



player's
guide to

Rangers and Rogues



A CORE SOURCEBOOK FOR REVISED 3RD EDITION FANTASY ROLEPLAYING

players guide to Rangers and Rogues

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To R.K. Millholland and Something Positive, for the fantastic laughs and acerbic wit. I'm never sure whether to laugh or be appalled by your work, man, which must mean that it's just that good.

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To James Maliszewski, for leaving his name out of the Additional Materials section of the *Player's Guide to Wizards, Bards and Sorcerers* and the *Player's Guide to Fighters and Barbarians*. Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.

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PREFACE

Welcome to the fourth in the Player's Guide series.

Our intent with this series is simple: We want to examine the ways in which players can become a stronger part of the setting in which their characters exist. By providing ways in which characters may derive a background from and have a role in the setting's development, they become closely tied to the setting. In turn, players adopt a more vested interest in both their characters and in the setting as a whole. The more richly a setting is developed, the more characters can "come to life," creating memorable role-playing and exciting adventures.

Thus, our goal is to help your characters become a living, breathing part of the game world.

More than that, though, we want to see how these classes might shape and inspire a campaign setting. The player characters — and characters like them, past and present — are the movers and shakers in the game world. Not every character in the setting has levels in the so-called "PC classes." In fact, those who do are in the minority. But from these relatively few individuals come the events, both heroic and monstrous, that forever shape their world.

Therefore, this series uses the setting of the Scarred Lands to help show you how diverse classes weave their influence into every aspect of the tapestry of a game world. As with the rest of the book, you can refer to it for your own Scarred Lands game, or use it as inspiration in any other campaign.

The **Player's Guide to Rangers and Rogues** is more than suggestions and rules on how to play a certain type of character. This is a book about determining where your characters, and those like them, have affected the world. To this end, we examine the skills and tricks involved in hunting the shadows, whether the stalker does so for the greater good or for personal gain. The men and women who are the focus of this book tend to exist on the outer limits of the law — whether because they eschew those laws or simply because they haunt the fringes of civilization.

Within these pages are the stealthy, the hunters, the stalkers, the watchers.

So, welcome to a book filled with the vigilant and the villainous, a book on criminals and bounty hunters, assassins and protectors, law-keepers and law-breakers.

Welcome to the **Player's Guide to Rangers and Rogues**.

Joseph D. CARRIKER, JR
SCARRED LANDS DEVELOPER
SWORD & SORCERY STUDIOS

INTRODUCTION

While the *Player's Guide to Rangers and Rogues* is designed for use in any d20 campaign, you'll find that it is undeniably focused on the Scarred Lands. Throughout this book, you will read many references to that setting, its history and its inhabitants.

Yet, it would be a mistake to assume that this book's utility is limited to the Scarred Lands. As explained in the Preface, the purpose of the *Player's Guide* series is show how the various character classes shape and inspire a campaign setting. The Scarred Lands is used as a single example of this process rather than the only one. Any references to it are meant to inspire your own ideas regardless of the campaign setting in which they occur.

Adapting material in this book to other settings may require some work. This introduction should make that easier, since it offers a comprehensive overview and plenty of suggestions. Armed with its advice, players and Game Masters should have little difficulty tailoring the rest of the book's content to campaigns set in other worlds, or even to other conceptions of the Scarred Lands setting than the standard one presented in *Sword & Sorcery* products.

As always, the key is for GMs to remember the oft-quoted — though oft-forgotten — truism: *you* are the final arbiter of what is and is not the case for your campaign, wherever it is set. This book offers a multitude of options, variants and alternate takes on many aspects of the core classes of rangers and rogues (not to mention an exhaustive discussion of their place in the Scarred Lands setting). If anything here runs counter to your conception of things or would do violence to the established truths of your campaign, feel free to ignore them! That's as true for campaigns in the Scarred Lands as in any other setting. Use only what appeals to you and is genuinely useful, and discard the rest.

So long as you bear that in mind, this book is as valuable to players and GMs alike, regardless of whether the campaign is set in the Scarred Lands or in a game world of their own creation.

Types of Games

Fantasy roleplaying games come in many flavors, not all of which operate under the same "rules." That is, each type has its own distinct mood, feel and tone, all of which influence how the game is played and the types of stories that are told within it. These in turn affect how the characters relate to the setting and the kind of impact that they can have on it.

It's important to note that some campaign settings are broadly enough drawn that they can allow for multiple types of games depending on the interests of the GM and the players. The following sections provide some insight into the benefits and drawbacks of each type. They also make it easier for those not playing in the Scarred Lands to categorize their own campaign by its type, so as to take fuller advantage of the material presented in later chapters.

Simply read through the following to see where your campaign best fits, and you'll also find assistance of how to adjust the rest of this book's contents accordingly.

High Fantasy

High fantasy is, in many ways, the default type of fantasy roleplaying setting. Its name derives from the fact that its fantastical elements — magic, monsters, heroism — are at the high end of the scale. High fantasy games are in no way "realistic." They pay little heed to notions of plausibility. Instead, they rely on over the top plotlines, outlandish locales and larger than life characters to tell epic stories set in a mythical locale. Most high fantasy games also have a strong component of black and white morality to them. The forces of good are virtuous and praiseworthy, while the forces of evil are vicious and blameworthy.

High fantasy need not be simplistic, however. In fact, many high fantasy tales contain very sophisticated examinations of the nature of evil and the very real temptation to choose it over good as a means to achieving an otherwise just end.

The Scarred Lands setting is largely a high fantasy setting, so the majority of information in this book is well suited to use in other high fantasy campaigns. High fantasy settings are also strongly archetypal, which is to say they use characters that embody certain universal qualities or roles. Two such archetypes are the "wilderness warrior" and the "thief with a heart of gold," both of which dovetail nicely with traditional conceptions of the ranger and rogue character classes. Consequently, very little in this book need be changed to accommodate a high fantasy setting, since nearly every element is commonplace in such campaigns. All the GM really must do is change the references to those appropriate to his own setting rather than the Scarred Lands.

Low Fantasy

Low fantasy, as its name suggests, is at the opposite end of the scale when it comes to fantastical elements. Low fantasy games are often described as "gritty" or

“realistic” in that they emphasize the dangers of combat and life in a world with medieval era technology and culture. Considerations of disease, malnutrition and pointless death are often important.

While perhaps not truly realistic, low fantasy games aim for verisimilitude wherever possible. Stories in this type of game focus on lower-key goals — survival, making a living, getting from point A to point B, and the like. This is not to say that low fantasy is all dreary and banal. Many low fantasy stories can be quite exciting, but a lot of the excitement comes from overcoming more mundane obstacles than those in high fantasy. Low fantasy characters are often rough and tumble sorts of individuals, people who are willing to do whatever it takes to succeed in their goals, even if it means flouting the conventions of the society in which they exist. Whether literally or not, low fantasy characters are often outsiders who live by their own rules, making this genre a natural one for games that focus heavily on rangers or rogues — outsiders if ever there were any among the standard character classes.

To use this book in a low fantasy setting, then, requires little work. The primary issue is one of magic. Low fantasy, by its nature, has few encounters with genuine magical or supernatural elements. When it does happen, it's usually outside the protagonists' control. In a low fantasy setting, rangers might not have access to divine spells or, if they do, their spell list might be shorter, eliminating some of the obvious supernatural ones, such as *speak with plants* or *polymorph*. The same applies to certain rogue abilities, such as slippery mind, depending on how (or if) the GM wishes to justify its existence. Likewise, many feats or prestige classes introduced in this book would be off-limits because of their dependence on magical or supernatural aid. Still, rangers and rogues are among the most suitable classes for low fantasy, making them good character choices for games that use this genre.

GOthic HORROR

In some ways, gothic horror could be considered a subset of low fantasy in that it rarely involves mighty magic or vast storylines. Gothic horror is a specific type of game in which fear, passion, mystery and primitive psychology all contend to create an atmosphere of brooding — even angst-ridden — doom. In such games, characters with detailed concepts and backgrounds are very important, since so many of the plots revolve around their often-frustrated wants and desires. Gothic horror is not about the slaying of dragons or the exploration of new lands. Instead, it focuses on isolation, impotence and self-examination as the springboards for tales of terror.

Neither rangers nor rogues are natural characters for a gothic horror setting, but neither are they inappropriate for it. That is to say that, while the genre is geared more towards introspective and emotional characters, rangers and rogues are just as likely as anyone else to

possess these traits as anyone else. Their status as outsiders definitely sets these classes apart from others, which means that they might find no respite from the horrors they encounter in “polite society.” They may find themselves shunned or otherwise avoided, treated as if they were as pernicious as the evils they face. This fact gives the GM plenty of ammunition for some very interesting stories should he wish to take advantage of it. If isolation and frustration are important elements of the genre, then rangers and rogues could easily exemplify them.

Most of the advice presented above in the discussion of low fantasy applies equally well to gothic horror. Magic and the supernatural remain rare and largely outside the control of the player characters in this genre. Thus, any feat, prestige class or item that runs counter to this convention of the genre could, if not considered carefully, undermine the feel of the setting. Many of the groups and organizations described in this book could, if properly presented, be used in a gothic horror game. The same goes for the tricks of the trade, some of which, such as the rogue's contacts, for example, work very well in a genre that depends heavily on social interactions for much of its tension.

SCIENCE FANTASY

Science fantasy can use the trappings of science fiction but without any of the underlying science that goes with it. Alternately, it can be a game in which magic mixes with science to produce a fantasy setting that avoids the trappings of medievalism that are usually considered part and parcel of fantasy. In either case, science fantasy differs greatly — at least superficially — from other types of fantasy game settings. In general, it has more in common with high fantasy than low fantasy or gothic horror, but it can employ elements of each, such as a degree of grittiness or the absence of black and white morality.

In science fantasy games, magic is treated like technology. That is, it is just another scientific process that can be understood and harnessed, whether for good or for evil. In some science fantasy settings, magic reproduces contemporary or futuristic technologies, like automobiles or spaceships. In others, the laws of magical science are different and lead to unexpected developments that bear no resemblance to anything existing in the real world. Science fantasy assumes that magic has an impact on the world beyond that of adventurers and their enemies. In many ways, science fantasy is the ultimate type of high fantasy.

Depending on the specifics of the setting, rangers and rogues may find their fortunes vary a great deal in a science fantasy campaign. If, for example, the GM rarely sets his adventures in a wilderness environment — or there is no wilderness area at all! — the ranger finds himself lacking much of his *raison d'être*. Of course, with the right selection of feats, a ranger need not be a one-trick pony and could be just as useful in urban environments as any other characters, perhaps even more so. The same issues are less

problematic for rogues, since they are quite versatile and adaptable as a class. The proper selection of feats, skills and special abilities allows a rogue to function handily in many different environments, even ones as different as those in some science fantasy settings.

The material in this book can be used largely without alteration in a science fantasy setting, although the applicability will vary with the setting itself. For example, the many different groups and organizations described herein could be used with minor tweaking. The Order of the Black Thorn could become a band of bounty hunters used by an evil technomantic empire, while the Vigils of Vesh might be a group dedicated to protecting civilization from the misuse of techno-magic. Guilds and brotherhoods might need some updating to make them appropriate for a setting in which science and magic work hand in hand. Of course, one of the best things about a science fantasy setting is that almost anything can be justified, making the addition of this book's many new feats, prestige classes and items a simple matter. What might seem implausible simply on scientific principles becomes much more so once the GM adds to magic to mix.

The Campaign

Most fantasy campaigns assume that the PCs belong to a band of adventurers composed of a mixture of races and classes. Such a group has many advantages, both within the setting and within the game. In the setting, a mixed group can draw upon different pools of resources, as the fighter appeals to his lord for assistance and the cleric consults a temple library for hidden lore, for example. From a game mechanical standpoint, having a good mix of character classes ensures versatility, as the fighters engage in melee combat with enemies and clerics are available to heal the injured.

At the same time, there is no reason why a party composed solely of a single class need suffer unduly. Certainly, an all-rogue campaign is very different from one composed of many different character classes. Yet, that difference can also be a source of strength, as well as an opportunity to explore playing styles or plotlines that might otherwise be impractical. For example, the GM might want to run a series of adventures — or even a whole campaign — about tracking down ruins for lost riches and encountering the things that dwell within. Such adventures would hold little interest for players of druids or monks, but they'd appeal greatly players of rogues. Many other examples abound.

The following sections, therefore, provide brief discussions of the advantages and disadvantages of campaigns built around a single character class. As with everything else in this book, the GM should feel free to use as little or as much of the advice offered as he wishes. Some of the advice and suggestions offered may be of use even in games in which there is a mix of classes.

Hunters in the Wild

An all-ranger campaign has a lot going for it conceptually. That is, rangers tend to be clannish and parochial in their outlook, preferring to work with others of their kind rather than those who don't share their vocation. Likewise, their unusual position as outsiders make them prone to keep to themselves even when others who value their skills and abilities employ them. For this reason, a GM looking for a rationale as to why all the player characters are rangers should have little difficulty in coming up with one. Ranger brotherhoods are close-knit and united in a common — if sometimes esoteric — purpose, which makes them readymade bases for all-ranger campaigns. This sort of arrangement is invaluable to a GM who wants the PCs to know and trust one another from the beginning. In most ranger groups, membership carries with it an assumption of trust — a prerequisite for many (if not most) new campaigns.

The primary difficulties with all-ranger campaigns are twofold. First, there is the question of distinguishing between rangers. With every PC having the same class, overlap is inevitable, despite the options available to rangers even at low levels. Consequently, it's essential that skill and feat selection be coordinated, to avoid characters' stepping on one another's toes. Likewise, developing distinctive personalities and backgrounds is a must. Without these small differences, an all-ranger campaign could be an exercise in cookie cutter roleplaying and that's not enjoyable for anyone. Second, there is the question of campaign focus. As archetypal wilderness warriors, both players and GMs might find themselves falling into only a handful of conceptions for the campaign. There's nothing wrong with that, of course, but the ranger is more versatile than that. With a little thought and effort, the GM can avoid creating endless variations on the same themes and come up with something that allows the ranger to show off his many different abilities in the context of the campaign.

Here are a handful of ideas to use in an all-ranger campaign, which the GM can use as inspiration for his own games:

- The characters are all defenders of an ancient forest, dedicated to battling the evil humanoids that have been attempting to despoil it in recent years.
- The characters are scouts for a military force that is expanding into a wild and untamed land.
- The land has been conquered by evil beings from across the sea and the characters are guerrilla warriors fighting from a secure locale deep within the wilderness.
- The characters are agents of a king, sent out into the far reaches of his realm, to hunt down criminals and other evildoers.
- The characters are the devoted protectors of a circle of druids who find themselves beset by enemies on all sides.

SHADOW WARRIORS

An all-rogue is in many ways the most flexible of single class campaigns a GM could choose. Partly, that's a function of the character class itself. Although it has a definite "thievish" cast to its abilities, there is more to the rogue than pick pocketing and burglary. For one thing, rogues get a very large number of skill points at each level and have quite an impressive list of class skills. Consequently, a rogue could conceivably know almost anything, making him far more flexible than members of other classes. Likewise, many of his abilities include options and choices, which allows the player to tailor his character to the needs of the campaign. Thus, it'd be very easy for the players in an all-rogue campaign to distinguish themselves from one another. Their basic abilities would of course be fairly similar to one another, but there could be vast differences in skills, feats and other special abilities.

This flexibility has advantages and disadvantages. Unlike less flexible campaign types, the GM won't necessarily have a good idea in advance the types of skills or abilities that the player characters might have – unless he clearly emphasizes certain types of activities in describing his campaign to the players. For example, the GM might say that his campaign will focus on a merchant caravan traveling along a seacoast. In such a case, Charisma-based skills are especially important, like Bluff and Diplomacy, while others are less useful. Of course, this means that the GM of an all-rogue campaign should give some serious thought to the overarching structure of

the game. Is it about a gang of aristocratic ne'er-do-wells that wander the cities of the world for fun and profit? Or is it about a bunch of cutthroat thieves out to make a name for themselves? Rogue campaigns can take so many different forms that without guidance from the GM, a player could create quite a number of different characters. That's a strength of the rogue as a class, but it's also something a GM should be wary of. Unlike most other classes, a campaign featuring only rogues doesn't suggest only a handful of possible setups. Indeed, the possibilities available are quite large.

Here are a handful of ideas to use in an all-rogue campaign, which the GM can use as inspiration for his own games:

- The characters are up and coming members of a large city's thieves' guild and must contend with internecine strife and brushes with the law to achieve power within the organization.
- The characters are individuals whose aptitude for thievish activities has made them ideal agents of the city watch as it fights against the depredations of genuine criminals.
- The characters are all members of a merchant house, using their roguish skills to advance their patron's schemes and to enrich themselves in the process.
- The characters are spies who've been sent into an evil land to learn the plans of its villainous rulers.
- The characters are the crew of a pirate vessel, traveling across the seas of the world, raiding other ships to survive and avoiding capture at the hands of their numerous enemies.

book one

RANGERS



CHAPTER ONE

A HISTORY OF HUNTERS

The uninitiated do not recognize our vocation for what it truly is: the culmination of centuries — nay, millennia — of human history. From the ancient days when our forefathers served as great chieftains and protectors of the druids, during the rise and fall of the Ledean dynasties, and through the Divine War and into the present day, there have always been individuals such as we. Currently, we may share neither the same beliefs nor the same methods as those who came before us. In some cases, we find their actions repugnant to all we hold dear. Yet, there can be no question in our shared heritage, for wherever men and women braved the wilderness, leading their fellows through its obstacles and defending them from its dangers, we find kindred spirits. We must never forget that, lest we also forget the wisdom to which we are heirs and transmitters.

— Serturi Arkads, historian and recruiter for the Beltanian Vigil

The world at large thinks of rangers as rough individuals, lacking the refinements of civilized living. And it is true that many of these individuals do reject urban life, seeing in its comforts a debilitating decadence. But there is certainly more to rangers than just a desire for strenuous living. Indeed, the stories about rangers — tall tales really — are quite remarkable. One could spend a lifetime collecting anecdotes of these rugged warriors, and still not have a unified picture of how they came to be regarded as they are today. For every culture that lauds them as explorers and trailblazers, there are two that label the “different” aspect of rangers as a much more negative characteristic.

This is perfectly understandable. As a group, rangers have not been very good at explaining the true nature of their profession to the wider world. Many see little point in doing so, which has only made the situation worse and fed the fears of those who view them as aberrant and perhaps even a bit mad. What is even more unfortunate is the fact that so few rangers actually know or appreciate their own past. Certainly some have heard snippets of history, usually relating to their own brotherhoods. A hand-

ful even know the histories of specific rangers who lived in the days before the Divine War. Yet, only an extremely small number of people — most of them sages or loremasters rather than rangers — know much of anything at all about the full account of this most unusual of vocations.

It is therefore the purpose of this chapter to provide at least a small part of that larger history. The Vigils of Vesh are the most well-known and respected rangers in the Scarred Lands. They have done more to bring rangers into civilized eyes and out of the wilds than any other such organization since at least Ledean times, if not before. One of the most important tasks they are credited with is the compilation of a written history of the ranger vocation, from the most ancient times of Scarn to the present day. These Vigilants have traveled far and wide to collect this information, and some have dedicated their lives to consulting with other rangers and scholars in order to compile an accurate history.

This record is naturally incomplete in places, especially those sections where surviving evidence is minimal (such as during the time of the Slarecians). Despite this, the following history is probably the

most exhaustive on the subject in all of Ghelspad — and perhaps beyond. The Vigils are now able to instruct new recruits in ranger history. The vigilants believe that it is important that they all understand whence their vocation arose, so that they might enter the future armed with that knowledge and thereby avoid the mistakes of the past while simultaneously emulating its victories.

The Watchers on the Horizon

Like so many things about ancient Scarn, no one can say for certain when rangers first appeared in the world or precisely why it was that they did so. Even the longest-lived races, like the elves and dwarves, can shed little light on this mystery. Thus, it is doubtful that anyone will ever be able to determine with certainty what epoch rangers (or their antecedents) first appeared in.

Nevertheless, there are legends that purport to reveal the truth of the matter. The first of these has been preserved among the orcs of Lede, who claim that it has been handed down from before their own people even existed upon the face of Scarn. Called the *Saga of Khulthenni*, it tells the story of an unnamed (and in fact unknown) titan who blessed his favored servants with preternatural senses and skills — so as to serve as his agents in the world. According to this tale, the titan had been cursed by his brothers and sisters for some affront and was bereft of his ability to sense the world he had shared in creating. Rather than surrender to despair, the titan bestowed gifts upon the creatures who served him, such as the ability to see great distances or to hear the minutest of sounds. He also taught those loyal to him specific magical arts, which granted them the power to manipulate Scarn in ways much like the more powerful servants of the other titans. The servitors of this unnamed titan were bound to their benefactor, and spread across the world to act as replacements for his lost eyes and ears.

Very few people today take the *Saga of Khulthenni* very seriously, but it contains enough elements within its stanzas (of which there are at least five thousand) that sages acknowledge it may indeed shed some light on the origin of rangers and their craft. At the very least, the story shows that the idea of creatures blessed by the titans — yet who were not druids — is an ancient one. It is with good reason that no one claims that rangers are a recent phenomenon.

Far more important than the *Saga of Khulthenni* is the chronicle known as *Lord of the Hunt*. This Albadian epic is even longer than the *Saga of Khulthenni* and is often recited by these fierce war-

riors at moots and other gatherings of their people. It tells the story of the destruction of the El'Thamian Empire at the direction of the titan Hrinruuk, who wished to test the mettle of the mortal races and their realms. While it would be impossible to relate the entirety of the epic's contents (or even a small portion therein), the following is a particularly relevant section and is generally considered to be further evidence of the ancient pedigree of rangers:

The Calling of Jurista

...and so it was that Jurista, son of Ugirs, son of Elmami, stepped forward and accepted the challenge of the Lord of the Hunt, saying, "I am not afraid, my master. Yea, I welcome this opportunity to serve you as you see fit, for you have never failed to give my people boons when we did as you bade us — or punishment when we unwisely disregarded your instructions. I do not wish it to be said of me that I shirked when such an offer as this was made, for I possess a stout heart and strong arms, as well as a desire to serve you as you deserve."

