasa noble is building a base of power near Kolapar, in the Gundarwood. The rakshasa has allied with a tribe of yuan-ti. They occupy an old tower deep in the forest.

A map purported to be of the tomb of Reinhar I is found. The tomb is guarded by a stone golem shaped like a lion, and an iron golem shaped like a tiger.

A wizard wants to hire adventurers in Halruaa to seek out the treasures of the archmage Akhrual. The tower is guarded by a pair of larakens, or magic drainers. Several unique Halruan spells could be found, or a new magical item.

# Dark Trees

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Jungle, tropical
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Grove
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Nocturnal
DIET:	Special
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-7)
TREASURE:	Incidental
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1-4
ARMOR CLASS:	0
MOVEMENT:	3
HIT DICE:	10
THACO:	11
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2 or 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	3-18/3-18 or 4-24
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	H (12-15')
MORALE:	Champion (15-16)
XP VALUE:	12,000



Dark trees are native to the Shining South. The earliest reports of dark trees preying on humans begin 200 years ago.

Dark trees resemble cypress trees, but their bark is darker, and little moss grows on them. They have two deep black eyes, which are almost impossible to find unless one knows precisely where to look. They superficially resemble treants, but anyone who sees a dark tree can almost feel the palpable hatred and evil emanating from it.

**Combat:** Dark trees have a superior Armor Class due to their bark-like skin. They are not especially susceptible to fire, for their bark is wet and slimy, and fire does not easily ignite it.

Dark trees do suffer a -2 penalty to their saving throw versus any magical cold attack.

In melee, dark trees can attack with their two arms, inflicting 3-18 (3d6) points of damage per successful attack. If both arms hit, the dark tree has grabbed the victim. On the next round, the dark tree can attempt to bite the victim, with a +4 bonus to hit. A successful bite causes 4-24 points of damage, as the tree drains blood from the victim. Dark trees have the ability to cause confusion in a target, once per round, in addition to their normal attacks. This ability has a range of 50 feet. The target receives a saving throw versus spell to avoid the effect. During combat this has the same effect as a confusion spell, but is more insidious if cast on an unsuspecting target. It causes the target to completely lose his sense of direction, often becoming hopelessly lost in the jungle.

Dark trees are 90% likely to be taken for small cypress trees when they are not moving. This blending effect is only 75% effective against druids, rangers, and other priests of nature.

**Habitat/Society:** Dark trees live deep in the jungles, under the forest canopy that keeps the direct sunlight off them. They are solitary creatures, delighting in tormenting an unsuspecting group of adventurers before moving in for the kill.

Dark trees are a failed experiment of a renegade wizard of Halruaa. The mage, Benautil, was intent on creating servants that would serve him as well as treants. He invested a great deal of time and much research into necromancies and other foul magic. He was delighted with the success of his experiments on the trees, until the trees turned against his will and slew him.

The trees have spread and have become common in the Wood of Dark trees, in northwestern Durpar. They have also spread to the Granuin Forest, in Luiren, and the Ajmer Forest, north of Dambratb. No other sightings have been reported to date.

**Ecology:** Dark trees can exist by photosynthesis, but they prefer the taste of blood. They must feed well on blood, before they can bud. Budding is a process that takes one year. At the end of that time, the original dark tree breaks up into 2-5 (d4+1) identical dark trees.



# Laraken

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Swamp
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Magic
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-7)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	6
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	15
THAC0:	5
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1 + absorption
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2-5 (1d4+1)
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Drain magic, spell use
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Special
SIZE:	L (10' diameter sphere)
MORALE:	Champion (15-16)
XP VALUE:	15,000

A laraken, also known as a magic-drainer, appears as a shining yellow sphere. It can wink out at will, reappearing elsewhere in a moment. Laraken are distant relatives of nishruu, and are for the most part confined to the swamplands, for their yellow bodies must stay wet or they become very uncomfortable. They have a pair of yellow tentacles which protrude from opposite points on the sphere.

**Combat:** The laraken is capable of lashing out with one tentacle once per round, which inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage per hit. The hit also drains a spell from any spellcaster, or a charge or a plus from a magical item. As it drains these, it gains the power it has absorbed.

A laraken feeds on magical energy. It is capable of absorbing any spell energy directed at it. It also gains the power of whatever the tentacle has drained. If it hits a magical sword, and drains a plus, it receives a +1 bonus to hit and damage. If it drains a spell from a mage, it is able to cast that spell. The laraken prefers to drain memorized spells, then charges from magical items with spell-like effects, then pluses from magical items. The laraken drains the highest-level spell that a spellcaster has memorized. If the victim possesses two or more spells of the same level, the spell drained is randomly chosen. The spellcaster must make a saving throw versus death magic, adjusted for wisdom, or fall unconscious for 1d10 turns.