The Lord of the Hunt smiled upon the warrior and extended his hand to him with these words: "Unique among your people are you, Jurista, son of Ugirs, son of Elmami, for you indeed possess no fear of the doom I have laid upon the Southron men. You do not back away in horror at the thought of what I plan, even though it may mean your death and that of all your people. Truly you are my devoted servant, for not in many a year have I seen a mortal so willing to bind his will to my own. For that you shall be rewarded as none have been. You shall become an inspiration to those who also serve me and a sign of terror to those who dare to defy my desires."

With that, the Lord of the Hunt gave Jurista, son of Ugirs, son of Elmami, a bow and quiver and told him, "Use these weapons that I give to smite my enemies as I command." Jurista took the gifts, and carried them openly for all the people to see. Then, the Lord of the Hunt asked him, "Who are my enemies?" Jurista, son of Ugirs, son of Elmami, answered, "Whomever you decide, for you are the Lord of the Hunt." The Lord of the Hunt smiled upon him again and said, "You are indeed wise and know your master well. In recognition of your wisdom, I bestow upon you an even greater gift than that which you carry. You may become as I am, choosing your enemies as you wish and dealing them great destruction. You shall use your bow, your sword and any other weapon I give you to hunt them and teach them that you are their master, just as I am yours."

CHAPTER ONE: A HISTORY OF HUNTERS

the Lord of the hunt then gave Jurista, son of Ugirs, son of Elmairi, a coat and told him to wear it, which he did. The coat was warm and thick and made from the finest leather. The Lord of the hunt said to him, "you wear a coat just as I do. you are now protected from the harshness of the weather and the weapons of your enemies. you will range over the wilderness and subdue it, just as you shall dominate your enemies."

Finally, the Lord of the hunt gave Jurista, son of Ugirs, son of Elmairi, a hood, which he placed upon his head. he said to him, "you shall see with the eyes of the eagle and hear with the ears of the hare. nothing shall escape your notice. yea, even the very ground shall speak to you, yielding up its secrets. but remember, you are always to be my servant and serve those in authority over you, just as they too serve me. yet, you shall always be special to me, for you are a reflection of my perfection and an earthly exemplar of my power."

From an historical perspective, the *Lord of the Hunt* contains many fanciful elements and obvious inaccuracies, yet it also reveals much about the origins of rangers — including their formerly close

association with the titans and their servants. This connection survived the coming of the gods, as will be revealed later in this chapter.

TAMING THE WILD

From ancient times, many tribes had members who did not fit in — individualists who flouted the social conventions of their people and existed outside the established social hierarchy. But this lack of conformity carried a price, and these misfits were inevitably pushed to the fringes of the tribe where they could choose to either live alone or perhaps bond with a handful of others who shared their dislike of social convention. Of necessity, these individuals learned to rely on themselves, developing many skills that enabled them to survive outside the strictures and safeties of tribal society.

As these misfits became more skilled, they did not go unnoticed. Whereas in the past they might have been left alone and dealt with only when absolutely necessary, times eventually changed. The tribes found they needed men and women who could hunt and track and, most importantly, survive in the wilds. All of the skills that were vital to an individual's solitary survival also provided the means whereby an entire tribe could improve itself and flourish in otherwise harsh conditions.



So the tribes turned to those who they had once rejected and offered them a chance to fit in, offering their disenfranchised members the opportunity to once more belong to a community in exchange for a degree of liberty unknown among their fellows. Many of these proto-rangers accepted the offer. As much as they disdained “normal” society, they also did not wish to be alone forever. They craved the companionship of even those who did not share their worldview, painful though that might have been for some of these individualists to admit. Indeed, there are many old stories of misfits falling in love with their civilized counterparts and the difficulty — and embarrassment — they encountered in trying to bridge the gap.

From the beginning, then, rangers have always existed uneasily on the edges of civilization. By nature and temperament, they were uncomfortable with the notion of living within the strictures of civilized hierarchies and laws. Yet, they also possessed skills and abilities that their less individualistic comrades could use to good ends. This created a situation in which rangers were continually drawn back into the society they rejected, a pattern that would be seen many times in the history of the Scarred Lands.

One of the skills that rangers possessed was the handling of useful animals, such as dogs and hunting birds. Out of necessity rangers developed a close connection with the animals they relied upon for survival, and over time this affinity became even further developed. Many tribes claim that it was these early rangers who first domesticated animals and brought them back to their people, thus causing rangers to this day to be regarded with some measure of awe. The wanderers of the Ukrudan Desert, for example, claim that their rangers first learned to ride camels and it was from them that their entire people adopted the practice. Many other examples of such stories abound, both in Ghelspad and Termana.

Whether such tales are true or not is unimportant to all but pedants. What is significant, however, is that many cultures in the Scarred Lands associate rangers with the use of domesticated animals. Interestingly, the *Lord of the Hunt* does not do so, perhaps because the titan Hrinruuk is better known as a slayer of animals than as a tamer of them. Even so, the point remains that rangers and animals are mythically intertwined in a way that few can deny.

DRUIDIC GUARDIANS

As both the *Saga of Khulthenni* and the *Lord of the Hunt* make clear, the earliest rangers were thought to have derived their power and mission from the titans. They were the chosen servants of the Defeated and, originally at least, were bidden to uphold the dictates of their masters. Naturally, this caused rang-



The Origin of Ranger Spells

In the contemporary Scarred Lands, many rangers do not realize that the spells they use are titanic in origin. But the first rangers were taught their magics by the druids, who were of course the titans' foremost servants. These spells continue to work today in much the same way as the titanic rituals of the land (see the *Player's Guide to Clerics and Druids*), in that they do not draw upon the power of the titans themselves but upon the energies of the world itself — which the titans were the foremost manifestations of. Thus, the destruction of the titans during the Divine War has in no way weakened these spells' efficacy, since they require only that the caster know how to tap into the native power of the Scarred Lands.

Of course, some rangers do realize the true nature of their spells, including many good-aligned rangers such as the Vigils of Vesh. For them, the use of titanic magic was once a source of a moral quandary, primarily due to their great hatred of the titans and all that they spawned. Many early Vigils (and other rangers of the Divine War period), such as Olester Lis and Drij Uvalvi, refused to use spells because of their revulsion at anything having to do with their enemies. Their position, though respected, was not widely held and eventually many rangers concluded that, since titanic magic did not actually draw upon the titans themselves but rather on the world, there was no moral impediment to using it.

Despite this, the origin of ranger spells is not widely reported, for fear that it might draw the suspicion — or ire — of those whose hatred of the titans remains blindingly strong. Most rangers, who actually know the truth about their magics, fear that this knowledge would serve no purpose other than to undermine their work in the Scarred Lands. On more than one occasion, for example, Vigils have suffered at the hands of superstitious peasants because their enemies spread tales of the vigilants' supposed “secret allegiance” to the titans. Such incidents are more rare today than they once were, but the danger continues to exist, which is why the true nature of ranger spells is not discussed among the uninitiated.



ers to strongly associate themselves with the druids, who above all other mortal servants of the titans were the most important on Scarn.

The druids did not possess the same relationship to their masters that clerics have to the gods, but now is not the time to ponder metaphysical verities.

For the present purposes, the relationship was similar enough as to make no difference. Rangers then became a bit like “titanic paladins.” They were the strong sword arms of the titans who they served, and more practically, they were the might connected to the druids’ will. Thus it was that rangers used their wilderness talents and combat skills to defend the druids against all who opposed them.

In return for this protection, the druids showed their appreciation by teaching the rangers the secrets of titanic magic. They limited the rangers’ access to their deepest secrets, of course. The druids were not foolish enough to undermine their own base of power. Yet, they realized that the rangers would prove even more capable servants if they could cast a small repertoire of specialized spells. Most of these spells augmented the rangers’ professional abilities, making them even more potent in the wild. Over the millennia, many new spells were added to the rangers’ knowledge, creating much diversity within their ranks.

LEADERS OF MEN

As one might expect, the close association between rangers and druids elevated the place of rangers in tribal society. They had already begun to be regarded as “acceptable” individuals before this, but their involvement with the power of the druids sealed the bargain. Bit by bit, rangers acquired privileges and position. Since many druids had little interest in ruling tribes, they passed off such duties to their protectors, the rangers.

Even in those tribes where leadership was not directly handed to a ranger, the profession still became increasingly linked to important leadership roles. For example, some tribes maintained “war chieftains,” special leaders chosen in times of strife to lead the warriors in battle and act in the best interests of the tribe. In other communities rangers were revered elders, whose expertise was called upon in times of trouble — such as when the weather turned bad or when disease struck. In fact, most tribes found that the unique knowledge of the rangers, combined with their military and magical prowess, could not be overlooked. Thus, by the dawn of recorded history, rangers were no longer marginalized and feared; they were important members of their societies.

The WALKERS IN THE WILD

The eternal struggle between barbarism and civilization has been fought many times, sometimes even within the hearts of individual men and women. It is something that cannot be ignored, however much we

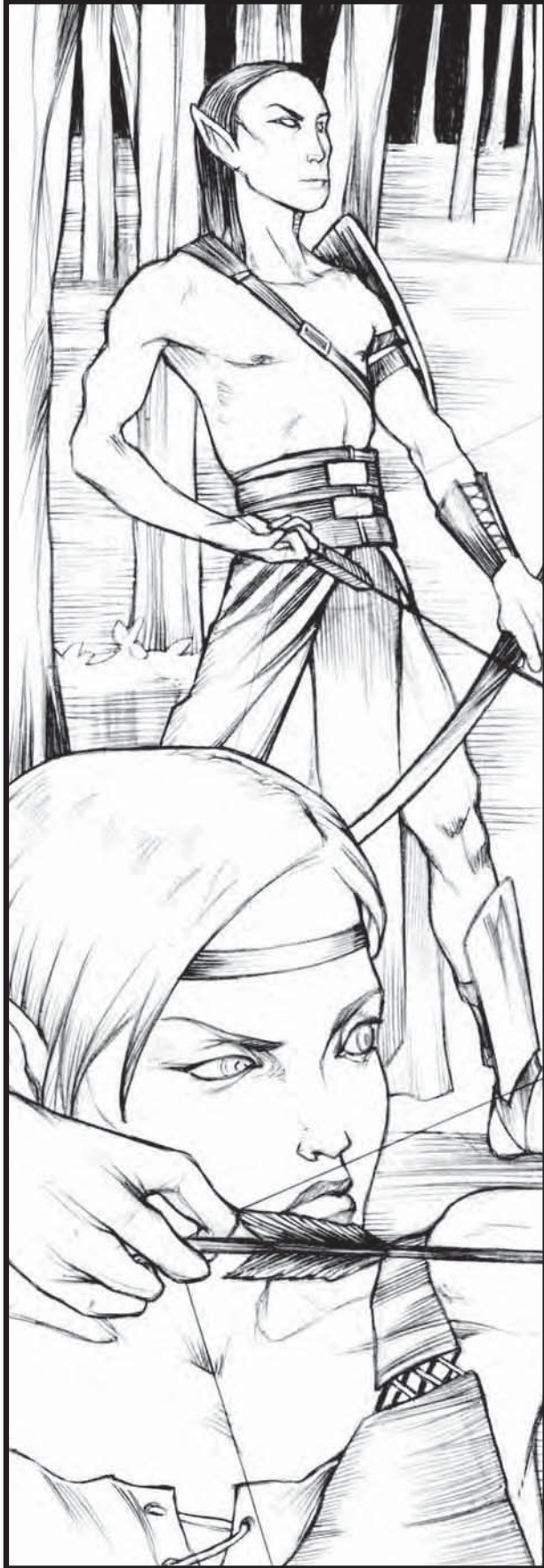
might wish it to be. Barbarism is often equated with freedom, while civilization is associated with restraint. Perhaps this equation has some truth in it, for there can be little question that civilization often comes with a price. On the other hand, few would wish to live the rough — and short — life of a barbarian, however much civilization might sap one’s strength and restrict one’s freedom of action.

Consequently, the rise of civilization in Ghelspad once more made it difficult for many rangers to adapt. Many had encountered a hard enough time finding a place in their tribal communities; how could they possibly become part of this larger, more organized culture? Rather than try, some rangers withdrew into the wilds and consequently had little to do with the rest of the world. They existed as their ancestors once had — as misfits with little connection to any community or culture. These rangers were the origins of the “wild men,” who are often spoken of in folk tales and legends. Some even exist to this day, making their homes in the secret places of the world and preserving remnants of ways not seen since ancient days.

If civilization is one thing, however, it is adaptable. True, a culture as organized and disciplined as, say, the Ledean Empire, might have no place for brooding individualists in its cities — but that is not to say that it has no place at all. Most civilizations quickly found ways to channel rangers into “productive” endeavors, such as employing them as military scouts or frontiersmen to lead settlers to a new land. Every civilization has need for trailblazers and explorers, for people who feel most comfortable in the great unknown reaches of the world. So it was that rangers continued to find a place for themselves, even as the wilds of Ghelspad and Termana fell before the inexorable march of civilization.

ANCIENT EMPIRES

The oldest empires of Ghelspad all had ranger brotherhoods of one sort or another. They differed in their specifics, of course, but all were heirs to the traditions established by the barbarian tribes that first used rangers as leaders and protectors of the druids. By this time in Scarn’s history, certain characteristics were common among most rangers, regardless of their origins. First, they tended to operate in small groups outside the usual societal hierarchies. They often included individuals who could not “get along” in society, either because of inherent temperament or due to their unconventional beliefs. Individualism was the order of the day. All rangers were adept at wilderness lore and tracking, and most had an affinity for animals (which were often used as companions). Finally — and perhaps most importantly — rangers were skilled warriors, usually with a fanatical devotion to the destruction of a particular species or group.



This last trait made them very useful to many of the ancient empires. Unfortunately, the ranger ability to focus on a single type of enemy was often used against the empires as well. Such was certainly the case during the days of the mighty Dragon Empire. Rangers, such as the formidable Bendathai and the Wyrn-Foes, became dragonslayers without peer. The Bendathai also acted deep within the Empire's territory, wreaking havoc and freeing slaves to revolt against their draconic masters. In the end, the rangers' actions were instrumental in bringing down the Empire and changing the course of history.

The Dwarven Imperium had many rangers within its ranks. They specialized in subterranean fighting, especially against the beasts that dwelled beneath the surface of Scarn. Unlike the rebellious rangers of the Dragon Empire, the Imperium's rangers were pillars of the state. Rather than being perceived as misfits and outcasts, these individuals were highly regarded by their lords; though their preference for hunting among the darkness of Under-Scarn caused them to be perceived with some degree of awe and fear from the common folk. These dwarven rangers also used their martial prowess to oppose the titans and their foul spawn. In the end, however, they proved less effective than their predecessors. Regardless of their best efforts, the Imperium fell.

The Asaatth Empire likewise had rangers in its armies. The feared Brotherhood of Emerald was an elite group of rangers who protected the Empire from invaders. They engaged in guerrilla tactics, sometimes striking from ambushes or setting hidden traps along narrow paths. They excelled at the hunt, using various reptilian creatures to aid them in their efforts. Despite their skills, they were outnumbered and finally exterminated by their human counterparts, some of whose descendants still keep alive the art of asaathi hunting.

The Virgin Woods of Denev has long had its own rangers. The elves of that wild land may well have developed their skills independently of other rangers, since they have always been well integrated into elven society. That is, elven rangers were always respected and found little difficulty functioning within Vera-Tre, in sharp contrast to their counterparts elsewhere. Many sages suggest that this is because the virtues espoused by rangers tend to be the very qualities upheld by the wood elven folk. Elven rangers were masters of the bow and sword, skills now commonplace among rangers elsewhere and possibly derivative of the elves, although the direct line of descent remains unclear.

CHAPTER ONE: A HISTORY OF HUNTERS

The Empire of Flame probably had rangers of its own, although none can say for certain. In contemporary Ghelspad, there is a small society of rangers with weird fire-based magics, called the Kazieri. They maintain that they hold the secrets of the Empire of Flame's military forces, an assertion that is disputed by many, including the sorcerers of Shelzar and Zathiske (who make the same claim). Nevertheless, the likely association between the Empire and the titan Thulkas makes it quite possible that rangers served the Empire of Flame during its height.

The SLARECIAN EMPIRE

The slarecians and their empire remain shrouded in mystery to this day. Very few individuals had any real understanding of them or their activities, even when they existed on Scarn. For that reason, most inhabitants of the Scarred Lands have no idea the role the slarecians played in the development of rangers. Their role is admittedly a small one, but it should still be acknowledged and pondered, if only to provide a fuller picture of how the vocation has changed over the millennia.

The slarecians were alien beings who had little regard for any creatures other than themselves. They were enemies of mortals, titans, and gods alike. They looked upon all life as potential slaves or as foes to be slain. Many mortal beings served the Slarecians and learned from them a measure of their mental abilities. These more skilled slaves the slarecians used primarily as warriors and assassins.

From time to time, the slarecians would encounter a race or a group whose nature appealed to them. Rather than actively restricting those who they found useful, they would simply redirect their focus. Such was the case with rangers. The slarecians saw these rugged men and women as the perfect agents of destruction. They warped many rangers to use their powers against the titans and the gods, and encouraged their hatred for particular species or types of creatures. Under slarecian mastery, rangers became known as fanatical purveyors of genocide, leading pogroms against those who their masters considered dangerous. There are stories, preserved in ancient tomes, that Ghelspad once was home to gnomes — before they were exterminated from the continent and the few survivors forced to flee elsewhere. These stories have never been proven, but they suggest that rangers' dedication against particular foes can be used to evil purposes if properly directed.

The LEDEAN EMPIRE

The Ledeian Empire was perhaps the greatest Empire Ghelspad has ever seen. At its height, it controlled nearly the whole of the continent and it ruled more or less without interruption for three and a half millennia. The secret of its longevity was its ability to embrace and adapt local customs and

methods to serve its own imperial aims. One such adoption was the vocation of the ranger, which the Ledeians called “stalkers” or “scouts.”

Stalkers were widely used by Ledeian noble houses as assassins and spies. Ledeian society, especially during its long decline, was profoundly corrupt, replete with backstabbing and internal conflict. The history of the empire is one of coups, counter-coups, murder and intrigue. This created unique openings for those who could be stealthy killers. Stalkers were just such individuals, and were responsible for the deaths of many a noble and governor, not to mention the several emperors who unquestioningly died by their hands. The use of stalkers was never officially sanctioned, but it was quietly condoned as a practice that allowed the aristocracy to deal with disputes without the need for revolts and uprisings.

Scouts, on the other hand, were an official part of the imperial military. They worked side by side with the legionnaires, providing them with advance intelligence of enemy movements as well as reporting on the lay of the land. Ledeian scouts were as proficient in swordplay as any soldier. Over time, they developed a distinctive style of fighting — lightly armored, but wielding two weapons, often short swords. This style was never popular with the legions, but it eventually became more commonplace among rangers who were not members of the imperial military. The style survives even today and has become such an accepted part of ranger fighting that many Termanan members of the profession have adopted it as well.

POST-LEDEAN NATIONS

The fall of the Ledeian Empire brought about the foundation of several kingdoms, a number of which survive to this day. Some of these cultures are especially noteworthy for having ranger brotherhoods that are strongly associated with them. Once again, it is impossible to touch on more than a couple of these organizations, which is why this section details only the Liliandeli and the Vigils of Vesh. Naturally, interested parties can find further information elsewhere on other groups if they so choose.

The Liliandeli arose among the elves of the Broadreach Forest, long before it had been warped into the Hornsaw Forest of today. The elves of that time looked to Liliandel and her husband Thoresk for leadership in their fight against the titanspawn who served Mormo. Mormo took great pleasure in tormenting the Broadreach elves and their allies, so the Liliandeli were formed to combat their evil. The newly established group worked closely with bards and druids serving Denev. In this, they provided a model for later brotherhoods to be formed around highly diverse but allied individuals, united only by their desire to achieve a common goal. In addition, the Liliandeli often used animals to directly assist them — another characteristic adopted by later rangers.

The Vigils of Vesh were created to defend the borders of the new kingdom. Their earliest members were ragtag bands, composed of individuals with diverse skills and backgrounds. Interestingly, not all of these early Vigil members were rangers, as rogues made up a significant portion of the original membership. As one might expect, this fact meant that the Vigils quickly became known for their stealth and ability to uncover even the most hidden of enemies. Soon the Vigils were being regularly called upon for covert operations, both within Vesh's borders and elsewhere. So impressive was their reputation as warriors and spies, that the mere mention of the Vigil name was enough to strike fear within the hearts of most evildoers.

The Charduni Empire

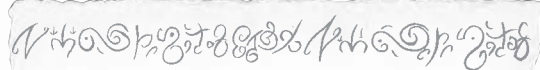
Although Ghelspad is certainly the focus of most historical attention regarding the development of rangers, it would be wrong to assume that other lands did not produce their own members of this profession. After all, service to the titans was once universal and all mortal races bowed before their might. This fact is just as true in Termana, where many ranger brotherhoods developed over the centuries. Since it would be impossible to describe them all, this section focuses only on those that existed during the height of the Charduni Empire, for they provide some of the greatest insight into the unique development of rangers on that continent.

The charduni had little place for rangers in their military organization, but their society had a role for them nonetheless. Under Charduni rule, the law was supreme and many crimes carried extremely harsh sentences. Not surprisingly, criminals would choose to flee rather than face judgment. This led to a sizable population of cutthroats and ne'er-do-wells in the far corners of Termana, some of whom would periodically decide to band together and fight against the Empire.

Rather than allow this to continue unchecked, the charduni established orders of bounty hunters devoted to the Great General. These rangers used their tracking abilities to hunt down criminals and bring them back for justice. In some cases, these rangers were legally empowered to act as judge, jury and executioner as well. The practice was imported to Ghelspad during the days of Charduni rule, and became firmly established in many places touched by that empire; even today, this influence is still very evident in the justice systems of Dunahnae and Calastia.

The Greatest Quarry

The culmination of the long history of rangers was the Divine War. Unlike, for example, paladins or clerics, rangers fought on both sides of the war. Many rangers continued to serve the titans, and their servants the druids, as they had done from time immemorial. Others had been converted to the wor-



The True History of the Vigils

Although members of the Vigils do not like to discuss it, the original vigilants were recruited to act as the secret police of the new kingdom. In those days, the security of Vesh was always in question, as enemies both within and without threatened to destroy the nascent realm. Rather than allow these dangers to triumph, Veshian rulers authorized the creation of a special force answerable only to the king and charged this group with keeping the peace by any means necessary.

Thus, many early vigilants were dubious characters whose methods left much to be desired. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, they succeeded in their mission and kept Vesh safe. As time passed and the kingdom appeared more secure, the Vigils softened their tactics and became more like the organization that exists today. Most vigilants know at least something of the organization's original purpose. It is not a secret as such, but it is also not a topic of public conversation. The Vigils would rather focus on the past few centuries, when their record of accomplishments is more sterling.



ship of the gods and saw the titans and their spawn as the ultimate enemies — and test of their skills.

Throughout the war, rangers took on several distinct roles. The first was that of "favored warriors," much along the lines of paladins. Gods such as Tanil (and titans like her father Hrinruuk) bestowed special blessings upon rangers and employed them as holy warriors in the Divine War. This was not a common occurrence admittedly, but it was an important one, for it firmly established in the common mind that rangers could just as readily serve as agents of the gods and titans as could clerics, druids or paladins.

The stalker tradition of the Ledean Empire was also alive and well during the Divine War, especially among the nations of southern Ghelspad. They regularly used rangers as spies and assassins, often striking against military and religious leaders. Many consider the assassination of the great warrior Leks Innessis, a servant of Thulkas, by a ranger in the employ of Chardun, a turning point in the war. This incident is hardly exceptional and wars of assassins proved important in many theaters of the conflict.

Rangers also served as scouts and outriders in almost every army of the Divine War. This too is a legacy of the Ledean, but one that has grown and developed significantly since those ancient times.

CHAPTER ONE: A HISTORY OF HUNTERS

During the war, rangers were more than simple gatherers of battlefield intelligence or isolated harriers of troops. Instead, they acted as advance forces, striking deep within enemy territory and softening up the opposition in preparation for attacks by much larger and more potent forces. However, the ferocity with which many of these rangers undertook their missions earned them a black reputation that survives to the present day.

The conclusion of the Divine War saw rangers firmly ensconced in the societies that emerged in its aftermath. They had proven themselves invaluable during the war; few could imagine a world in which they did not have a place. In some lands, like Vesh, rangers had become an integral part not only of that nation's own military but also as the foundation for a much larger organization — whose mission was vital to practically every aspect of the realm's security. In others locations, like Calastia, rangers became special operatives who would undertake particularly unusual or dangerous missions. And among the tribal peoples of the world, rangers remained important leaders and warriors without peer.

No one escaped the changes wrought by the Divine War. Rangers who once served the titans found themselves suddenly bereft of patrons. This enraged and even maddened many of these powerful individuals, leading to the formation of groups of zealots who were devoted to striking down those who had participated in the

destruction of their masters. In some cases, such as the Hornsaw Sentinels, the war unhinged their minds and twisted their original purpose — a dying blow performed by the Defeated. Elsewhere, the war saw the rebirth of long-dead groups like the Liliandeli, appearing once more to take up the vocation that had earned them praise so long ago.

The vocation of the ranger remains as difficult and, some would say, unusual as ever. But the world has never needed these men and women more than now. Scarn is no more; it has been replaced by the Scarred Lands. And the talents and abilities of rangers are uniquely suited to navigating the new dangers that await the mortal races. Rangers are among the few who have preserved the ancient ways of overcoming natural obstacles and emerging the stronger for it. Such skills are sorely needed in these perilous days.

Yet make no mistake: the many talents of rangers are neutral. They can be as easily used for evil as for good, despite the best efforts of groups like the Vigils of Vesh to make it otherwise. While not as widespread as more common warriors, rangers can — and are — found everywhere in the Scarred Lands, sometimes in the most unexpected places. It would be a grave mistake to underestimate them or to think them limited to one time or place. The Divine War taught that doing so can be fatal. If the purpose of the study of history is to avoid the mistakes of the past, this would be a wise lesson to learn.



CHAPTER TWO

BROTHERHOODS OF THE -SCARRED LANDS

I'd be very, very careful who you call a "dirty savage," private. That man you just insulted is a highly trained wilderness skirmisher who knows a dozen ways to kill a little snout-nosed soldier like you before you even know he's there. He may be filthy, aye, but that's because animals can smell soap and human scent for miles. He looks wild and unkempt, but that's because he has spent his time in these forests and hills, learning their secrets — including how to best use the lay of the land to kill a man. See, he doesn't have to even touch you to end your life. You'd be surprised at the damage he can inflict by simply leading a pursuing patrol into a bear's den and sneaking out the back. I've watched that man shoot a hive of hornets out of a tree over an enemy troop's heads, then pepper them with arrow-fire from hiding. About the only thing you got right was to call him a "madman." And if that madman slits your throat tonight, you've no one to blame but yourself.

— Lieutenant Vaul Tolrennith,
of the Calastian army to Private Uderos, deceased.

Rangers have a reputation for being loners — independent men and women who reject civilization and brave the wilds of the Scarred Lands for their own mysterious purposes. But the recluse stereotype is not a wholly deserved one. Some rangers do fit this popular conception, of course, but many do not. Rangers often band together to form complex brotherhoods united in a common cause. From the ancient days when rangers served as tribal protectors and companions of the druids, to the Imperial Scouts of Lede, to the contemporary Vigils of Vesh, rangers have regularly worked with one another and those who share their goals. To fail to recognize this fact is to be ignorant of history and to confuse self-reliance (which rangers possess in abundance) with dispassion. Whatever their origins and outlooks, rangers are intense, dedicated individuals whose zeal and rough ways sometimes intimidates those who do not understand them. It is only natural then, that rangers should seek out others who share their devotion.

The Vigils of Vesh

Surely the most well-known ranger brotherhood in Ghelspad — and perhaps in all the Scarred Lands — is the Vigils of Vesh. The Vigils operate as elite military units of the Veshian militia, as well as serving as agents of the realm's government abroad; but their significance goes far beyond simple national defense. They are embodiments of Ghelspad's hopes in the aftermath of the Divine War. The Vigils stand watch against the machinations of titanspawn and titan cults; where they guard, they ensure that civilization will never again suffer as it did in the past.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE VIGILS

There is a great deal of confusion outside of Vesh — and even within it — as to who is or can be a member of the Vigils. This is perfectly understandable. Even many members of the Vigils have a hard time keeping this straight, and for very good reason. As noted later in this chapter, the Vigils are an extremely open-ended and flexible organization. They place relatively little

stock in pomp and circumstance and have only the loosest overall structure. This means that the organization is fluid and allows for individuals to come and go as required by the exigencies of their current mission.

Unfortunately, this fluidity also has the side effect of throwing into question just who qualifies as a “vigilant.” Broadly speaking, anyone who works with the Vigils of Vesh in a long-term official capacity could be called a vigilant. However, this usage is more colloquial than anything else. For example, a cleric of Madriel who regularly heals vigilants in the field might herself be called a vigilant, even though she is not bound by the same oaths and ethics as other members of the organization. This fact is further complicated because the Vigils of Vesh sometimes recognize long-time allies by making them honorary members of the organization, granting them the right to wear the amber necklaces that are the overall symbol of the group (although individual Vigils add some other insignia to the necklace to distinguish their service).

In actual fact, though, there are only two types of people who can properly be called vigilants. The first is the broadest group. It encompasses every sworn member of the Vigils of Vesh. These individuals swear to uphold a series of oaths — known simply as the Greater Oaths and the Lesser Oaths. The Greater Oaths are the ultimate vows of the Vigils, and if broken will inevitably result in expulsion. The Lesser Oaths (also called the Standing Orders) are more flexible and open to interpretation. They too should be obeyed, but there is a great degree of leeway in just how that obedience can be had.

Vigilants can belong to any class or race. Most are rangers or rogues, although there are examples of nearly every class in the organization. These rank and file vigilants are assigned to a local Vigil and given specific instructions as to their mission. Much like any other soldier, they must heed the commands of their superiors and must participate in those actions to which they are bidden.

Above the rank and file are the so-called “true” vigilants. It is these individuals that are the basis of the legends and tall tales that have spread across Ghelspad since the founding of the organization. These vigilants are, in fact, the lieutenants of the group. They have shown themselves to be both trustworthy and capable. In recognition of their abilities, they are inducted into the inner circle of the Vigils. They are given magical *medallions of the Veshian Vigils* (see **Relics & Rituals**), and the authority to act as commanders of small groups of lesser vigilants. Most significantly, they often act on their own recognizance, making quick decisions in the field without the need to consult with any superior. Some are even allowed to become completely free agents, who roam Ghelspad doing good in the name of the Vigils of Vesh.



NON-RANGERS IN A VIGIL CAMPAIGN

Rangers are far and away the most common class found in the Vigils, but they are not the only ones. Rogues are actively recruited, given their proven abilities as guerrilla fighters and spies. Madriel and Tanil are the patron goddesses of the brotherhood, so it’s not surprising that clerics of these two deities are also numbered among its members. A handful of wizards provide arcane might to the organization. Other classes are possible, although those with strongly lawful tendencies (such as monks and paladins) or associations with the titans (such as druids and sorcerers) are quite rare.

A GM running a Vigil-based campaign should bear in mind that non-rangers play an important role in this group. The Vigils have succeeded in protecting Vesh and its allies for so long because they are flexible and open-minded. No one who possesses valuable abilities is turned away simply because he or she is not a ranger. Indeed, even many of the leaders of the Vigils have no class levels as rangers. Consequently, non-ranger characters can and do have a place within the brotherhood, filling roles that rangers cannot (such as powerful divine or arcane spellcasting), as well as complementing the traits at which rangers excel.



Given such a continuum of vigilant roles, it is little wonder that the exact membership of the Vigils of Vesh is unclear to outsiders. Fortunately, the group thrives on being flexible and adaptable. Moreover, its leaders have always preferred that its inner workings be nebulous and even somewhat chaotic. Doing so provides an extra level of protection against attack, as well as an insurance policy against infiltration from enemy forces. The destruction of the Dark Motak Vigil, for example, is a good illustration of this principle in operation. Had the Vigils been more centrally organized, Jovian Traitor’s betrayal might have had even more dire effects. Instead of destroying only his own Vigil, he might have compromised the entire organization. The Titanswar may be over, but the Vigils continue to have many enemies. Consequently, it is unlikely that the group will change its structure any time soon.

ORGANIZATION OF THE VIGILS

The Vigils are organized to be flexible and independent, thereby guaranteeing that no single enemy can destroy the entire brotherhood. Composed of 11 smaller

Vigils, each with its own geographical jurisdiction, the Vigils of Vesh is more like a confederation of smaller groups than a single unit. Besides the effect of making the overall organization better defensible, this arrangement allows vigilants to be more familiar with the local situation and modify their tactics accordingly. If there is a watchword for the Vigils of Vesh, it is "adaptability." The Vigils have no overarching orthodoxy when it comes to practical matters. Whatever works and is consistent with their oaths and codes of conduct is considered acceptable.

What follows are some brief descriptions of the various Vigils that make up the organization. The information presented here is intended primarily as an aid to players looking to create vigilant characters. More detailed information on the Vigils of Vesh can be found in *Secrets & Societies*.

ACERNOTH VIGIL

The Acernoth Vigil is at the forefront of Vesh's war against the growing power of the slitheren in the Mourning Marshes. Its rangers are among the most hardy and battle-tested in the entire organization. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they are also among the grimmest of all vigilants, finding little joy in their work as they fight against the seemingly unending encroachment of evil around them. Nevertheless, the so-called Marsh Vigil remains a popular choice for rangers hoping to gain combat experience against some of Ghelspad's most vile foes.

Location: Acernoth Delta, Mourning Marshes

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: The Acernoth Vigil can count on the support of the other Vigils in its vicinity (like the Hornswythe Vigil), as well as the government of Vesh. Its primary enemies are the slitheren. Rangers of this Vigil typically take monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Kinthas Ardante the Silverblade is the commander of this Vigil, and is considered by many to be a paragon of the never-tiring defender. Avanta Cirto is also a renowned foe of the slitheren and an expert in their unsavory ways.

Signs of Brotherhood: This Vigil uses a caterpillar insignia as its recognition symbol.

Rangers of the Acernoth Vigil: Rangers of this Vigil sometimes multiclass as clerics or wizards to counter the spellcasting abilities of the slitheren. Many take Skill Focus (Survival) to aid them in Tracking through the swamps they patrol. The Acernoth Vigil is also well known for training its members in the use of the Marshlander (see Appendix One) feat.

BEHJURIAN VIGIL

Due to a combination of factors, this Vigil is the most prestigious in all of Vesh. First off, its commander is extremely competent and well liked. Secondly, its members have seen a lot of action, especially against titanspawn. The Vigil once had a smaller area of jurisdiction, but expanded it when the Dark Motak Vigil was betrayed by Jovian Traitor during the Divine War.

Location: Mithril and the surrounding territory

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: This Vigil enjoys the support of not only other Vigils, but also receives backing from Mithril and



Mullis Town. Its enemies are mostly titanspawn and their kind. Rangers of this Vigil typically take aberrations and monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Lemses Behjur is the commander of this Vigil. He has been in this position for so long that he has given his own surname to the organization.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of this Vigil use a sprig of conifer needles as their symbol.

Rangers of the Behjurian Vigil: Members of this group represent a mix of races and outlooks, as well as large numbers of multiclassed individuals (including paladin/rangers). They are much more likely to worship lawful deities like Corean and Hedrada than are other vigilants.

BELTANIAN VIGIL

The Beltanian Vigil is the original Vigil, and the one from which all subsequent Vigils have been modified. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it now functions as the logistical and strategic center of the organization, providing assistance to all other Vigils when needed. Many, in other Vigils, grumble that the Beltanian vigilants are merely “armchair warriors” who no longer face the front lines of the war against evil. This charge is wholly without basis, for while it is true that the Beltanian Vigil is no longer beset by enemies on all sides as it once was, its members remain as battle ready as ever. In the minds of most of their comrades—and the people of Vesh—the Beltanian vigilants are the epitomes of their vocation.

Location: Northeast Vesh

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: With great regularity, these vigilantes actively support members of fellow Vigils, offering both tactical advice as well as arms, equipment and other aid. When needed, the Beltanian Vigil also provides emergency reinforcements to other nearby Vigils. Indeed, many new vigilant recruits receive their initial training in this Vigil before being sent to others. Its enemies are both Blood Sea titanspawn and the orcs of Lede. Consequently, rangers of this group typically take aberration and humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Dareatha Keloi is the commander of this Vigil and its most famous member. The half-orc ranger Raeksen is also well known, if only for the oddity of his having turned against his ancestry to defend the people of Vesh.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of the Beltanian Vigil use the fly as their symbol.

Rangers of the Beltanian Vigil: The members of this Vigil are very knowledgeable in the theoretical aspects of combat. Many possess high ranks in Knowledge (ancient history) and other related tactical skills.

GANJUS VIGIL

The Ganjus Vigil is not a part of the military of Vera-Tre, but nevertheless works closely with it to protect the Ganjus Forest from the forces of Mormo. The Vigil consists mostly of elves, but includes many outsiders as well. Indeed, this Vigil is also often used as a training ground for new vigilants, since the dangers of the Ganjus offer many opportunities to learn skills vital to a vigilants' success. Furthermore, the interaction with the government of Vera-Tre offers another perspective on how the organization can work hand in hand with others to achieve a mutually beneficial arrangement.

Location: Ganjus Forest

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: The Ganjus Vigil is allied with the elves of Vera-Tre. Their enemies are primarily the titanspawn of Mormo. Consequently, rangers of this group typically take aberrations, humanoids and monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Andrus Kheltarion is the leader of the Vigil and noteworthy for being a devotee of both Tanil and Denev.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of this Vigil use the petals of the blue tavistia flower as their symbol.

Rangers of the Ganjus Vigil: Nearly all rangers in this group pay homage to Tanil, although a handful also regard Denev as a patron. They specialize in archery, which is why most take bow feats such as Far Shot, Point Blank Shot and Rapid Shot, among others. They also put the Forester (see Appendix One) feat to great use. Many are skilled in Craft (Bowyer) as well. Ganjus vigilants typically use masterwork bows, the majority of which were personally crafted by the vigilants that carries them.

HORNSWYTHE VIGIL

The Hornswythe Vigil is the second oldest Vigil in the entire organization. In its early days, it was at the forefront of the battle against titanspawn and those allied to them. Over time, as Vesh grew more secure and the fronts of the battle shifted, it grew less important. Now, it serves primarily as a back up for the larger Acernoth Vigil. Unlike the Beltanian Vigil, which has also seen its role change over time, the Hornswythe Vigil remains actively engaged in battle. It simply does so in a more supportive fashion, with its main emphasis being filling holes in the Acernoth Vigil's roster.

Location: Mouth of the Hornswythe River

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: This Vigil works closely with the Acernoth Vigil, which is its primary ally, in the war against the creatures of the Mourning Marshes. Unsurprisingly, then, the Vigil's enemies consist of the slitheren of the region, as well as any other swamp creatures that threaten Vesh. Rangers of this group typically take humanoids and monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Delian Ruk is the leader of this Vigil. He is assisted by Shan Pavan, a charismatic ranger/bard devoted to Tanil, whose skill as an entertainer is almost as great as her prowess in battle.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of this Vigil use the mosquito as their symbol.

Rangers of the Hornswythe Vigil: Since they function primarily as an adjunct to the Acernoth Vigil, rangers of this group frequently multiclass to provide a wider range of abilities than is usually found among their kind. Ranger/clerics (of Tanil) and ranger/bards are common, as are ranger/rogues. A handful of the members of this Vigil also dabble in arcane magic. Most of the vigilants of the Hornswythe Vigil possess either the Marshlander or Waterman feat (see Appendix One).

LOLHARDEN'S VIGIL

Lolharden's Vigil is somewhat unique among the Vigils of Vesh in that it actively seeks out evil to fight rather than defensively guarding an area. This tactic is due to their role as protectors of the Veshian caravans in Lede. If the Vigil simply waited until evil reared its head, too many merchants would be slain and the viability of commerce in the region would be undermined. However, the pre-emptive raids these vigilants undertake often result in many deaths, which have ensured that its leaders are always on the lookout for new recruits willing to undertake it dangerous mission. This fact has given Lolharden's Vigil a grim reputation, as well as the respect of traders everywhere.

Location: Forests of eastern Lede, near the Bridged City and Gest Ganest

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: This Vigil receives varying degrees of support from the other Vigils, but is frequently understrength and lacking in equipment. Perhaps that is because its enemies are orcs, proud and the Horsemen of Vangal — all powerful and prolific opponents. Rangers of this Vigil typically take humanoids and monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Collit Lolharden is the commander of the Vigil and is well respected, even outside its membership, for his bravery and skill. Rogas Penna is likewise well-regarded and is widely considered the greatest living expert on the Horsemen of Vangal in Ghelspad.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of this Vigil use the acorn as their symbol.

Rangers of Lolharden's Vigil: Rangers of this group are always on the move. They use horses to a much greater extent than do other vigilants. Thus, many possess high ranks in Ride as well as feats like Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack and Spirited Charge; they are also usually proficient in either the Forester or Plainsman feats (see Appendix One). While multiclassing is not the norm, many rangers of this group possess a few levels as fighters to give them access to more combat feats. In addition, renegade half-orcs and even full orcs sometimes wish to

join the group, although few of them show the necessary expertise (or dedication to combating evil) that is needed to last long in the ranks of Lolharden's Vigil.

MARITIME VIGIL

The Maritime Vigil is one of the most demanding of all the Veshian Vigils. This is a function not only of the foes it faces — titanspawn of the Blood Sea — but also the necessity that its members be adept at operating on and under the water. The group maintains a small fleet of light warships to battle against its enemies, and its no-nonsense commander believes that every vigilant under his command should know how to operate all aspects of these ships should it become necessary. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Maritime Vigil is not a sought after assignment by most rangers, and those who do request placement here are considered somewhat eccentric (or even mad) by their comrades.

Location: Blood Sea coast, south of Sorporatra Swamp

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: Neighboring Vigils theoretically support the Maritime vigilantes, but the unique nature of their missions makes this aid less than useful most of the time. Its enemies consist primarily of the horrors of the Blood Sea. Consequently, rangers of this Vigil typically take aberrations and monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Pheloros Markhannian is the leader of this Vigil and is well known as a tough and determined vigilant, with a remarkable sense of justice. Lananda is another respected member of the Vigil. This half-elf woman is an accomplished sailor and trains many new recruits in the use of boats.

Signs of Brotherhood: This Vigil uses the seashell as its symbol.