The laraken's tentacles can each take ten percent of the total hit points of the creature before being severed. A weapon which hits the tentacle is subject to the effects of the touch. These tentacles can be regenerated. To do so, the laraken redirects one spell level per hit point of the tentacle that it has absorbed. The laraken does not receive any bonuses, or spell effects for the levels it has redirected to regeneration.



Laraken hate all intelligent life, and always attack when they sense a party that possesses spellcasters or magic. They will not follow a party onto dry land.

**Habitat/Society:** Laraken were brought here when a great conjurer, Akhlaur, summoned them from their alternate prime material plane. On their own plane, they lived in a very wet, swamp country. They are uncomfortable in humidity of less than 95%, so even the Shining South is a very dry place to a laraken. Since the laraken feed off magic, the gate to the elemental plane of water, with its enchanted water gushing through and spreading the Akhlaur swamp, provides perfect food.

**Ecology:** Laraken feed only on magic. They attack merely because of the intense hatred for those who summoned them, which they consider to be anything of roughly humanoid shape.

Laraken reproduce by absorbing a *regenerate* spell; this allows them to grow a new laraken from a severed tentacle. It is thought that they had other means of reproducing on their own plane, but those conditions do not exist here. This means, thankfully, that laraken are very rare, and are likely to remain so. Laraken need to absorb the equivalent of three spell levels per day. A laraken can also use these spell levels to regenerate 1 hp of damage.

# All that is Powerful and Frightening

The dark drow elves are a magical race living far underground. Coming to the surface world only to make war, they are one of the most feared races in the Realms. They are also the favorite foes of most courageous adventurers.

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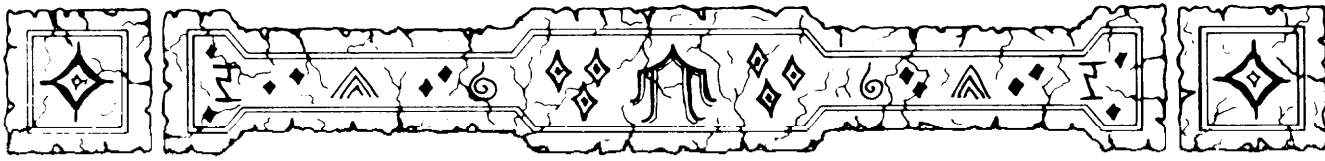


# Thirty-One Leading Chakas of Durpar

These are the current chakas on the List of Thirty-One. The "Interests" column describes their primary holdings or profit-making venues.

Chaka	Home Base	Interests
Jeradea	Heldapan	Everything
Turamir	Huorm	Almost everything
Semenra	Pyratar	Almost everything
Selatarir	Klionna	Gems, trade with Luiren
Baroda	Turelve	Grain, textiles
Jaipur	Myrmyr	Shipping; have had two fleets return from Maztica
Ysnam	Heldapan	Building, stonework shipyards
Gemstone	Ormpe	Gems, weapon makers; discoverers of the Curna emeralds
Berol	Zelpir	Fishing, gem cutting, vast grain fields
Yanama	Morvar	Iron work (mining and smithing), wagon making, textiles
Hoktant	Zabbasz	Trading, exclusively. This chaka boasts seven master traders.
Synd	Heldapan	Artwork, fine silks
Finglefall	Ormpe	Gnomish chaka. Gem cutters, mining
Orissar	Turelve	Adventuring chaka. Expanding into gems, horse trade with Dambrath. Their caravans are always well guarded.
Karikal	Morvar	Mingari trade with Ulgarth, wood from Ajmer Forest
Chamar	Pyratar	Grain, fishing
Barodal	Pyratar	Grain, fishing
Cochin	Thrudar	Woodworking
Salicur	Huorm	Copper, textiles
Bihar	Kolapar	Grain, shipping
Benaral	Pharsul	Books, textiles
Trollslayers	Orpher	Adventuring company. Great success in Veldorn.
Gwarlor	Flyndagol	Woodworking, gold, iron mines
Sholapur	Myrmyr	Shipbuilding, grain
Baker	Sezilinta	Halfling chaka. Baked goods shops in every city in the Shining Lands.
Zelpara	Zelpir	Grain, mechanical gadgets
Rawnpore	Bachlaxis	Textiles, caravans
Bellari	Heldapan	Shipbuilding
Silverhand	Ulara	Dwarven chaka. Silver mines
Hakahrsi	Sezilinta	Halfling chaka. Grain, foodstuffs of all types. First year on the List of Thirty-One.
Belasore	Klionna	Fishing, pearls