Rangers of the Maritime Vigil: Members of this group are all accomplished swimmers; additionally, many of them possess the Waterman feat (see Appendix One). Not surprisingly, they avoid heavy armor and favor weapons that work equally well in an underwater environment, such as spears and tridents. Most also know how to pilot small watercraft, and perform other basic sailing tasks.

METYRIAN VIGIL

The Metyrian Vigil is well-known as “the mounted Vigil.” Its members are skilled equestrians and travel quickly across the wide territory of the group. All of these vigilants are swift and accomplished riders — they have to be. Within its jurisdiction are some of the most titan-haunted lands in all of Ghelspad, such as the Bleak Savannah and the Blood Steppes. Members of this Vigil can expect to face a wide variety of foes, from giants to spider-eye goblins to wrack dragons. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, the Metyrian Vigil enjoys a good reputation and is a popular assignment for vigilants looking to see a lot of action in the battle against evil.

Location: West of the Kelder Mountains

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: The Metyrian Vigil is largely independent due to its unique nature, but many city-states within its territory, such as Amalthea, give it aid when possible. Its enemies are primarily evil humanoids and the titan-serving peoples of the Blood Steppes. Consequently, most rangers of this group take humanoids as their favored enemies, although some also take aberration, giants or monstrous humanoids.

Notable Personages: Nytheera Oskial is the leader of the Vigil and an excellent horsewoman. Mon Alaineck is well known for his rivalry with the giant tribes of the Blood Steppes.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of this Vigil use the genny (wild wheat) seed as their symbol.

Rangers of the Metyrian Vigil: All rangers of the Metyrian Vigil are expected to have maximum ranks in Ride. Many, if not most, possess mounted combat feats, as well as at least one from among the Hill Walker, Mountaineer or Plainsman feats (see Appendix One). A few of these vigilants even multiclass as fighters in order to give them access to a larger number of such feats. Interestingly, there are more women in this Vigil than men, partially due to Oskial's example and active recruitment of the best riders within the region — regardless of their gender.

MULLIS TOWN VIGIL

The Mullis Town Vigil ensures that trade continues between Mithril and its namesake. The group started when a group of traders and caravan guards decided to band together and seek the sponsorship of the Vigils in their endeavors. After they proved their worth in battle, the leaders of the Vigils of Vesh were quite happy to sanction their work, providing them with training, equipment and additional vigilants to round out their numbers. Since then, the Mullis Town Vigil has become an essential part of life in that region of Ghelspad and much beloved by the merchants who ply their trades in the Cordrada Corridor.

Location: Mullis Town region

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: This Vigil works very closely with the Behjuran Vigil to protect the trade route between Mullis Town and Mithril. Its enemies are primarily the orcs of Lede and bandits who prey on the merchant caravans that travel through the region. Naturally, rangers of this Vigil typically take humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Denivan Intos is the current leader of the Vigil. Another popular member is Pol Zelaon, who almost single-handedly defeated an orcish raid on a caravan outside of Mullis Town. His actions earned him the respect of his peers and the enmity of the orcs.

Signs of Brotherhood: The rangers of this Vigil use a pebble of adamantite as their symbol.

Rangers of the Mullis Town Vigil: Because this group frequently works in the capacity of caravan guards, many of its rangers multiclass as fighters or rogues. A fair number are also quite knowledgeable about various aspects of trading, and may have even once worked as traders themselves. They favor missile weapons, particularly crossbows, and wear light to medium armor.

PELPERNOI VIGIL

The Pelpernoi Vigil operates in the Haggard Hills, where they lend support to the elves and druids of the area. The Hills were once a far more dangerous place than they are now. Largely thanks to the efforts of the vigilants of this group, they have become considerably safer and calmer in the last couple of centuries. This has created a certain unease among the Vigil's leaders, who worry that they no longer have a purpose and may be disbanded. There is currently no evidence that there is any such plan in the offing, but it has not stopped Pelpernoi vigilants from worrying about their future — and ways to ensure it never comes to pass.

Location: The Haggard Hills

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: The Pelpernoi Vigil enjoys the friendship of the local elves as well as the druids of Denev. Its enemies are the titanspawn and sorcerers in the area, who continue to sow discord despite the relative calm of the region. Most rangers of this group take humanoids and monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Talissa Pelpern is the current leader of the Vigil. She is well known primarily because her ancestor, Lord Hadrass Pelpern, led his troops into battle against the evil sorcerer Muslijher two centuries ago. Talissa is trying hard to live up to his legacy, which sometimes leads her to make foolhardy decisions.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of this Vigil use the moth as their symbol.

Rangers of the Pelpernoi Vigil: Rangers of this group are much more adept in the ways of magic than others of their class. Many have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft. Others multiclass as clerics (of Tanil primarily) or wizards. The Hill Walker feat (see Appendix One) is common in this Vigil.

SEMANYE VIGIL

The Semanye Vigil exists primarily to protect Durrover and the surrounding territories. Inevitably, defending Durrover means that these vigilants regularly engage in clashes with the Calastians, whose imperial designs threaten the realm. Officially, the Vigil is not supposed to become involved in Calastian politics. In fact, of course, it has always done so, encouraging insurrections and rebellions and providing aid and comfort to those opposed to Virduk's rule. This has created a small amount of friction between the Vigil and its superiors in Vesh, although so far this tension has been kept to a minimum thanks to the deft diplomacy of the Semanye Vigil's leaders.

THE MIND OF A TRAITOR

I remain in doubt about my path. Is there no other way? I have prayed to tanil and denev even to corean — for guidance, and have received none. Perhaps it is for the best. I am not sure that I wish to be dissuaded from what I am about to do. It is not something the gods could condone. How could they? How could they give their blessing to the betrayal of my comrades, the men and women with whom I have fought side by side these long years? I am contemplating nothing less than the destruction of the dark motak vigil. Despite my reasons for doing so, could the gods ever look kindly on such a plan... such a betrayal?

Perhaps they could. Did not the gods turn on their very parents? Did they not rise up and plot to kill their forebears, to whom they were bound by ties of blood? Yet, who would question the justice and morality of the destruction they caused? I certainly cannot. Perhaps there is a precedent then. Maybe I am not damning myself by planning to destroy the enemy from within. Perhaps there really is no other way.

Or, am I deluding myself? I cannot be sure. I know only that there can be doubt that mortaxus must be destroyed. He and his army of the dead must be defeated, or else all of vesh will fall before him. If by the deaths of my comrades — and ultimately my own as well — this foul servant of chern can be brought low, so be it. I can see no other way. I can imagine no other conclusion. I wish that I could. Even now, I would follow a different path if I could but see it.

My name shall become a curse. I shall be reviled and hated for generations to come. Is that too great a price to pay to destroy an evil as great as mortaxus? Is that too great a price for the freedom of my people? Surely the gods will understand. If any beings could possibly know what it is to step outside the bounds of morality to do what is right, it is they. It must be so.

Lorindale shall ensure the success of my plan. He shall spread the story of my treachery and in so doing convince mortaxus of my sincerity. Lorindale is a better friend than I deserve. To support me in this insane gambit is more than I have any right to expect. I only hope that he will be able to live with his decision to aid me. It is bad enough that I bring ruin upon myself and my fellow vigilants, but to destroy Lorindale too — that is too much to bear. But I will carry even this last burden. I must, and so I will.

— JOVIAN TRAITOR

Location: Durrover and regions further west

Alignment: Any non-evil

Allies and Enemies: The Semanye Vigil receives much support from Durrover and from the many rebels working against Calastia. Naturally, its primary enemy is Calastia. Rangers of this Vigil typically take humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Drax Mora is the leader of this Vigil. His daughter, Sesoin Mora, is even more famous, since she was captured by the Calastians and executed as a spy two years ago. She is widely regarded as a martyr to the cause of freedom and younger vigilants seek to emulate her devotion. The Vigil's founder, Patrushin Semanye, was

born to Veshian and Durrovian parents. He is considered a model of the amity that exists between the two realms.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of this Vigil use a blade of the tundra-grass called shivitsk as their symbol.

Rangers of the Semanye Vigil: These vigilants frequently work as spies and saboteurs. Consequently, they often possess ranks in Bluff, Diplomacy and Disguise. Some have also been known to assist in the defense of the mountainous heights of the region, and thus the Mountaineer feat (see Appendix One) is a relatively popular one. Many multiclass as rogues, with some even reaching high enough levels to take the shadowdancer prestige class.

OTHER RANGER BROTHERHOODS OF GHESPAD

While the Vigils of Vesh are far and away the most widely known ranger organization in Ghelspad, they are not the only rangers to band together for mutual benefit and support. This section describes a few of these other significant ranger brotherhoods.

BROTHERHOOD OF THE CRIMSON TEMPLE

The Brotherhood is one of the most notorious ranger groups in all of Ghelspad — and the oldest. Its members are dedicated followers of the titan Mormo and take pride in having served their mistress for untold millennia, holding true to the “old ways” by which their ancestors lived and died. The Brotherhood exists primarily to defend the druids of the Crimson Temple tradition of Mormo’s faith, as well as to advance their plots in any way deemed necessary. Rangers of the Brotherhood are often fanatics, as well as deadly in combat, which has only added to their unsavory reputation.

Location: Hornsaw, northern and eastern Ghelspad

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Allies and Enemies: The Brotherhood has few allies, and those are only among the races who serve Mormo (like the hags and medusae), while its enemies are many (particularly the Vigils of Vesh). Members of the group typically take humanoids as their favored enemies, although some take animals or fey.

Notable Personages: Miernahn Evarmar is the Brotherhood’s most famous member. He died along with Mormo during the Divine War, and is currently revered as a paragon of the Crimson Temple.

Signs of Brotherhood: If possible, rangers of the Brotherhood dress in cured red leather armor. If this is impractical, they incorporate the color red into their attire in some fashion — usually in the form of a cape or hood.

Rangers of the Brotherhood of the Crimson Temple: These rangers focus their abilities on skills,

feats and spells that cause destruction. They are deadly close combatants and often use envenomed weapons to give them an additional edge.

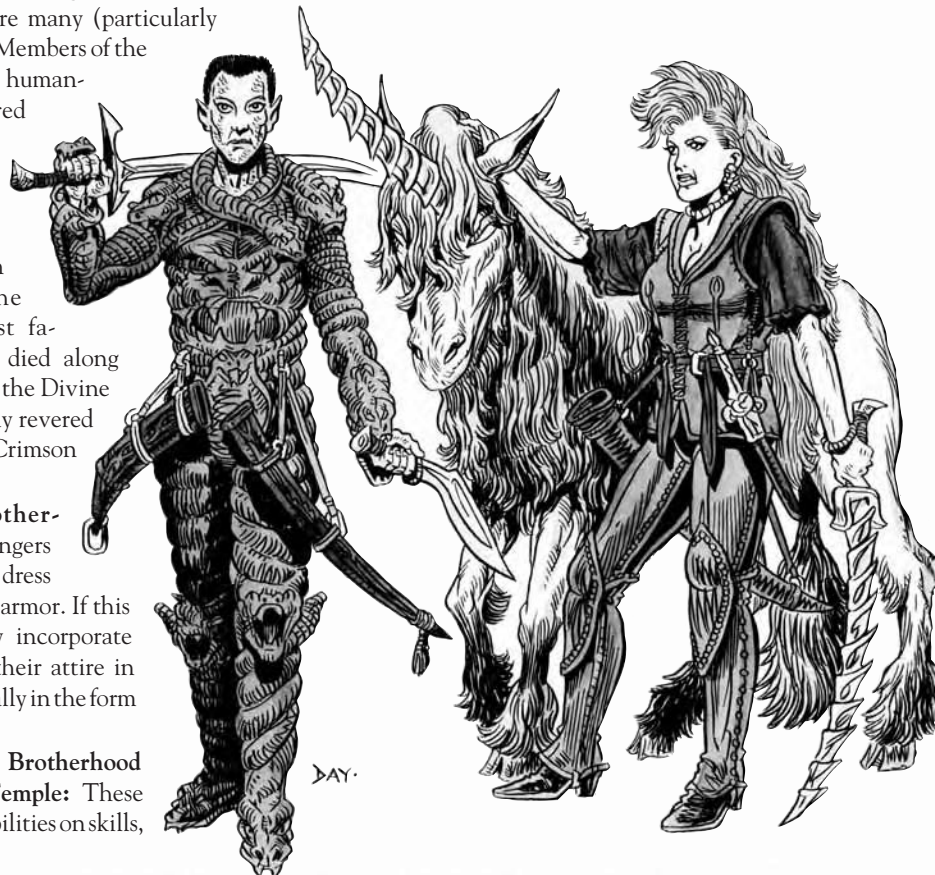
HORNSAW SENTINELS

The Broadreach Forest was part of the Veridan province of the old Ledeian Empire. For generations, sentinels from the Empire patrolled the forest to prevent its inhabitants from wreaking havoc on Veridan. When Lede fell, many of these sentinels continued their work and, over time, came to see themselves as guardians of the Broadreach. The death of Mormo during the Divine War twisted the Broadreach into the Hornsaw and destroyed all but one of the original sentinels. This lone surviving ranger decided to hold to his oaths to protect the forest, despite what it had become. In time others were recruited to his cause. The Hornsaw Sentinels are thus a brotherhood of wicked rangers who protect the Hornsaw from those who would “harm” it — even by restoring it to its former uncorrupted condition.

Location: Hornsaw Forest

Alignment: Non-lawful and non-good, with most being chaotic evil

Allies and Enemies: The Sentinels ally themselves with the servants of Mormo and count as enemies anyone, regardless of alignment, who would harm the Hornsaw. They typically take fey and humanoids as favored enemies.



Notable Personages: Elitoran is considered the founder of the Sentinels, for he was the sole member of the Broadreach Sentinels to survive the corruption of the Hornsaw.

Signs of Brotherhood: A scimitar crafted from the horn of a Hornsaw unicorn is the Sentinels' weapon of choice and is the symbol of their fellowship.

Rangers of the Hornsaw Sentinels: Most Sentinels take Weapon Focus (scimitar) and are fond of using poison. Hornsaw sentinels are also somewhat notorious for their use of the Forester feat (see Appendix One). Few actually worship Mormo; their loyalty is to the Hornsaw, not the titan whose death warped it. Most of the rangers of this fellowship end up taking levels in the Hornsaw Sentinel prestige class (see **Hornsaw: Forest of Blood**).

KELDER BROTHERHOOD

The Kelder Brotherhood is one of the youngest ranger groups in Ghelspad. They formed only in the last decade in response to Calastia's aggression against Durrover and other realms of the Kelder Mountains (such as Burok Torn). The Brotherhood is not tied to any one nation, preferring to remain aloof from local politics whenever possible. Its sole purpose is to fight against Calastian imperialism within its sphere of influence.

Location: Durrover, Burok Torn, the southern range of the Kelder Mountains

Alignment: Chaotic good, chaotic neutral, neutral and neutral good

Allies and Enemies: The Brotherhood is strongly allied to both Durrover and Burok Torn, who both benefit from its op-



erations. Its primary enemy is Calastia, which it fights with great zeal. Rangers of this group typically take humanoids as their favored enemy, although those who regularly battle clerics of Chardun may also take undead.

Notable Personages: Thrand Backbreaker is the foremost dwarven member of the Brotherhood, while Havarek Arnd is his human counterpart.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of the Brotherhood wear chain shirts and dark brown hooded cloaks.

Rangers of the Kelder Brotherhood: The rangers of this group favor close combat feats such as Power Attack, Cleave and Great Cleave. Because of dwarven influence, many use hammers and axes as weapons. Most of the Kelder Brotherhood is skilled in navigating the mountains and caverns of the Kelders, possessing either the Mountaineer or Spelunker feats (see Appendix One).

KING'S FORESTERS

The King's Foresters are a group of rangers charged by King Virduk of Calastia to patrol Geleeda's Grove. Officially, their purpose is to prevent the Grove's inhabitants — titanspawn and worse — from ravaging the surrounding countryside. Unofficially, some of the Foresters act as spies for the king's vizier, Anteas, to discover the secret of that forest and just why Virduk decided to annex it as a wedding gift to his queen.

Location: The Calastian realms bordering on Geleeda's Grove

Alignment: Lawful evil, lawful neutral and neutral

Allies and Enemies: The Foresters oppose the titanspawn of the Grove, as well as anyone who wishes to enter the forest without official permission. They have allies within the Calastian government, as well as enemies, since the Foresters are factionalized according to their level of loyalty to the king, his vizier and the queen.

Notable Personages: Mhinsil Imin is the leader of the Foresters and obeys Virduk without question. Meanwhile, Maran Kentoc is Anteas' primary agent and the leader of those For-

CHAPTER TWO: BROTHERHOODS OF THE SCARRED LANDS

esters seeking the secret of Geleeda's Grove.

Signs of Brotherhood: The Foresters wear black cloaks and bear the king's seal upon their armor — evidence of their royal mandate.

Rangers of the King's Foresters: Rangers of this group are more likely to wear heavier armor than is typical for the class. They also favor larger weapons, such as greatswords. Many Foresters (especially those serving Anteas) multiclass as rogues; a sizeable number also make use of the Forester feat (see Appendix One).

LILIANDELI

The Liliandeli are a diverse band of rangers, bards and clerics who worship Tanil. These noble foresters work to return the Hornsaw to its former state, while defending the few remaining untainted inhabitants against the depredations of Mormo's servants. The group is the modern incarnation of a much older organization, led by the legendary elf Liliandel — from whom the band took its name. Like their predecessors, contemporary Liliandeli are implacable foes of titanspawn and use a combination of magic, archery and stealth to achieve their ends.

Location: Broadreach Horizon of the Hornsaw Forest

Alignment: Chaotic good, neutral or neutral good

Allies and Enemies: The Liliandeli are enemies of those in the Hornsaw who serve Mormo.

Any who would join them in their fight are considered allies, particularly Vera-Tre and the Ganjus Vigil. Most Liliandeli take evil humanoid as their favored enemies, as well as aberrations, giants and magical beasts.

Notable Personages: Marilus, son of the group's founder, is the current leader of the Liliandeli. Also important is the druid Arelei, whose Incarnate soul is that of Illia, the long-dead sister of Marilus.

Signs of Brotherhood: Liliandeli are too few in number and too loosely organized to have anything in common beyond their desire to fight Mormo's servants. Some swear an oath of loyalty to Marilus, an act that deeply unsettles him but which he nevertheless accepts.

Rangers of the Liliandeli: Many Liliandeli multiclass as bards and a handful of rangers choose to pursue levels as clerics or wizards. Tanil is a popular deity among the group, although Denev also has her devotees. The Liliandeli archer prestige class can be found in **Hornsaw: Forest of Blood**.

ORDER OF THE BLACK THORN

Because Chardun does not have paladins, as does his rival Corean, the Great Tyrant has instead created a special order of rangers to fill a similar role. With their roots spreading as far back as the Ledean Empire, these rangers revel both in destruction and in spreading the dominion of their divine master. Many are true psychopaths whose lives were warped from an early age by Chardun's teachings — a tragedy to be sure, but a deadly one.



Location: Southern and western Ghelspad, Virduk's Promise in Termana

Alignment: Lawful evil or neutral evil

Allies and Enemies: The Order enjoys the friendship of most sects of the church of Chardun, as well as those nations devoted to the Slaver God. Its enemies are many, particularly among races and lands that have suffered at the hands of Chardunites. Rangers of the Order typically take animals, fey, magical beasts or plants as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Cardan Braissa is one of the oldest living members of the Order, having spent most of her life serving Chardun. She currently resides in Virduk's Promise, having accompanied the Calastian settlers there to spread the faith of her god.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of the Order prominently display the symbol of Chardun on their attire. On their left hands they bear the tattoo of a bracelet made from thorns — a sign of their thralldom to the Tyrant.

Rangers of the Order of the Black Thorn: Members of this group all wield maces in imitation of their master. Many also use whips. They have access to a number of specialized ranger spells (described in **Relics & Rituals 2**), which they use with great pride. The highest teachings, of this Order's philosophy, spur its members to take levels in the Black Thorn ranger prestige class (see Appendix Two).



SOCIETY OF THE MANACLE

The church of Chardun is devoted to law and order, almost as much as is the church of Hedrada. Of course, Chardunites take their devotion to extremes, forgetting that laws exist to serve men and not the other way around. This Chardunite obsession has created large numbers of “criminals” whose only crime is to flout unjust laws. In pursuit of these renegades is the Society of the Manacle, a guild of rangers who work as bounty hunters in Ghelspad. Originally, the Society saw its mission as a divine mandate from Chardun. Over the decades, however, it has moved away from its original vision and become more mercenary, accepting jobs from anyone who will pay its handsome fees. Interestingly, the Society is not welcome in Calastia, since King Virduk distrusts its motives and ultimate loyalties.

Location: Dunahnae, western and southern Ghelspad (except Calastia)

Alignment: Lawful evil or (rarely) lawful neutral

Allies and Enemies: The Society still enjoys good relations with the church of Chardun, as well as with most evil nations. Its members typically choose humanoids as their favored enemies, since they are their most common quarry.

Notable Personages: Ints Aivo founded the Society shortly after the Divine War and is widely revered by its members. Sils Mairis is a current member whose exploits in both Ghelspad and Termana are well known.

Signs of Brotherhood: Members of the Society wear tattoos of chains on their arms and chests. As they advance within the Society's hierarchy, new links are added to the tattoos.

Rangers of the Society of the Manacle: Many Society rangers multiclass as rogues or clerics of Chardun, although the latter is less common than it once was. Those who retain a strong devotion to Chardun sometimes become blackguards. Many also end up taking levels in the bounty hunter prestige class (see Appendix Two).

UKRUDAN WANDERERS

The Ukrudan Wanderers are the tribal rangers of the desert-dwelling Ukrudan people. Devoted to Enkili, in his male aspect as Bringer of Rain and Storms, the Wanderers are adept at surviving the desert and overcoming its many dangers. Some Wanderers hire themselves out as guides and pathfinders, while others defend their tribes against the depredations of the asaathi and Daywalker slitheren. All are extremely protective of their people and will do whatever they must to keep them safe.



Location: Ukrudan Desert

Alignment: Chaotic good or chaotic neutral

Allies and Enemies: The Wanderers enjoy the friendship of all Ukrudan who share their faith, as well as having many outsider allies who rely on their skills. Their enemies are primarily the asaatthi and slitheren, though they also are strongly opposed to those Ukrudan who worship Thulkas. Rangers of this group typically take aberrations and monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Munjal Kachara is a famed Wanderer whose battles against the asaatthi are known even outside the desert. Gerugap Dir is a fixture of the city of Akrud, where he sells his skills as a desert guide.

Signs of Brotherhood: The Wanderers all wear a symbol of Enkili, as well as a tribal emblem, to indicate their affiliation. Many use phrases from Ukrudan folksongs as codes to identify themselves to others of their kind.

Rangers of the Ukrudan Wanderers: The Wanderers usually wield scimitars and wear little to no armor. They fight nimbly, taking feats such as Dodge, Mobility and Spring Attack (as well as Cloth Dancing and Whirling Defense from Appendix One). They are also quite adept at surviving in the desert; many of them take the Desert Walker feat (also found in Appendix One).

RANGER BROTHERHOODS OF TERMANA

Ghelspad is not the only continent to be home to ranger brotherhoods. Some, like Termana, boast a large number of such organizations. Perhaps it is because Termana is so wild and untamed that a proportionally greater number of such groups have sprung up there than anywhere else in the Scarred Lands. Their existence is admittedly less well known than their more famous counterparts in Ghelspad, but that is likely to change with time. As more and more communication opens up between the two continents, some of the following ranger brotherhoods — and others yet to be described — may grow in renown.

The Bear Men

The Bear Men are a class of warriors from the realm of North Crilos. They are so-called because of their hirsute appearance and great size, as well as for their wildness in battle. These rangers are regarded with awe by their countrymen, who see them as gifted by the gods Tanil and Enkili with extraordinary strength and endurance. The Bear Men exist to defend North Crilos from outside threats and the foul horrors that sometimes spill out of the Blood Sea.

Location: North Crilos

Alignment: Chaotic good or chaotic neutral

Allies and Enemies: The Bear Men have no allies outside of North Crilos. Within that realm, however, they are accorded great respect and even some measure of fear. Their enemies include the Blood Bayou and South Crilos, although the former are far more pernicious than the latter. Bear Men rangers typically take aberrations, magical beasts or monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Humaida is a revered Bear Man who died fighting titanspawn of Kadum during the Divine War. Thijai is a living Bear Man whose battles against the Blood Bayou inspire his fellows to do the same.

Signs of Brotherhood: Bear Men grow thick and prodigious beards and wear their hair long. Before combat, they adorn their bodies with bright war paint. Bear Men do not interact with women in any fashion, let alone intimately.

Rangers of the Bear Men: Many Bear Men multiclass as barbarians, using their rage ability to good effect. Most wear no armor, with some of the most fanatical entering battle naked except for their war paint. A good number also take the Bear Totem feat from the *Player's Guide to Fighters and Barbarians*.

The Motley

The Motley are an unusual band of freedom fighting rangers, located in the Tattered Hills on the borders of the Blood Bayou. The group arose only in the last handful of years as a counterbalance to the evil of the Jack of Tears and his Carnival of Shadows. The rangers of the Motley are a grim and determined lot; many of them come to the Motley after losing family and loved ones to the clutches of the Carnival as it passed through their home villages. As a sign of their prowess, they wear snatches of the festive garb of those they defeat, giving them an odd and even sinister appearance that ironically may cause those who encounter the Motley to mistake them for members of the very Carnival they hate. In fact, a few of the Motley are hideous — these deformed members suffered horrible facial mutilations as children, when the Carnival turned them into the “clowns” of the black parade. The Motley makes a point of rescuing as many of these disfigured children as possible; as a result, the Momus has few more relentless enemies than the Motley, who have vowed never to rest until he is defeated.

Location: Tattered Hills, Blood Bayou and surrounding areas

Alignment: Chaotic good or chaotic neutral

Allies and Enemies: The Motley has few allies, although any who oppose the machinations of the Carnival King are regarded as at least temporary friends. Naturally, its primary enemy is the Carnival of Shadows and those who serve it in the Blood Bayou. Rangers of this group typically take monstrous humanoids and outsiders as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Jostial Ekin is the leader of the Motley, having founded the organization nearly two decades ago. His right hand man is Loroste Teltz, who is charged with the recruitment and training of new members.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of the Motley are fond of facial tattoos in mockery of the Momus and his lieutenants. Others merely wear masks of similar appearance.

Rangers of the Motley: Members of this group are masters of both guerrilla warfare and infiltration, often taking the Marshlander feat (see Appendix One) due to their time spent in the Bayou. Many excel at Bluff, Diplomacy and Disguise, as well as Hide and Move Silently. Some multiclass as rogues to acquire aptitude in Sneak Attack.

The Paekuri Fellowship

The Paekuri Fellowship is a brotherhood of gnomish rangers from the Gamulganjus. Rangers of this group act as defenders of their tribal lands. They believe themselves to be the chosen of the jungle spirits and consider it their vocation to fight against the titanspawn that infest the region. They likewise serve as war chiefs in times in strife, lead-

ing the gnomes in vicious battles against their enemies. Despite their small size, the gnomes of the Fellowship are skilled warriors who are especially known for their traps — which are unequaled in all of Termana.

Location: Gamulganjus

Alignment: Chaotic good, neutral or neutral good

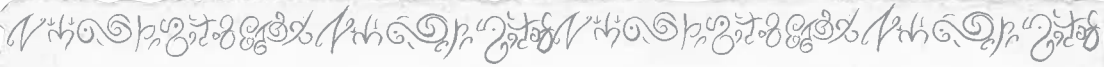
Allies and Enemies: The Fellowship is widespread among the gnomish tribes of the Gamulganjus. Thus, its members can expect support and assistance from any of them. Its enemies consist primarily of titanspawn, but the lizardfolk and troglodytes of the jungle are also considered their foes. Rangers of this group typically take fey, humanoids or monstrous humanoids as their favored enemies.

Notable Personages: Mongaan and his brother Maawhia are two of the most accomplished Paekuri rangers in the Gamulganjus. Their battles against titanspawn and troglodytes are legendary.

Signs of Brotherhood: Rangers of the Fellowship shave their heads upon joining the group. Male members likewise shave their facial hair. Many of the Paekuri also tattoo striated patterns on their flesh, which gives them the ability to better hide in the dense undergrowths of the Gamulganjus.

Rangers of the Paekuri Fellowship: Most of these rangers excel at Craft (trapmaking) as well as Hide and Move Silently. Some multiclass as rogues or (more rarely) illusionists. Many of the Paekuri take levels in the gnomish trapmaster prestige class (see Appendix Two).





MULTICLASS RANGERS

While the brotherhood descriptions in this chapter have included some suggestions about typical multiclass combinations for rangers in the Scarred Lands, here is some further insight into the matter.

- **Barbarian:** Among tribal peoples like the Albadians, many barbarians also take up the skills and knowledge of the rangers, seeking out the enemies of their people and unleashing their fury upon them.

- **Bard:** There are a number of rangers who also learn the ways of the bard. It is unclear whether they do this to balance the destructive tendencies of their ranger calling with the creativity and preservation of culture that is the bard's way, or because they simply learn the various arts of the bard in the course of their travels. Regardless of the reason, the ranger who plays a lute when he isn't slaying his enemies is a fixture in numerous tales. Many such multiclass characters are in the service of the church of Tanil.

- **Cleric:** Although once uncommon, ranger/clerics have become more prevalent since the Divine War, especially in the church of Tanil. Such characters explicitly reject the long association between rangers and druids — and therefore the titans — as incompatible with the realities of the present age.

- **Druid:** Rangers have long been connected to the druids, so it's not surprising that many combine the talents of both classes. Such characters almost always serve the titans, though a fair number are devotees to Denev and therefore not necessarily at odds with divine worshippers. An equal number, however, are ranger/druids of the Great Hunter, Hrinruuk; while the other titans are each represented by a handful of these multiclassed rangers.

- **Fighter:** Though rangers already possess significant fighting skills, many seek to further hone their martial abilities by multiclassing as fighters. This allows them to increase the effectiveness of their already prodigious combat skills, turning these ranger/fighters into truly deadly foes.

- **Monk:** Though very rare, ranger/monks do exist, primarily in the service of Hedrada. This unusual combination of abilities makes the character well-suited as a guerrilla or rebel against evil — a role some have adopted in realms like Calastia and Dunahnae.

- **Paladin:** Rangers rarely take up the paladin's path, but there are always exceptions. A ranger devoted to Corean may hear his divine master's call and complement his wilderness abilities with those of religious zeal. Such a ranger would be most unusual, but not unique — precedents exist in the history of the Scarred Lands.

- **Rogue:** The abilities of rangers and rogues are quite compatible and many individuals choose to pursue both, especially members of the Vigils of Vesh. Ranger/rogues make peerless wilderness warriors, masters of stealth and ambush. Not surprisingly, many such characters become scouts or bounty hunters.

- **Sorcerer:** In the past, some rangers showed an inherent talent for sorcery and practiced it in the name of the titans. With the conclusion of the Divine War, such individuals are even more uncommon, although they can still be found among the cults of the Defeated.

- **Wizard:** Few rangers have ever taken up wizardry and that remains true even today. The occasional ranger/wizard is thus quite an oddity, although some vigilants do combine the two vocations, as noted above.



RANGERS OF NOTE

In the Scarred Lands, rangers are not always recognized for their importance, even though they play many significant roles. Especially since the conclusion of the Divine War, when so much of Scarn was ravaged, rangers have made their mark on the world to a level that few outsiders even realize. It would be impossible to

describe in any detail even a handful of these many noteworthy rangers. Even so, this section provides thumbnail sketches of a few of the most influential and remarkable rangers of Ghelspad and Termana. Hopefully, these profiles will give the clear message that to be a ranger is a diverse and complex thing; and that when meeting a ranger, nothing should be taken for granted.

ATAKI LAVANT

Ataki (*male human Rgr8/Blk2/Bth3, LE*) is a member of the Society of the Manacle and one of the most dangerous bounty hunters in all of Ghelspad. Unlike many of his comrades in the Society, Ataki takes on only those missions that further the cause of Chardun. Thus, he happily hunts down rebels in Dunahnae and Calastia or heretics opposed to the church's teachings, but he rarely works simply for money. Ataki is a religious fanatic, and for years his zeal is what has preserved him in the face of great odds.

Currently, Ataki is operating in Calastia, where he is on retainer with the church of Chardun. He works closely with clergy leaders to hunt down those who oppose the church's mission — even those heretics within the Calastian government. This has led to some friction with Virduk's court, and particularly with Anteas, who worries that Ataki might undermine the monarchy for the sake of religious orthodoxy.

BOROVIK

Borovik (*male half-orc Rog3/Rgr7, CG*) is a most unusual example of his kind. His mother is a sorceress devoted to Denev while his father was an orc chieftain of Clan Viridian on the Plains of Lede. His parents had so little in common that their brief — and remarkable — liaison lasted barely long enough for Borovik to be conceived. The young half-orc was raised among his mother's people in the Kelder Mountains, where he learned to respect magic and to hate the titans and their spawn.

Upon reaching young adulthood, Borovik left home and began a quest to find his place in the world. He believed that the unusual circumstances of his birth were auspicious and that the gods had something special in store for him. As yet, he has not ascertained his purpose, but he continues to look. He is currently in the south, investigating rumors of Slarecian ruins inhabited by a branch of his father's own clan. Borovik feels that by learning how and why these orcs have moved so far from their homes, he might come to understand himself — and perhaps much more.

KINTHAS "SILVERBLADE" ARDANTE

Kinthas (*male human Rgr8/Vig10, CG*) is the leader of the Acernoth Vigil. Nicknamed "Silverblade" because of his magical scimitar, he is a cunning and charismatic warrior who rose to prominence in his battles against the slitheren of the Diseased clan. At a young age, he fought at the Battle of Moor, an event that forever colored his way of looking at the world. His role in the battle was perhaps minor in the grand scheme of

things, but his bravery and resourcefulness were recognized then and he quickly advanced through the ranks of the Vigils to his current position of authority.

Kinthas is a master of hit-and-run tactics, which he has taught to many other vigilants over the years. The Acernoth Vigil has slowly been reshaped in his own image. A determined man who sees his work as almost a divine vocation, Kinthas is a difficult man to like, even if one cannot help but be impressed by his personal magnetism. In many ways, he reminds the Vigils that no matter how many successes they achieve, there is always more evil to be combated, more dangers to be overcome. There is no rest from the duty of protecting civilization.

More information on Kinthas can be found in **Secrets & Societies**.

OBERYN AMETHYST

Oberyn (*female elf Rgr6, CN*) was born in northern Calastia. Unlike many other forsaken elves, she was not cursed with a lethal deformity. Instead, the only evidence of her heritage is a double pupil in her right eye. Far from being a handicap, this unusual feature somehow improved her aim as an archer. She quickly became one of the most skilled archers among her people — or anywhere else in Calastia.

When Calastian militia destroyed her village and her entire family along with it, she vowed to seek revenge not only upon Calastia — whom she hates with great passion — but against all humans, who she considers no better than titanspawn. In the years since her family was murdered, she has led a crusade against Calastia, which has earned her the name "Virduk's Bane." Few, even her erstwhile allies, understand the true depth of her hatred, however. Most assume she simply wishes to bring down the Calastian Hegemony. In fact, Calastia is simply a stepping-stone and proving ground for her skills. If she was to ever succeed and Calastia were to fall, she will turn her attentions to the rest of humanity, whatever the cost to herself.

More information on Oberyn can be found in **The Wise & The Wicked**.

SANOSÉN AGEL

Sanosen (*female human Rgr11, NG*) hails originally from Mithril, where her family members are prominent in the church of Corean. From an early age, Sanosen felt that her ancestral faith was too strict and disciplined for her liking. Drawn to the worship of Tanil and Denev, she left Mithril at an early age and sought her own path. Eventually, she fell in with the rangers of the Mullis Town

CHAPTER TWO: BROTHERHOODS OF THE SCARRED LANDS

Vigil, from whom she learned much. However, she found the Vigils almost as stifling as the Coreanite paladins and so left them behind as well.


Now, she travels throughout northeast Ghelspad, fighting against the forces of evil and those who aid them. Sanosen has gathered to herself a small group of companions, whose membership changes with each season. Together, they go from settlement to settlement and offer their services in return for food and lodging. This has earned Sanosen a great reputation among the people she meets and has contributed to the tales of her exploits, some of which have grown in the telling.

Thijai

Thijai (*male human Bbr4/Rgr10, CN*) is perhaps the most famous of the Bear Men in his native land, North Crilos. In this distant realm, he has spent much of his adult life fighting against

the evil of the Blood Bayou, as well as incursions from South Crilos. Thijai is as fond of wild combat as any of his fellows, but he shows a distinctly “thoughtful” approach that sets him apart from them. He is a master at ambushes and uses stealth to lure his opponents into advantageous positions before attacking. Not surprisingly, he has acquired a reputation as a warrior without peer.

Thijai’s image may suffer, however, for he recently found himself in a situation he never expected: he has fallen in love — and with a woman no less! The woman in question is Frisvena, Chief Endol’s daughter, which has only added to the complications caused by this love affair. Should their involvement be discovered, they would both be disgraced and North Crilos would lose one of its most ardent defenders. Yet, Thijai is not prepared to deny his feelings for Frisvena and is desperately seeking a way to remain a Bear Man and pursue this romance.



CHAPTER THREE

TO ENDURE

THE WILDS

Watch yourself while out here, lad. Oh, I know that you're well-versed in surviving the dangers that the woods have to offer, but you aren't in your home forest any more. Tracts of wilderness are like animals, boy — some of them are friendly and will eat right out of your hand. Others are rabid and will tear out your throat just for seeing you. These woods might as well be foaming at the mouth. Watch yourself.

— the ranger Tawnus, to his apprentice.

Though they are many things — warriors, spellcasters, scouts — rangers are survivalists, first and foremost. Theirs is the knowledge of the dangers in the wild, as well as the techniques for overcoming them.

RULES OF SURVIVAL

Rangers are known as masters of wilderness survival, and with good reason. If anyone in the Scarred Lands knows how to overcome natural obstacles and survive, it is they. While many such survival techniques are easily represented through the use of Knowledge (nature) or Survival checks, some are more complex. A handful of these more multifaceted survival techniques are presented in this section, both for player use and to provide GMs with inspiration in creating more detail for their own campaigns.

AVALANCHE TUMBLE

The wilderness is full of places where the very mountains may rain their fury down on hapless explorers. Many rangers have learned how to fall in such a way as to lessen the impact of an unexpected plummet, resulting in far less physical injury.

System: The character makes a DC 20 Survival check; five or more ranks in the Tumble skill grants a +2 synergy bonus to this roll. Success indicates that being caught in the avalanche deals 1d6 less points of damage. For every 2 points scored above the DC on this roll, the damage from the avalanche is reduced by another 1d6, to a minimum of 1d6.

FALSE TRAIL

Given their extraordinary knowledge of tracking, it is little wonder that rangers are also quite skilled at hiding their own trails when necessary. Through the use of this tactic, rangers can create a false trail that gives the impression that they have gone in another direction.

System: The character makes a Survival check. The result of this roll is the DC for the opposing tracker's Survival roll to determine that the created trail is false. This DC also indicates how many minutes those who are fooled are likely to follow the false trail. Creating a false trail takes one minute.

Example: The vigilant Elzabet d'Iria is being tracked by Calastian scouts through the Durroveran lowlands shortly after a rainstorm (soft ground, DC 10). Using

some fancy footwork, she hides her trail as she travels. Deciding that this isn't quite enough, she takes a couple of moments to create a false trail, rolling a 24 on her Survival check. The scouts following her will have to make a DC 24 Survival check to realize that the new trail is a false one, though after nearly a half-hour it will become evident that the obvious trail is a ruse. They must then back-track and attempt to rediscover her actual trail, granting her plenty of time to get further ahead of them.

ONE WITH ROCKS

Rangers who travel the mountains of the Scarred Lands soon learn that they provide excellent camouflage if one is familiar with them. When being pursued by creatures in rocky, mountainous terrain, a ranger can cover himself with his cloak and the surrounding dirt to present the illusion that he is in fact just another rock. This tactic was originally developed by dwarven rangers but has since spread to many others, whatever their race.

System: The character first makes a DC 15 Survival check. Success indicates that he gains a +2 bonus to his Hide checks against anyone who attempts to detect him while in the rocky terrain. For every 2 points higher than the DC scored on this roll, he gains an additional +1 bonus to his Hide checks. Camouflaging oneself in this fashion takes a number of rounds equal to the total bonus gained — though the character may forego part of the bonus if he doesn't have enough time to totally conceal himself. The character must remain perfectly stationary to benefit from this bonus.

SANDSTORM BURROW

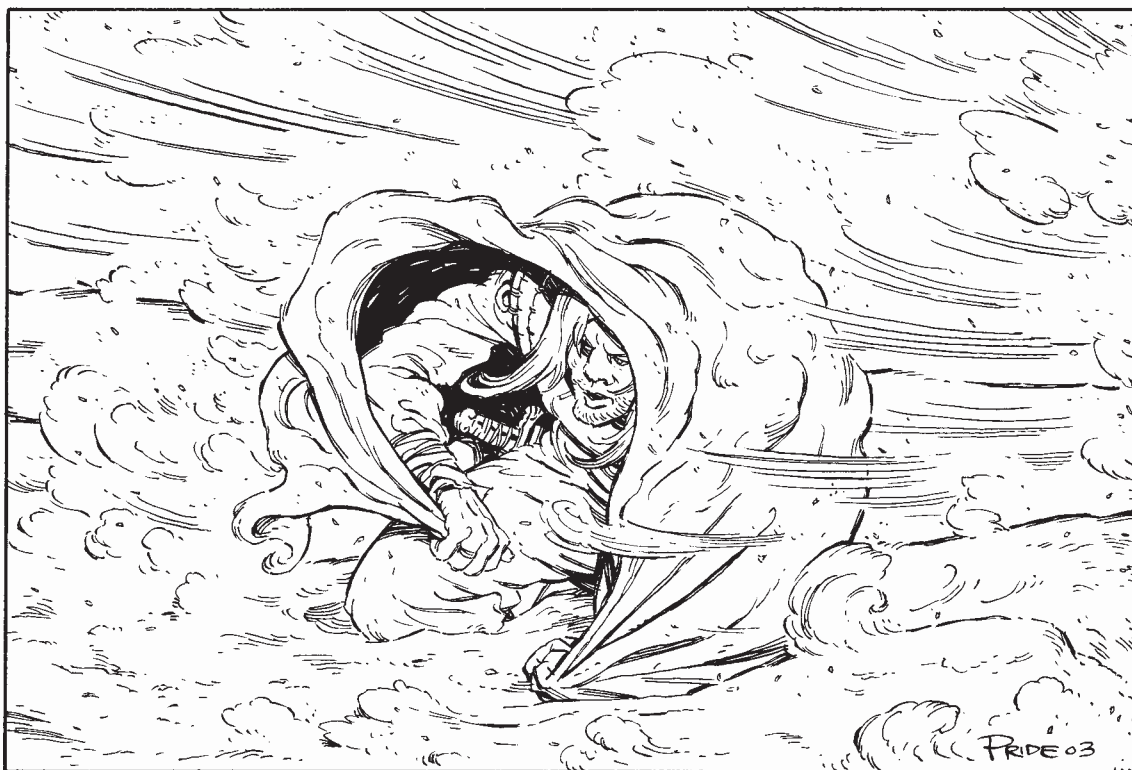
Many desert-going rangers know the secrets of surviving in a desert sandstorm. Rather than continuing to travel and encountering the many hazards of such a storm, the ranger knows to hunker down and cover himself with his cloak. This not only prevents him from becoming lost, but it also creates a pocket of air between his body and the cloak. Using this technique provides temporary protection from the effects of the sandstorm.