# Luiren Specialty Priests

## Yondalla, Protector of Halflings

### Greater Power of Seven Heavens, LG

**Portfolio:** Nature, protection, death, and aspects of halfling life, especially birth and fertility

**Requirements:** Halflings only, Wisdom 13

**Weapons Allowed:** Any non-edged weapon plus slings, throwing rocks, and short swords

**Armor Allowed:** Leather or none

**Major Spheres:** All, Animal, Creation, Divination, Guardian, Law, Necromantic, Protection, Healing, Plant, Weather, Wards

**Minor Spheres:** Combat, Sun

**Magical Items Allowed:** Any usable by priests

### Granted Powers

Specialty priests of Yondalla are adept at throwing rocks. They receive a +2 bonus to hit, in addition to the normal halfling thrown weapon bonus, when using rocks that they have selected. Thrown rocks do 1d4 points of damage. Priests of Yondalla can throw three rocks per round. At 5th level, specialty priests of Yondalla can cast a magical stone spell, once per level per day.

At 7th level, specialty priests of Yondalla gain the ability to blend into any natural forest or pastoral background, becoming 90% undetectable.

At 10th level, specialty priests of Yondalla gain the druidic shape change ability. Their choice of forms is restricted, however, to burrowing mammals, mammals that live above ground but not in trees, and mammals that live in water. Specialty priests of Yondalla are not allowed to become reptilians or avians, nor do they recover lost hit points when shapechanging.

### Other Notes

Specialty priests of Yondalla have no power to turn or control undead.

Specialty priests of Yondalla have only existed in Luiren since the Time of Troubles. This new order seeks to preserve the Luiren way of life. Its adherents also believe in existing with nature rather than subjugating it. They are very comfortable with halfling whistler bards, and the two groups frequently work together. Specialty

priests of Yondalla have gained a favorable reputation in Luiren. They often are proficient in Healthy Cooking and Medicinal Cooking.

Specialty priests of Yondalla wear brown and green. Their holy symbol is a wheat stalk crossing a silver tree, representing the meadows and forests.

## Arvoreen, The Defender

### Intermediate Power of Seven Heavens, LG

**Portfolio:** Protection, vigilance, war

**Requirements:** Halflings only, Dexterity 12, Strength 14

**Weapons Allowed:** Any (short sword first)

**Armor Allowed:** Chain or worse, no shield

**Major Spheres:** Combat, Guardian, Healing, Protection, Sun, War, Wards

**Minor Spheres:** All, Animal, Charm, Divination, Elemental, Plant, Weather

**Magical Items Allowed:** Any usable by priests or fighters

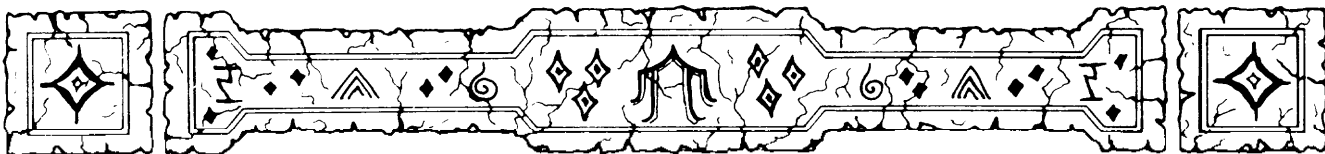
### Granted Powers

Once per day the specialty priest may imbue a character with a strength of 18+, with the exceptional percentage to be rolled by the priest. A specialty priest of fewer than three levels may imbue one character per day with such exceptional strength. The recipient gains the bonus and abilities associated with this strength for one turn per level of the casting specialty priest, to a maximum of six turns (one hour).

At third level, a specialty priest may imbue one character with a strength of 18+, as above, and another character with a strength of 19.

At sixth level and above, the priest can give this exceptional strength to up to three characters, one with a new ability score of 18+ as above, one with 19, and one with 20. A maximum of three characters can be affected. A single character can receive only one magical strength bonus at a time. If the same character is imbued with two or more magical strength bonuses in this manner, the highest score takes effect.

Specialty priests of Arvoreen can turn undead as normal. They can also be multi-classed as fighter/clerics.



# The City of Vaelen



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®  
2nd Edition



## The Shining South

Far off in the south exist countries of legend. Here live the powerful, reclusive mages of Halruaa, the cheerful halflings of Luiren, and the traders of Durpar and Var the Golden. Come along on a risky visit to Dambrath, a country ruled by an alliance of drow and the priestesses of Loviatar, or to Ulgarth, where the only true coffee in the Realms is grown.

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