System: The character makes a DC 15 Survival check. Success indicates that the character may go for ten minutes before the normal suffocation rules associated with dust storms (see the *DMG*, Chapter 3, "Wilderness Adventures," *Weather*) begin to take effect. For every point higher than the base DC scored on the roll, ten minutes is added to this time. The character may also make a Survival roll to help another form the pocket of air, but doing so is a base DC 17. Preparing an appropriate burrow takes one minute.

RATION EXTENSION

Rangers know how to conserve rations for as long as possible. Though expert hunters, sometimes they travel in lands where there is no readily available game or where the wildlife is poisonous. In such cases, they know how to stretch their store of preserved food and water for days on end, augmenting what supplies they carry with small berries and herbs that reduce hunger pangs and thirst.

System: The character makes a DC 15 Survival check. Success indicates that she requires half as much



food and water as normal during that day. The ranger may help others gain this benefit, but doing so requires a DC 18 Survival roll. She may only use this ability for a number of days equal to her total Fortitude save. After that, the character must consume a normal daily amount of food and water, though on the following day she may resume the use of ration extension.

THE TAINTED LANDS

The Divine War left deep and lasting scars upon the world — and many of these wounds were physical ones, that can be seen and experienced by those who dare to do so. Wherever a titan fell, the land warped and twisted according to the nature of the Defeated in question. The Blood Sea is perhaps the most obvious example of this, as is the Hornsaw Forest, but others abound as well. Within these tainted lands, nature itself has been overturned, replaced by the essence of the titan who corrupted the surrounding area. The land itself becomes a hazard best avoided. Even the animals and plants that dwell within have been affected, becoming horrors the likes of which few have seen.

Despite these dangers, there are times when they must be faced and individuals willing to face them. Rangers are renowned for their ability to survive in nearly any environment; the tainted lands are no different, except perhaps in their origins. This section details a handful of tainted lands, providing basic information on their obstacles and the difficulties in overcoming them. The intention is to provide GMs with a more specific picture of how the titans have corrupted the Scarred Lands since their demise, in addition to providing another arena in which rangers have the opportunity to shine.

BLOODSWAMPS (CR 10)

Bloodswamps are noxious bogs that are created by the toxic waters of the Blood Sea. Consequently, most exist along the eastern coast of Ghelspad and the northern reaches of Termana. Of course, given enough time, bloodswamps can arise anywhere into which the waters of the Blood Sea are poured. It is rumored that Kadum's servants regularly transport large containers filled with such water to the interior of Ghelspad and Termana, so as to create more of these foul lands even in areas not adjacent to the Blood Sea.

Original Terrain: Potentially anywhere, although most are along the coastlines touched by the Blood Sea

Traits: Recognizing a bloodswamp from a distance requires a DC 30 Survival check, while realizing one has stepped into a bloodswamp after the fact requires the same skill check at DC 20. In each case, the ranger notices that the fetid water of the swamp has a reddish cast, as does the mud.

Rules: Breathing the air of a bloodswamp exposes the character to a powerful poison. The character must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or suffer 1 point of permanent Constitution drain as the initial damage, with 3d6 temporary Constitution damage as the secondary damage. Characters who fall to the ground unconscious, due to temporary Constitution loss or for any other reason, are then exposed to tiny tendrils that burrow into the flesh — causing 1d4 points of damage per round. These tendrils cannot be killed, as they are a part of the land itself and do not exist as independent creatures. The tendrils will not attack characters who are still conscious, and the damage can only occur while the unconscious character is in direct contact with the ground.

Navigating the Bloodswamps: To escape the effects of a bloodswamp's noxious vapors requires the use of a cloth doused in the distilled essence of the lufkaberry plant. This information is known only to those who make a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) or Profession (herbalist) check. Lufkaberry plants are very common in southern Ghelspad and are widespread in Termana. The process of distilling sufficient essence to douse one cloth takes 2 hours. The cloth is then worn over one's mouth to filter out the poisonous gases.

CRUCIBLES OF THULKAS (CR 3)

Crucibles of Thulkas are patches of rusted iron ground, beneath which roils molten lava. Sometimes called "ironblights," they arise when pieces from the imprisoned titan fall from the sun, creating a taint where they impact that cannot be healed. Crucibles expand until they encounter water or greenery, both of which halt their advance but do not heal the damage. Crucibles explode like geysers, spewing lava on those unable to avoid the blasts.

Original Terrain: Non-mountainous rocky terrain of any sort

Traits: Recognizing a crucible of Thulkas from a distance requires a successful DC 20 Survival check, while realizing one has stepped into a crucible of Thulkas after the fact requires the same skill check at DC 15. The ranger who succeeds at this skill check will immediately notice the peculiar nature of the ground as well as the molten lava that courses beneath its surface. Anyone with 5 or more ranks of Spot gains a +2 synergy bonus to the check to recognize a crucible of Thulkas.

Rules: The lava blast is a hazard with the following description: 1-ft.-wide, 50-ft.-long stream of lava (2d6 fire damage); DC 13 Reflex save avoids.

Navigating the Crucibles of Thulkas: Short of avoiding them, there is no way to wholly avoid the effects of a crucible of Thulkas. Creatures who can run at a speed of at least 120 feet in a round, gain a +2 circumstance bonus to their Reflex saves to avoid the eruptions. A character who makes a DC 15 Survival check would know this.

GLUTTONARIES (CR 4)

Gluttonaries are seemingly pleasant stretches of land that appear in inhospitable areas, such as deserts or marshes. They are inevitably filled with lush, fruit-bearing plants and abundant game animals. Fresh water will also be apparent, usually in the form of an inviting spring. In reality, the fruits and water are poisonous and the animals are venomous. The ground itself has the consistency of quicksand in places, consuming those foolish enough to have ventured into the gluttonary without caution.

Original Terrain: Any inhospitable terrain, particularly deserts and marshes

Traits: Recognizing gluttonaries, either from a distance or upon entering, requires a DC 30 Survival check. Should a ranger be sufficiently skilled to do so, he will notice an acrid, rotting smell in the air that reveals the presence of Gaurak's power. If the party is traveling with animals and includes a character with 5 or more ranks in Handle Animal, that character gains a +2 synergy bonus to recognize the gluttonary upon entering it, as the animals react poorly to the scent.

Rules: Any animal (GM's discretion) living inside a gluttonary gains a poisonous bite; use the size-based poison chart for Monstrous Centipedes (MM, Chapter 3) to determine the strength of this poison. The fruits and water in the gluttonary are similarly poisonous if ingested. In some areas, the ground quickly gives way like quicksand (see DMG, Chapter 3, "Wilderness Adventures," *Marsh Terrain*).

Navigating the Gluttonaries: There is no way to avoid the effects of a gluttonary except not to indulge in its offerings. Evading the animals is harder and requires either speed or a willingness to confront them.

HUNTSTEADS (CR 6)

Huntsteads are stretches of dark forest filled with brambles and thorn bushes, in addition to trees whose foliage blots out the rays of the sun. They arose in areas touched by droplets of blood from the headless body of Hrinruuk, as it wandered across Ghelspad wreaking devastation. The plants that fill these huntsteads are both toxic and ambulatory, creating a veritable death-trap for anyone who wanders into them unprepared.

Original Terrain: Forest

Traits: Recognizing a huntstead from a distance requires a DC 20 Survival check, while realizing one has stepped into a huntstead after the fact requires the same skill check at DC 15. Those who succeed will notice not only the preternaturally large thorns and trees of the area but also the crimson sap that drips from them—the sign of Hrinruuk's corruption.

Rules: Once all characters traveling in a group are within a huntstead, the brambles and briars will rapidly constrict around the party in an attempt to kill them. The brambles have the following statistics: +6 melee,

1d4 thorns for 1d4+5 points of damage per successful hit. Ordinary and magical weapons cannot harm the brambles, but fire of any sort causes them to burn and recede. If more than 30 points of fire damage is done to them, they part enough to allow everyone currently trapped to escape.

Navigating the Huntsteads: There is no way to avoid the effects of a huntstead except to wear heavy armor that makes it difficult for the brambles to penetrate, and to carry either magical or mundane flame.

PLAGUELANDS (CR 3)

Plaguelands are more common in Termana, where the body of Chern fell to mighty magical attack. Indeed, the "original" plagueland is on the northern coast of that continent; however, smaller examples have popped up elsewhere including in Ghelspad. The reason for this spread of Chern's taint is unknown, but the titan's cultists are commonly suspected. Anyone stepping within a plagueland is susceptible to attack by all manner of virulent diseases, including many that can only be cured through magic. Fortunately, the barren and desolate nature of plaguelands makes them easier to spot than many tainted lands.

Original Terrain: Plains, grasslands, and other flat terrain

Traits: Recognizing a plagueland from a distance requires a DC 20 Survival check, while realizing one has stepped into a plagueland after the fact requires the same skill check at DC 15. Plaguelands are identifiable by the noxious, choking smell in the air, as well as the bleak appearance of the surrounding terrain. Many plaguelands, particularly those near populated areas, also stink with the stench of rotting flesh. In such cases, the DC is lowered by 5.

Rules: Anyone entering a plagueland must first make a DC 14 Fortitude save to determine whether they can breathe the air. If they cannot, they begin to suffocate (see DMG, Chapter 8, "The Environment," *Suffocating*) and will die unless removed from the boundaries of the plagueland. If they succeed in the save, they can breathe but are exposed to a disease that possesses the following vectors: DC 18 Fortitude save, incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 temporary Constitution. The disease continues to afflict the victim, doing ability score damage every day until cured or the victim is dead. The disease can only be cured with a *remove curse* spell.

Navigating the Plaguelands: Plaguelands can be successfully entered by taking one of two precautions. The first is to ingest a potion made from the broadleaf tree, which, unfortunately, is found primarily in the Hornsaw Forest in the contemporary Scarred Lands. Knowing this requires a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) or Profession (herbalism) check. Properly making the potion takes three days and a DC 15 Craft (alchemy) or Profession (herbalism) check. The other tactic is to have a cleric cast a "precautionary" *remove curse* on the character. It acts as a repellent to the diseases of the plaguelands



for a period of one hour. Knowledge of this requires a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) or Heal check.

PLEASURETRAPS (CR 3)

Pleasuretraps are unusual tainted lands in that they can appear anywhere and look like any type of terrain. They arise, it is said, when fragments of the dispersed titan Gulaben fall upon fertile ground and corrupt the terrain. These fragments subtly warp the land, creating alluring scents and sounds that keep the unwary inside the pleasuretrap, where they fall prey to its intoxicants and die.

Original Terrain: Any non-water or non-marsh

Traits: Recognizing a pleasuretrap from a distance requires a DC 30 Survival check, while realizing one has stepped into a pleasuretrap after the fact requires the same skill check at DC 25. These tainted lands bear an almost perfect resemblance to the original terrain from which they arose, thus explaining the high DC to recognize them. Those who do detect its dangers, do so because of the slight purple tinge of many of the plants and terrain features, as well as the sedate and almost intoxicated behavior of the native animals. Nothing else distinguishes a pleasuretrap from normal terrain.

Rules: Every 5 minutes a character is in a pleasuretrap, he must make a DC 18 Will save or fall asleep within the tainted land. Anyone so affected cannot be awakened by any means unless removed from the pleasuretrap and allowed to breathe untainted air for 10 minutes. While asleep, the character is exposed to the inhaled poison that permeates the pleasuretrap. This poison requires a DC 15 Fortitude save every hour the character is exposed. The initial damage is 1

point of temporary Charisma damage, while the secondary damage is 1d6 temporary Charisma damage and 1 point of permanent Charisma drain.

Navigating Pleasuretraps: Pleasuretraps can be safely traversed by breathing only through the mouth rather than the nose, since it is the smell of the tainted land that causes slumber. Knowing this information requires a DC 18 Survival check. To breathe only through the mouth requires a DC 15 Concentration check every 5 minutes a character is within the boundaries of the pleasuretrap. Failure indicates the character has been exposed to the alluring scents of the land and must make the Will save described above.

SHARDGRAVES (CR 4)

Shardgraves are expanses of earthen terrain, littered with shards of broken metal mixed with the bones of animals and other creatures. The earth is reddish in color, with patches of sooty black. Shardgraves owe their origin to the shattering of Golphagga, when tiny parts of his body fell to the earth and created areas of dangerous taint. When entered, the earth and metal flies up from the ground and attempts to cut the interloper to shreds. Shardgraves can be found in both Ghelspan and Termana and, one assumes, other parts of the world as well.

Original Terrain: Hills

Traits: Recognizing a shardgrave from a distance requires a DC 20 Survival check, while realizing one has stepped into a shardgrave after the fact requires the same skill check at DC 15. As noted above, these tainted lands are littered with a mixture of bones and broken metal. Anyone with 5 or more

ranks in Knowledge (religion) gains a +2 synergy bonus to the check to recognize a shardgrave.

Rules: The flying metal found in a Shardgrave is a hazard with the following statistics: 20-ft. radius hemisphere (5d6); DC 15 Reflex save avoids.

Navigating the Shardgraves: The metal fragments that attack those who dare to travel through a shardgrave are repelled by any material encrusted with rust. To know this requires a DC 20 Survival check. To find enough rust, in the general proximity of a shardgrave, to coat one's clothing and thereby protect oneself requires a DC 15 Search check. For every two points over this total, the character may protect one additional person.

Spellcaves (CR 3)

Spellcaves are not all literally caves, but all of these tainted locals are recesses within the earth where the residual power of Mesos came to rest after he was destroyed. In them linger magic in an inchoate form, which is dangerous for any but the most potent arcane spellcasters to encounter and even many of them lack the talent to escape unscathed.

Original Terrain: Caves, crevasses, sinkholes

Traits: Recognizing a spellcave from a distance requires a DC 25 Survival check, while realizing one has stepped into a spellcave after the fact requires the same skill check at DC 20. Spellcaves look very much like ordinary caves or crevices, except that they contain a low-lying mist of unnatural, shifting color that swirls around the knees of those who enter. Anyone with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (arcane) gains a +2 synergy bonus to the check to recognize a spellcave.

Rules: Arcane magic unleashed within the confines of a spellcave is invariably warped and twisted. A DC 20 Will save is required every time magic is unleashed, whether by spell or magic item. Success means that the caster's spell is unaffected, but he takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage from the effort, literally giving up some of his strength in order to stabilize the magic as it is unleashed. Failure at this save indicates that the nonlethal damage does not occur; instead, the spell is twisted as per the Wild Magic table (see the DMG, Chapter 5, "Adventuring on Other Planes," *Planar Traits*).

Navigating the Spellcaves: There is no known way of resisting the spell-twisting magics of spellcaves. Not using magic while in the affected area is the only way to avoid the effects of this tainted land.

Stormvales (CR 14)

The titan Lethene is not well known in the contemporary Scarred Lands. Thus, her connection to stormvales is poorly understood. Even many scholars look upon these huge wind tunnels as purely natural phenomena rather than the result of a titan's taint. Stormvales possess the unusual trait of being largely unnoticeable until one has passed into them fully. Only then are the wild winds and cacophonous sounds apparent — often too late to save those caught unawares.

Original Terrain: Canyons and valleys

Traits: Recognizing a stormvale from a distance requires a DC 35 Survival check, while realizing one has stepped into a stormvale after the fact requires the same skill check at DC 15. Stormvales have their own unique weather patterns, consisting of whirling winds that whip around at high speeds, tearing up the terrain and flinging rocks and other debris into the air.

Rules: Characters who enter a stormvale are affected by a *whirlwind* spell with an infinite duration. The Reflex DC to avoid the effects of the tainted land is 22.

Navigating the Stormvales: There are no easy ways to avoid the effects of stormvales. The best means (besides avoiding them altogether) is to hug the sides of the vale and keep away from open areas while within the affected territory. This tactic confers a +2 bonus to Reflex saves to resist its effects. Characters who succeed in a DC 20 Survival check may know this tactic.

Warplands (CR 15)

Warplands are unique, in that they were not created by the destruction of any titan; they are, however, inexorably linked to one — the titan Gormoth. The so-called Writhing Lord delighted in twisting the world to his own whims, creating lands meant to be as unpredictable as they are deadly. Warplands are like physical embodiments of chaos, where the normal laws of reality do not hold. Those entering a warland quickly find themselves lost, as if transported outside the ordinary world and into another place.

Original Terrain: Any

Traits: Recognizing a warland from a distance requires a DC 15 Survival check, while realizing one has stepped into a warland after the fact requires the same skill check at DC 10. Warplands are almost immediately recognizable, as the terrain changes its shape and form quickly enough for the naked eye to notice. If one is patient and stares at a warland over a period of minutes, its true nature will become obvious. Anyone with 5 or more ranks of Spot gains a +2 synergy bonus to the check to recognize a warland.

Rules: Anyone entering a warland is immediately affected, as if the arcane spell *maze* had been cast upon them. Each person's perception is so overcome by the taint of Gormoth that each is trapped within his or her own maze rather than as a group. Thus, a party of four individuals who enter a warland will find themselves in four separate mazes, as if each were individually affected by the spell.

Navigating the Warplands: Escaping a warland unscathed is quite difficult. The best plan is to be prepared prior to entering one. This can be achieved by consuming the oil of the villum plant, which provides a +2 bonus to one's effective Intelligence when determining how long it takes to escape from the *maze*-like effect of the warland. Familiarity with this method requires a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) or Profession (herbalist) check. Finding a villum plant with sufficient oil to provide this boon requires a successful DC 22 Survival check.

book two

ROGUES



CHAPTER FOUR

the WAYS

OF SHADOW

Always know the law before you break it. Almost anything is permissible if you can prove it's not expressly forbidden, and nothing is more fun than legally forcing them to apologize while you're still getting away with the loot.

— Temsheh the Witty

The Laws of the Land

at your request, honored reeve telos, I have here compiled an overview of the many types of Laws that exist across our world. to better serve you, I have included references to the countries that currently practice these diverse legal traditions, as well as providing basic guidelines on how best to circumvent each when necessary. as you can see, my Lord patriarch, though it may seem on the surface that every kingdom, empire or nation that has ever claimed territory has written and followed its own complex code of Laws and social traditions, this assumption proves fallacious upon close examination. it has become my understanding, over the course of my extensive research into the history and current practice of Law all over these scarred lands, that most legal codes are basically derived from only a handful of ancient or divine origins. each of these sources is described in detail below, along with the relevant information current to our modern world. I am sure much of what is written here you have already learned from experience, but it is my hope that the compilation of this information in one place will provide a readily useful resource for the continued worldwide increase of our family's many enterprises.

yours faithfully,

guernicas of house asuras

p.s. I would like to thank you, uncle, for your kind sympathy and much needed advice upon my rejection by the Loremasters of Lokil. you were absolutely right, as always. I did not belong in the seclusion of Lokil, away from my family and the realities of life. I am confident that my skills as a scholar can be much better put to use among those of my own blood. I can never repay you for taking such an interest in my future and troubling yourself to remind me of my filial duty.

The families of law, listed below, are organized in order of their antiquity as legal systems. Each type begins with a brief description and history, includes suggestions for how best to make each set of laws work in one's favor, and provides a list of countries whose legal practices are based on that system.

The Ways of the Tribes

The oldest and simplest form of law, the ways of the tribes have undoubtedly existed far longer than even the most ancient records can relate. Certainly those who follow such traditions rarely bother to write them down — for that matter, many practitioners are unable to write at all. Indeed, the only documentation we have of a fairly pure ancient tribal law system comes from a dubious old Ledean text, entitled *The Ways of the Northern Barbarian*, by Kandos the Scribe. Within its pages, Kandos faithfully, if patronizingly, details the culture and traditions of Albadia as it existed during the height of the Ledean Empire. I was uncertain at first as to the text's accuracy, but upon further research I have discovered that nearly every tribal nation in the known world, such as that of the Urkhadi of the Sweltering Plains and the many tribes of southern Termana, maintains still today a code similar to that practiced in Albadia many centuries ago.

Whether this code is somehow inherent in the nature of a primitive but sentient mind, or if it has been given to all these many different peoples by some mysterious higher being, cannot be said. Nevertheless, the ways of the tribes have a certain simplistic beauty. Each member of the tribe must behave at all times with honor, which generally consists of being both respectful of others and courageous. Furthermore, tribal members must also avoid all the traditional local taboos. These prohibited actions can be extensive, and include not only such ordinary things as dishonesty, incest, and the breaking of oaths, but also contain all manner of superstitious nonsense — like working during the full moon, eating meat prepared by a pregnant woman, and so forth (most of which vary wildly from tribe to tribe).

If a person is caught being dishonorable, he or she is punished on a fairly unique and individual basis, depending on the reasons for the infraction as well as the person's history and connections within the tribe. If honor is in question, the person is put through some manner of test — of skill, or strength, or sometimes of pure superstition (“If a worm lies within this apple, you are innocent of the crime”).

Leadership is decided even more simplistically: by strength. A strong warrior who is honorable is obviously favored by whatever spiritual or divine patrons



the tribe may claim, and as such is meant to lead. A strong warrior who is dishonorable must obviously have stolen his powers or bargained with a demon or other wicked spirit to acquire them. He is banished or killed. Leadership can be challenged at any time, with the usual exception of during a battle or hunt. If the contender is successful, obviously the victorious new leader was meant to run the tribe — until he in turn is later defeated, of course. Women are often (though certainly not always) banned from leadership and fighting; they do, however, enjoy many rights and generally a great deal of individual authority. This fact is especially true in Albadia, where magical talent is considered a “woman’s art.” The elderly of both sexes are highly regarded, and it is often taboo for a leader to act without the local elders’ approval.

Notes: On a small scale, this system would appear to be remarkably effective for maintaining peace, order and tradition. In fact, when dealing with the small tribes we often conduct business with, I would not suggest even attempting to bend their rules of behavior. Infractions can be punished in some highly barbaric and gruesomely creative ways indeed.

These peoples tend to have little concept of the value of goods in the marketplaces outside their homes, however, and this ignorance can work greatly to our advantage. Without ever touching their taboos or sullyng our “honor,” we can still turn an immense profit. A handful of decent weapons or sometimes even cheap (yet hard to acquire) trinkets, for example, can be traded for vast amounts of grain, pelts, hand-crafted jewelry or weeks of faithful service. Under such conditions, what need could we have for illegal activity? A bit of diplomatic salesmanship does wonders, all on its own. An important caution, however, is that some rare tribes actually have no concept whatsoever of property or trade. Such communities tend to be very generous, and a careful diplomat can arrange a trade-like relationship through the judicious giving and receiving of “gifts.” On the other hand, without an understanding of property the tribes have little comprehension of theft either, and they may think nothing of taking whatever they like from an envoy that is too friendly and open.

Current followers of the Ways of the Tribes (on the small scale): Those who live by these simple laws include the hundreds of different small tribes, of various races and allegiances, that roam within Termana’s mighty Gamulganjus. In Ghelspad — aside from the nearby Urkhadi, the Keltai of Darakeene and perhaps the Riders of Mansk — nearly all practitioners of this system are titanspawn. Indeed, most titanspawn law is tribal at best; but the orcs, proud and even ratmen we have encountered clearly show that they do indeed follow their own version of tribal laws. I will emphasize that the remarks I made above, about honorable behavior, hold true even for titanspawn; simply keep in mind

that their ideas of honor may be very, very different from what might hold true for a human community.

Additional notes: On a larger scale, tribal law is largely ineffective and much easier to circumvent. Those who take and hold power in such circumstances, though they may make an outward show of honor and respect for tradition, tend to be corrupt or easily corrupted. In any case they are generally more educated, civilized and harder to fool. It seems to me that so long as we can buy the approval of the local leadership and maintain a façade of legality for the common people, we can probably do as we like within these larger barbarian civilizations. Any place in which we cannot obtain the protection of the rulers is probably too dangerous to be very profitable, as such governments tend to be fractious and unstable.

Current followers of the Ways of the Tribes (on the large scale): A few such large tribal settlements exist among the ratmen of the Mourning Marshes, and possibly in Termana’s mysterious Blood Bayou. Otherwise, the ways of the tribes tend to be mixed and tempered with other, more advanced, legal systems once populations grow too large and diverse for tribal law to hold much sway. Examples of this modified or “civilized” tribal law exist in Albadia, Darakeene, and Ontenazu in Ghelspad, and in the Tepuje Cities and North and South Crilos in Termana.

THE DWARVEN EDICTS

The first laws to ever be recorded by the people who lived them, the Dwarven Edicts were an enormous step forward for civilization as we know it. Simplistic and sometimes naïve as they are, these early laws began to allow for order on a much larger and more diverse scale. The legal system of the Dwarven Imperium basically detailed what was specifically meant by “honorable” and “respectful” behavior. Sensible taboos, such as those against incest, rape and murder, were made official and dealt with in a consistent and orderly manner. Petty and superstitious taboos were (largely) left out and not enforced. A simple and small hierarchy of judges, from local magistrates on up to the Dwarven King, was empowered to judge and punish infractions, or send them to a higher court as necessary.

Much more importantly, however, the Dwarven Edicts recorded and detailed the relatively new concept of property value. Theft, for the very first time, could carry a specific and consistent punishment regardless of what was stolen or from whom. Prior to this, even though many tribes had laws concerning personal property and theft of cattle or wives, each individual incident of theft resulted in a potentially different application of law and thus a different punishment — creating a ridiculously complicated and often very unfair system. Under the dwarves, everything was given a specific worth in iron, and punishments were always based on the crime’s relative iron value. Most histori-

ans agree that this shift in property law was absolutely vital to the eventual adoption of a monetary system and a market economy. In other words, without the Dwarven Edicts, House Asuras might be in an entirely different line of work.

Notes: The most convenient thing about the Dwarven Edicts, and the laws still based on them, is their simple trust in the basic goodness of their citizens. Though the military was willing to enforce law whenever necessary, it was generally assumed that suppression of criminal activity was not a major portion of the army's duties. No policing was done, per se, and a crime — for all practical purposes — did not even exist until someone brought it to the attention of the local magistrate. I am certain it must be obvious to you, honored Reeve, that in such circumstances, the easiest way to prevent legal consequences is simply to make certain that the magistrate never hears of the crime. Whether this entails making certain the information never reaches the appropriate individuals, or simply convincing the magistrate to be very hard of hearing when it suits us, probably depends on the individual situation.

Sadly, modern times have become too complicated for the Dwarven Edicts to stand on their own in any but the most remote and rural of villages. Even the laws of dwarven lands are not nearly so trusting or plain these days. Countries whose legal systems were originally based on the dwarven methods, now commonly combine them with ideas borrowed from both the Ledean Codex and the newer Laws of Mithril. Oftentimes, even principles established in the Ganjus Concords are utilized, to deal with the intricacies of modern trade and civilization. What results is a much more foolproof system of law than that originally conceived of by the dwarven progenitors.

In general, breaking the law in these regions is rarely profitable. Even bribing officials usually only works on a temporary or one-time basis. In such idealistic communities, even other forms of persuasion and infraction are not recommended, as the local clientele tends to be extremely unsympathetic when such practices are discovered. Being caught once can destroy an entire venture, no matter how affordable the fine. A creative accountant can often save an enterprise hundreds or even thousands of gold a year in taxes, however, which is sometimes all the edge a competitive business needs.

Interestingly enough, the truly shady and blatantly illegal pursuits tend to have a better chance of success in Dwarven Edict based legal systems than do "mostly legal" businesses with respectable fronts. My best guess as to why this is so, is that the more hidden and "wrong" an activity, the more the people, government and militia are apt to pretend it doesn't and couldn't possibly exist. Maintaining a client base under



HEDRADA AND THE DWARVEN EDICTS

Many have claimed that the Dwarven Edicts were originally inspired by the essence of Pure Law. When the gods were created, that same essence took form in the person of the god Hedrada. If this is the case, it would seem only natural that the laws outlined in Hedrada's holy text would greatly resemble the Dwarven Edicts. Indeed, to the mind of a schooled lawyer, Hedrada's scriptural laws do read something like a far more complicated, less naïve version of the Dwarven Edicts.



such conditions is difficult, however, and sometimes expensive as well, so proceed with caution.

Current followers of the Dwarven Edicts: In their purest form, the Dwarven Edicts are only followed in small and out-of-the-way regions of the Celestial Shelf, the Kelder Steppes and the Kelder Mountains. In a modified and modernized form, the Dwarven Edicts still exist in Burok Torn, Durrover and Vesh, as well as — arguably — in Hedrad and other Hedrada-worshipping nations.

Special note on Burok Torn: the dwarves there are so deeply paranoid that nearly any secretive behavior is likely to be interpreted as treason, a crime that carries the dwarves' worst form of capital punishment. Illicit activity of any kind is therefore not recommended, considering the unfavorable risk to benefit ratio.

THE GANJUS CONCORDS

Nearly as old as the Dwarven Edicts, though they were recorded much later, the Ganjus Concords were the first post-tribal legal system adopted by the wood elves of the Ganjus, Broadreach (now known as the Hornsaw) and surrounding regions. As wood elf civilization grew and stabilized, the elves' neighbors began to admire and seek to imitate elven society. Governments actually requested that the elves send them what amounted to missionaries, and the Denev-worshipping elves were happy to oblige. Eventually, much of Albadian, Ontenazan and rural halfling tribal law was deeply colored by the earth-centric values of Vera-Tre and the Broadreach Horizon. In fact, the region around Amalthea actually adopted the Concords almost without alteration.

The most fascinating and incomprehensible thing about these laws is that, wherever possible (sometimes even when desperately impractical by our standards), all natural and dire creatures — even plants! — are to be treated as citizens. Certainly, they are citizens with

fewer rights than their humanoid neighbors; but every single natural living thing is still considered to be worthy of respect and freedom, and in certain cases even an opinion (through the use of druidic nature-communing magic). This puts a whole new spin on the concept of murder, since killing a plant or animal citizen for food, clothing or shelter is considered perfectly reasonable, so long as it is done respectfully and for a necessary purpose. Murder of one's own kind or any similar species is still viewed as an evil act and is punished accordingly, but in many cases the penalty for a wasteful murder of a very old tree, for example, can be almost as harsh.

This fanatic obsession with the rights of all life, coupled with an acceptance of needful death, leads to some odd religious cults, among other things. But even more importantly, these attitudes create a culture that is oddly both somewhat amoral and also almost entirely non-materialistic. Interestingly enough, without greed and envy to fuel it, crime seems to be something that no one wants to bother with. On the other hand, if material objects mean so little, what is the point in punishing theft when it occurs?

Notes: I have found, Reeve Telos, that countries who follow the traditional laws of the Ganjus Concords are generally quite tolerant of any and all behavior — even the dishonest variety — so long as it does not wastefully harm living things (even indirectly). The penalties for being caught cheating a customer or even stealing from the government are just not significant enough to deter any who are intent upon such activities (again, so long as they do not harm the natural world, even indirectly). Nevertheless, trying to run a business in a region where the citizens feel no particular need to buy anything, is rather like trying to bathe without water, soap or a tub.

Rather than permanent operations in such areas, I suggest seasonal caravans at most or — better yet — ignoring such people completely until they come to us with some specific need. Of course, we should make certain that it is to us that they come for the few items they do seem willing to trade for. At that point, we can charge an exorbitant rate for the “inconvenience of shipping so far out of our usual trade routes.” While not an ideal solution, I personally believe this to be the best use of an otherwise highly unprofitable market.

Current followers of the Ganjus Concords: Though there is still a hint of these elven based attitudes in much of Albadian, Amalthean and Ontenazan thought, and the ideas of Vera-Tre are even beginning to somewhat appear in Vesh, this is more in a context of social mores rather than official law. Making a show of protecting the land in these countries is a good idea, but other legal systems certainly hold a far greater sway. The only major population that sincerely continues to live by a fairly pure version

of the Ganjus Concords is that of the elves of Vera-Tre, who seem to prefer to keep to themselves and disregard the norms of commerce and crime that exist in other cultures

The Codes of Balhashia

The Codes of Balhashia, which originated in the ancient Empire of the Flame, almost do not bear mentioning as a major legal system — since if anything they are more conducive to chaos than to law and order. Nevertheless, this system (and others much like it) exists in abundance in our modern world and provides all manner of interesting opportunities for enterprising business-owners of all types. Indeed, more than any other system I have studied, these legal codes are based largely on the assumption that all the divine races are naturally dishonest, covetous, irresponsible and self-indulgent *and* that this is a perfectly acceptable state of affairs. Instead of attempting to suppress such tendencies, the Codes of Balhashia seek merely to channel them in easily controlled ways.

Nearly everything is legal under such a system, provided that an individual is licensed for such behavior by the appropriate government sanctioned guild. Thieves, assassins (murderers), prostitutes, chance-house lords and drug and slave dealers are all allowed to go about their “business” — that is, as long as their papers are in order. In the case of someone committing an unlicensed act, that individual is simply turned over to the appropriate guild house, to be dealt with in whatever manner the guild leader sees fit. Death or dismemberment are common punishments, however, even for relatively small unlicensed crimes; some of the guilds are more lenient and simply pressure criminals into joining the guild for an exorbitant fee, at which point they are licensed and turned back onto the streets. Under this system of rule anyone with enough money and connections may buy a vote on the city council, and the most powerful of those individuals then gets to be called ruler. Every guild, merchant house, wizards' college or other major establishment employs its own security, buys insurance from the thieves' guild or sells itself to some larger organization that can protect it. There is no established city military or police force in this type of culture. But local militia units, generally made up entirely of mercenaries, are common among the wealthy. Overall, it is easy to identify a community with this type of legal system; bribes and blackmail are the status quo, and virgins are far more rare than diamonds.

Though the Balhashian Codes (named for Balhashia ber Thulkor, who was probably merely the scribe that pounded them into their brass tablets) were the first laws of this type ever to be recorded, similar forms of government have sprung up all over the world and throughout history. What is especially interesting is that often there is no apparent connection to the



cultural influences of the Empire of Flame. It is my belief that if tribal law is what comes naturally to humanoids, then something like the Codes of Balhashia (which I personally refer to as Guild Law) is what comes naturally to humanoids forced to live among diverse strangers whom they cannot trust or understand.

Notes: There is little to say. How much power and freedom we wield under such a system depends almost entirely on how much we choose to take. Certainly we have the resources to seize outright control of some such governments, and so long as the local economy is reasonably stable, we are all but guaranteed to turn a good profit.

Current followers of the Codes of Balhashia: No current culture truly follows the Codes in their purest form, but governments that draw from or coincidentally resemble the Balhashia Codes are numerous. Lageni, New Venir, and Shelzar are prominent examples from Ghelspad; in Termana, the nations of Azale, Padrinola, Sunharrow, Thorvalos, and possibly a few of the forsaken elf realms, such as Kasiavael and Pelegael, all employ elements found in the Codes. Before it was conquered by Calastia, Zathiske would also have been included in the Ghelspad list.

The Ledean Codex

Ah, the mighty Ledean Empire. It may sound oversimplified, but our Ledean predecessors are the true founders of all modern law in Ghelspad. Without hesitation, I would assert that every single civilized nation or city on the continent has drawn at least some small portion of its legal code from the Ledean Codex. Without the far-reaching influence of the Empire of Lede, we would undoubtedly be living in a very different world.

The most notable feature of the Ledean Codex is that it was the first legal system designed for a gold-based capitalist economy, such as still prevails in Ghelspad. Furthermore, this method of law was the first to carefully and legally outline caste hierarchy. During its time, the Ledean court system was also unique for its complexity, which granted a huge amount of power to lawyers — as the only people who could fully claim to understand all aspects of the law. Very few individuals, other than those whose profession directly involved the law, had the luxury or education to make any kind of serious study of the labyrinthine Ledean Codex. This, of course, resulted in the average citizen developing a level of apathy and acceptance in matters of law, much like the attitude we commonly find in several of today's largest and most powerful nations.

The last particularly notable aspect of Ledeian law is that, in its unaltered form, it grants the least equality to women of all the legal systems listed here. Tribal law and the Iron Edicts both tend to favor males slightly, but under the Ledeian Codex women are always far lower on the complex power hierarchy than their own husbands and sons.

Notes: The very complexity of the Ledeian Codex inevitably works in our favor. Simply by employing competent legal advocates, we can easily find all manner of tax loopholes, as well as the best ways to conduct illicit activities to ensure that, if caught, we will always incur the minimum possible penalty. Also, the capitalist nature of the system grants a family as wealthy as ours an enormous amount of power through the greed of others. Bribery is usually illegal, but often quite common and even socially acceptable if done with subtlety. Those areas that still follow a caste hierarchy can sometimes be a problem, as being numbered among the common merchants is hardly an appropriate position for our house to operate from. Fortunately, buying or marrying into the nobility is often an option; and of course, our house rarely has trouble securing the loyalty of a few key local authority figures.

Current followers of the Ledeian Codex: As with so many of these ancient legal systems, no pure practitioners of Ledeian tradition exist today. The closest system to that of ancient Lede is the broad-reaching Calastian Hegemony. Most other nations have been more selective as to what aspects they choose to adopt from Ledeian law, commonly abandoning the caste system as well as the overt sexism of Lede. These more “enlightened” nations profess to uphold an ideal of pure equality. In reality, the “equality” usually works out to a purely wealth-based power hierarchy, more than perfect for our family’s purposes. Nearly every nation in Ghelspad could be listed here, but Amalthea and Darakeene are especially good examples.

THE IRON EDICTS

The Iron Edicts were supposedly written by the hand of Chardun himself. On the off chance that this is actually true, I have firmly resolved to never either anger or worship Chardun in any way. The greatest lesson I have garnered from my studies of this system of law, is that it is important to avoid Chardun’s notice at all costs. In other words, the Iron Edicts were not created by a kind or sympathetic lawgiver. A mere cursory glance through a copy of the Lex Charduni, for example, was enough to inspire a prayer to Enkili that I never be required to visit the Land of Chains under any pretext.

Citizenry of those nations that follow the Iron Edicts are in constant danger for their lives. It is a system of law that extends far into the minutiae of everyday life. What is worse, is that the slightest infraction can — at the whims of a superior — be interpreted

as a deliberate and heretical violation of Chardun’s own will and punished accordingly. Unsurprisingly, a lifetime of slavery is an all too common punishment. Every citizen must be on constant guard, with never a moment for thought or ambition, against the very real and terrifying peril of accidental offense.

As might be expected, the most common “major” crime committed in these lands is that of attempted escape. Such endeavors are rarely successful and often prove fatal to the perpetrator, and yet they continue unabated year after year, even, albeit rarely, among the upper classes. This clearly illustrates, I believe, the inherent problems and discomfort caused by this system of law.

Like all of our house, I have never been one to take sides in the affairs of the world. Good and evil, gods and titans — such lines in the sand matter little to me. I must admit, quietly of course, that a study of Chardun’s law has lowered my opinion of him considerably. Our house fares much better, I believe, under the whimsical protection of the Mistress of Storms.

Notes: While a great deal of profit can be had from dealing in large transactions arranged directly with the governments and armies of Iron Edicts lands, I do not recommend even the most legal and straightforward of permanent business ventures in such countries. The risk of losing both property and the lives of skilled employees is inordinately high, and the chance for major profit among such tightly controlled and frightened people is all but nil. Some of the major capital and border cities support enough diversity to spark a livelier economy and somewhat more permissive law-enforcement, and these areas might show promise (especially with an excellent information network and the direct protection of the local leaders). Any business in a city where our people are the only foreigners, however, is likely to operate at a loss — hopefully of money alone.

Current followers of the Iron Edicts: The purest version of these laws is undoubtedly the Lex Charduni in Termana’s Land of Chains, also known as the Charduni Empire. Here in Ghelspad, Dunahnae’s legal system strays only slightly from the original Iron Edicts. The government of Glivid-Autel also resembles this system closely enough to bear mentioning here, even if the necromancers do not typically worship Chardun. Calastian law, under the reign of King Virduk, has adopted a few aspects of the Iron Edicts into its traditions, as have several governments in Termana. Fortunately these other nations, including Karsian, Padrinola, Sunharrow, and Thorvalos, are still perfectly safe for business ventures, the main bodies of their laws emerging from other sources.

THE ELDURA-TRE CONCORDS

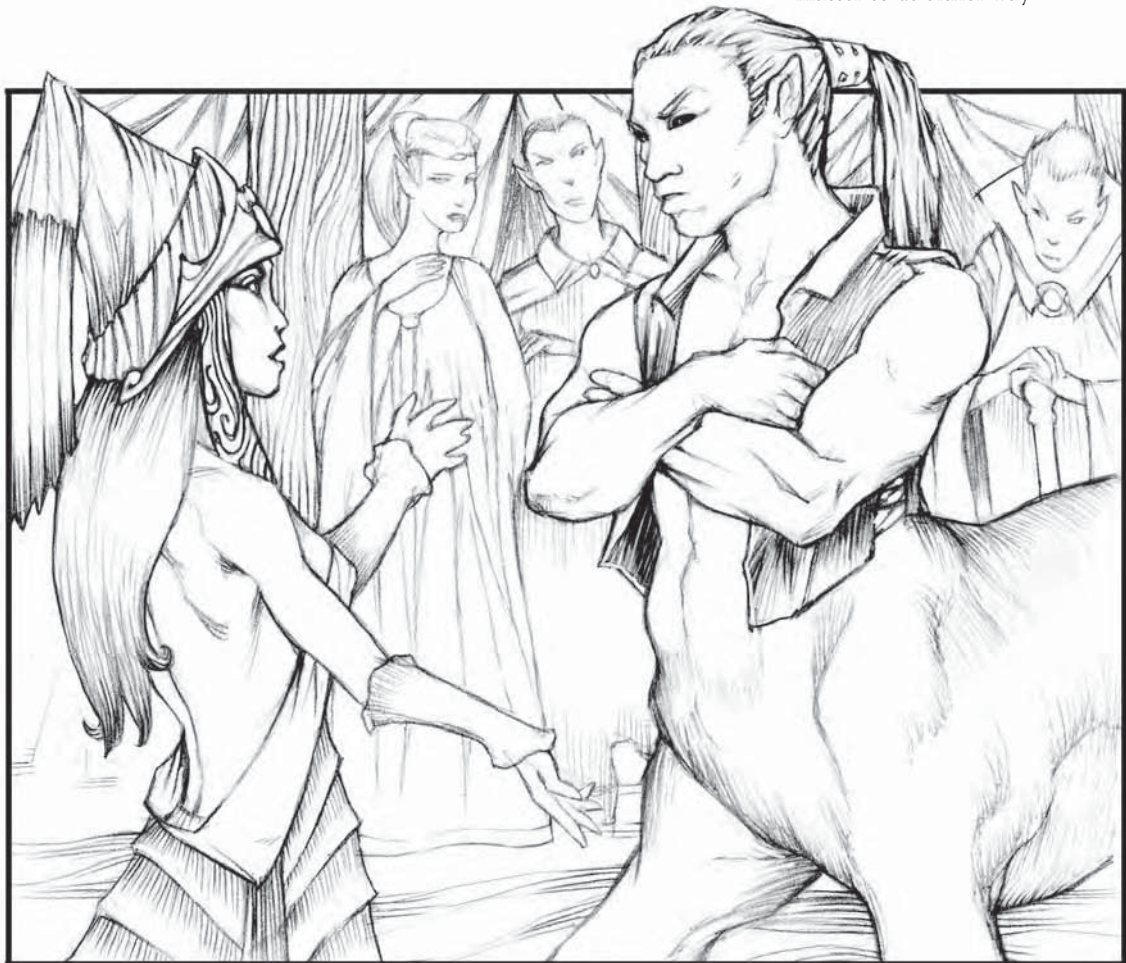
A set of laws nearly contemporary with the Iron Edicts, the Eldura-Tre Concord were originally given to the people now known as the Forsaken Elves — presum-

ably gifted to them by their forgotten demigod. In their purest form, these Concords resemble a surprisingly coherent and apparently effective combination of the Ganjus Concords and the conglomerate legal system of modern Vesh. One of the most unique aspects of the system is its emphasis on education for the entire populace, above nearly all else; even more unusual is its detailed formulas on the treatment of all non-humanoids.

Like the wood elves, the high elves gave certain rights to plants and animals (though the Concords of Eldura-Tre handled this concept in a much more practical and reasonable manner than those of the Ganjus). In addition to this, the laws of Eldura-Tre dealt with the proper treatment of unnatural creatures as well, even including titanspawn aberrations and extraplanar outsiders. Apparently, before the Divine War, the magic of these realms was so great and so common that summoning of, and conversations with, all manner of creatures was considered a perfectly ordinary occurrence. This becomes evident in the detail and attention given by specific laws to govern such actions. Granted, non-humanoids were generally treated as pets or slaves rather than as citizens, but they were not unprotected by the law (which is more consideration than unnatural beings receive in any other culture I have studied).

Notes: Though legally similar, as I have noted, to both Vera-Tre and Vesh, the Eldura-Tre Concords would seem to be much more hospitable to House Asuras than either of these. Far more interested in material possessions than their wood elven cousins and far less morally snobbish than the Veshians, the traditional government of the now forsaken elves would, in all probability, have been a very pleasant place for us to do business. Unfortunately, this system no longer exists, and those who currently claim to follow the Eldura-Tre Concords tend to interpret them in wildly different (and sometimes blatantly contradictory) ways. Nevertheless, several of these nations, particularly the Skysight and Midrealms, might make excellent customers.

Current followers of the Eldura-Tre Concords: All of the elven realms of Termana still claim to follow the Eldura-Tre Concords, though their versions would appear to differ widely. In any case, these realms include Ehitovael, Ganjulael, Kasiavael, Pelegael, and Sylavael. There is some evidence that both Azale and Sunharrow have taken certain traditions from the Concords, but in the case of Sunharrow especially, this is surely unintentional. The Eternal Isle may or may not follow a purer form of the Concords of Eldura-Tre, but since no one can enter or leave that place, it can hardly matter to us either way.



THE LAWS OF MITHRIL

The most newly established legal system, the Laws of Mithril were inspired by the strict codes of honor and virtue to which paladins adhere. As such, they are — rather obviously — not based so much on practical efficiency or any kind of understanding of basic human nature as on the unattainable ideal of everyone going out of their way to be nice to everyone else, all the time.

As might be expected, this system tends to work very well in regions where the vast majority of the populace truly believes in the codes of virtue to begin with. In regions populated by normal people of many different faiths and creeds or lack thereof, it either breaks down quickly or must be tempered by other, saner systems. Nevertheless, nations that revere Corean and Madriel seem to have a huge amount of respect for the Laws of Mithril and can't seem to help paying at least lip service to the inclusion of the paladin codes in their legal systems.

In any case, the major uniqueness of this legal system is its obsession with Truth and Justice as opposed to simple order. The idea of an innocent person being mistakenly punished is apparently so abhorrent to Corean's paladins, that they would rather see the wicked escape unpunished if the evidence surrounding the crime is not sufficient. In addition, the Laws of Mithril make far more provisions for the welfare of the weak and downtrodden, such as orphaned children, the elderly and the sick and crippled. Surprisingly, this does not appear to become too much of a burden on the

local economies, though this is perhaps because such laws are generally only instated by countries that are already relatively wealthy and prosperous.

Notes: In regions where the common people truly believe in the tenets of the Laws of Mithril, it is probably best to not only keep all operations above board but also to make some show of generously helping the poor. Merchants who appear to be “greedy” are often considered suspect by the local paladins (and more importantly by local customers). However, all large cities, even those dedicated directly to Corean himself, have a criminal element and even a criminal sector. Interestingly enough, the stricter the local laws, the more active and vicious the local criminal element. Should we need to take certain legal shortcuts, the means to do so are always there aplenty, and the paladins' efforts to never punish the innocent (they call it “innocent until proven guilty”) can easily work in our favor. Enkili forbid that we are ever caught in association with a criminal element in a Coreanic city, but discretion, to twist an old cliché, tends to get the better of valor.

Current followers of the Laws of Mithril: Obviously the purest form of this legal system is in the Coreanic city of Mithril. Similar codes of law exist in the Bridged City, the Gleaming Valley, Uria and even in Madriel-dedicated Silverisle in Termana. Other regions that have recently borrowed a few ideas from the Laws of Mithril include Burok Torn, Durrover and Vesh.

CHAPTER FIVE

POWER OF the GUILDS

Aye, you're right. There's nowhere to run — my people are watching all the exits from this building, with crossbows at the ready. I have but to gesture and my mage friend over there will be all over you with magical harm. What? Kill you? No, no — after this kind of a chase? We want you to join the guild, you silly boy. Skills like yours are too rare to waste. We just want them working for us, you see.

— Rithol the Gold, “recruiter” for the Scaled.

Though many think of rogues as being antisocial and solitary, in point of fact it is very difficult for most rogues to survive and prosper, in a world that disapproves of them, *without* banding together. In fact, with the exception of clerics and their temples, there are probably more guilds, organizations, leagues, clubs and societies for rogues than there are for any other adventuring class in the Scarred Lands. Below are described some of the typical groups rogues might belong to, along with the customary skills and feats that members of these organizations usually possess.

Thieves' Guilds

Thieves' guilds in the Scarred Lands tend to be brutal organizations that allow the most skilled and stealthy of society's dregs to come together and do business, exchange intelligence and learn skills from other thieves. Usually there is a hierarchy among members, with simple pickpockets, prostitutes and beggars on the bottom, and ruffians, thugs and cutthroats the next rung up (mostly because they use greater force to maintain their positions). Skilled burglars, smugglers, fences and assassins are above these, due to their superior experience and abilities. In control of the organizations are usually the local owners of shady

businesses (also arranged in a hierarchy based on their monetary and political clout).

Aside from areas with a particularly strong Scaled presence or other dominant thieves' guild like the Kilharman League, nearly every major city in Ghelspad and many in Termana can be expected to have at least one typical thieves' guild. If there is more than a single guild in any community, however, they are usually in constant and even violent competition with one another. Some of the most exceptional thieves' guilds are outlined below.

Preferred Skills and Feats: These vary widely throughout the guild. For individual types of thieves (such as ruffians or burglars), see Chapter Six.

BEGGARS' GUILD

The human lands of western Termana are for the most part harsh and brutal vestiges of civilized culture. There is little protection or even sympathy for the poor and the unfortunate, the aged and the orphaned. The nobles and governments of these lands (those that can claim government at all) are unfeeling and corrupt; the middle classes are amoral and busy struggling for their own survival. In conditions as dire as these, those who cannot care for themselves have nowhere to turn but to each other.

No one knows exactly how and where the Beggars' Guild began, but over the course of several decades it has spread throughout the Gray Isle, North and South Crilos, Sunharrow, Thorvalos, Padrinola, and even into oppressive Karsian (especially in the City of the Poor, just outside the walls of the capital). Anyone may join this guild, but as all guild members must share everything they gain with their fellows, those who join are usually individuals with nothing to lose. The old, the crippled, the leprous, the orphaned, the mad — these make up the Beggars' Guild. Most are street performers, pickpockets and, of course, beggars, but some are ruffians or cutthroats as well. A very rare few are priests, monks or other large-hearted souls who have only pledged their allegiance to the guild by choice. They all help each other to find food, shelter, and medicine, and they also protect fellow guild members as best they can from violence, injustice, and the ever-looming threat that the Jack of Tears will come one night with his Carnival and spirit them away to the Blood Bayou.

Location: Northwestern Termana (outside the Blood Bayou), mostly in urban areas.

Alignment: Any; chaotic is common and evil is rare. The two laws of the Beggars' Guild are: never harm another member, and always share whatever you have to give (including services as well as goods) with the group. Those who break the rules more than once or twice are simply not helped any more, and word of their expulsion is passed to other cities.

Allies and Enemies: The Beggars' Guild has a few small and localized allies, such as temples of the good gods. Its enemies include oppressive local law enforcement or competitive thieves' guilds. For the most part, however, the Beggars' Guild is universally ignored, so long as its members stay out of everyone's way.

Notable Personages: The Beggars' Guild has a popular legendary hero named Isset. Isset, so the story goes, was once a noble paladin of Corean; the chaos and pain that followed the Divine War placed her in repeated circumstances where she had to cheat, steal, trick or lie herself and her faithful comrades out of dangers. Eventually, her burden of "sins" became too great. Corean stripped her of paladin powers and ordered her on a quest of redemption. Instead of abandoning her friends to placate her deity, however, Isset forsook her former allegiance and devoted the rest of her existence to bettering the lives of the poor and to forming the Beggars' Guild. She eventually died a martyr. This last part of the tale, at least, seems plausible.

The Beggar's Guild of every region claims Isset for its own, however, and tells a vastly differ-

ent version of the tale, save for the bare details outlined here. Oddly enough, the majority of "beggars" seem to agree that all the different versions of the tale are true — even those that directly contradict one another. Another inconsistency is that after Isset lost her powers as a paladin, she never again entered any kind of clerical or druidic order, and yet, according to the tales, her miraculous powers of healing and succor only grew as time went on. Some members of the Beggars' Guild even suggest her goodness was so great that she became a demigoddess herself, and small cults of Isset exist in some regions. Outside the Beggars' Guild, however, tales of Isset are treated with condescension at best and at worst with legal hostility. The cults have as yet produced no divine spellcasters, nor any other proof that Isset — chaotic good demigoddess of the poor — exists.

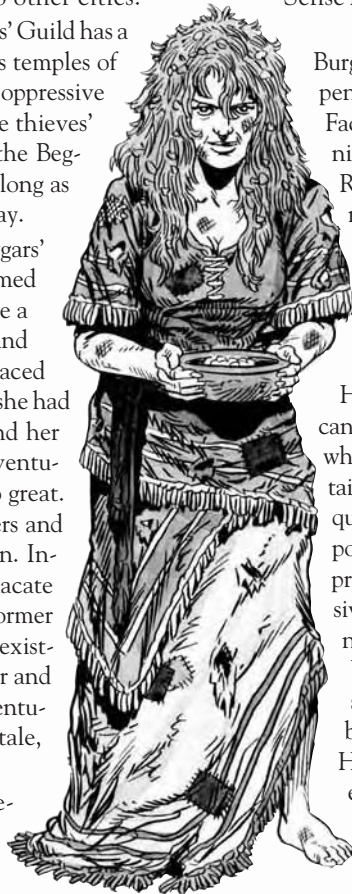
Signs of Brotherhood: Every poor soul in northwestern Termana knows the phrase, "only the helpless can help me now." Anyone who utters these words to any beggar or street urchin will be led to a gathering place and informed of the rules. From the point that the newcomer has verbally accepted and agreed to these mandates, then that individual is considered a "beggar," with all the rights and responsibilities thereof.

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Craft (any), Escape Artist, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Perform (any), Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, Spot, Tumble.

Preferred Feats: Acrobatic, Alertness, Burglar (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dodge, Great Fortitude, Honest Face (see Appendix One), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Quick (see Appendix One), Run, Sturdy (see Appendix One), Toughness, Urban Track (see Appendix One), Well Connected (see Appendix One).

Hwyrdd's Chosen

Though the accuracy of their name has been the subject of much debate in the Heteronomy of Virduk and elsewhere, it cannot be denied that the halfling renegades who call themselves Hwyrdd's Chosen certainly mean well. This band of crafty knaves quite literally robs from the rich to feed the poor and uses guile and guerilla tactics to protect and rescue their people from oppressive tyrants whenever they can. Of course, not all the inhabitants of the Heteronomy of Virduk thank them for this. Content to simply be at peace and to make their way as best they can, many halflings are angry with Hwyrdd's Chosen for stirring up trouble. Nevertheless, in Hwyrdd's name they struggle on, hoping to one day win independence for their nation once more.



Location: Mostly in the Heteronomy of Virduk, with a hideout in the border regions of the deadly Hornsaw Forest. Hwyrdd's Chosen will try to help halflings in need no matter how far they have to travel, however, and they always go wherever they feel they can do the most good.

Alignment: Usually neutral or neutral good.

Allies: Though they are somewhat dubious about their newly returned elven neighbors, Hwyrdd's Chosen do occasionally receive some measure of aid from the unpredictable Broadreach elves of Clan Lizard.

Enemies: Adversaries of this group include anyone who harms or oppresses halflings, but their usual foes are King Virduk and his law enforcement agents in the Heteronomy.

Notable Personages: Hwyrdd's Chosen are led by Vohro Nobi (*male halfling Rog6/Rng5, NG*), a young and charismatic man with a love of both justice and adventure. Nobi does his best to keep his robberies and rescues from hurting anyone, and as yet there have been no deaths attributed to Hwyrdd's Chosen, not even among the Calastians. An earnest and poetic soul, anyone who speaks face to face with Vohro Nobi will find it difficult to dislike this sincere halfling leader.

Signs of Brotherhood: Unless they are in disguise, Hwyrdd's Chosen always wear either brown feathers or fresh green leaves in their caps or buttonholes.

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Craft (any), Disguise, Escape Artist, Heal, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Profession (any), Spot, Survival.

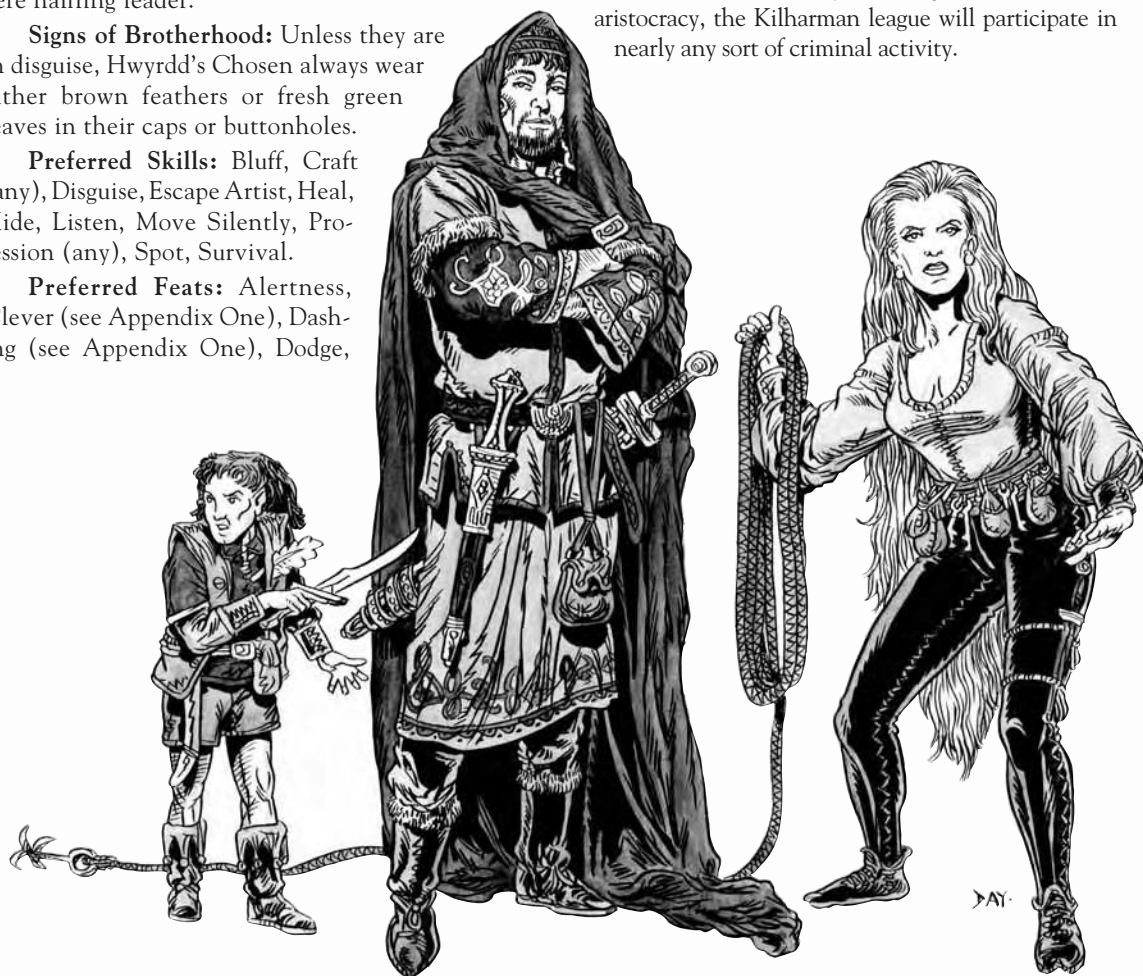
Preferred Feats: Alertness, Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Dodge,

Honest Face (see Appendix One), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick (see Appendix One), Weapon Finesse.

The Kilharman League

One of Ghelspad's most interesting and formidable thieves' guilds is certainly the Kilharman League. Approximately contemporary with the formation of the notorious Scaled organization, the Kilharman league is one of the oldest and most successful criminal guilds in the world. Oddly enough, the Kilharmans — like the Scaled — began as a form of political protest, though the objectives and the nature of these two organizations could not be more different.

Unlike the romantically radical founders of the now continent-spanning Scaled, the Kilharman League was created by a group of displaced aristocratic families in the wake of Virduk's wholesale redistribution of his kingdom's lands and titles. Led by, but not limited to, the powerful Kilharman family, these displaced nobles sought a continuation of their aristocratic lifestyle though illegal means. So long as it can aid them in their revenge against Virduk's injustice (earning the organization such nicknames as the King's Curse and the Hand of Vengeance), as well as in maintaining their façade of continued aristocracy, the Kilharman league will participate in nearly any sort of criminal activity.



For more information about the Kilharman League, see **Calastia: Throne of the Black Dragon**.

Preferred Skills: This depends largely on one's position in the organization, but Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Intimidate tend to be fairly common at all levels.

Preferred Feats: Common feats for those of lower status in the League vary widely, depending on the individual's position and duties. A bouncer at a gambling den is going to have vastly different feats than is a card dealer or the proprietor, for example. Higher up in the organization there is more similarity, however, and popular feats include Alertness, Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Dodge, Fence (see Appendix One), Improved Initiative, Leadership, Quick (see Appendix One), and Well Connected (see Appendix One).

The Scaled

Unquestionably the largest criminal organization in Ghelspad, the Scaled are certainly the only illicit institution with its own schools and training facilities. Where most underworld guilds are either hereditary hierarchies or are simply gangs formed from the dregs of society, the Scaled take their pick from only the best and most teachable young rogues they find. Also, the Scaled is probably the only group of its kind that requires the vast majority of its members to have some ability with magic. As unexpected a thieves' guild as they may be, however, they are widespread and successful enough to be known in many circles simply as "the Guild."

The Scaled is also one of the less violent criminal organizations in Ghelspad, and tends to avoid activities such as slavery and murder for hire (assassinations being reserved primarily for the guild's most tiresome enemies). Instead, Scaled members concentrate on such gentle pursuits as burglary, extortion, smuggling, and dealing in illegal prostitution, gambling and recreational substances, to name a few examples. Scaled training schools are quite rigorous, and the central leadership provided by the two surviving founders, Karmut and Lucera (who are based in Hedrad of all places), is strong and shrewd. The financial profits of Scaled operations certainly do not suffer from the relative non-violence of their typical modus operandi.

For more information on the Scaled, see **Secrets and Societies**. The Master of the Scaled prestige class is also included in Appendix Two.

Preferred Skills: Some of the first rogue skills taught at the Scaled academies are Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Sleight of Hand, Spot and Use Rope. The Scaled training courses eventually cover all the class skills of both rogues and wizards, however. Most

Scaled, including Karmut and Lucera, choose to specialize in a few areas rather than having only mediocre aptitude in all of them, so different Scaled members can have a wide variety of different skills.

Preferred Feats: Most of the Scaled are wizards as well as rogues, so they often take magic-related feats in addition to those commonly taken by individuals who work outside the law. Perhaps the most popular feats among the Scaled are Alertness, Burglar (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Quick (see Appendix One), Run, Silent Spell, Still Spell, and Weapon Finesse.

Mercantile Leagues

Vast mercantile leagues like House Asuras are quite rare in the Scarred Lands, as the economy on this war-torn world is only now beginning to stabilize sufficiently to allow such groups to gain a foothold. Furthermore, whenever some enterprising merchants seem close to establishing any kind of significant multinational trade network, House Asuras has a tendency to somehow acquire all of the new league's contacts and assets — often seemingly overnight. For these reasons, most merchant leagues in the Scarred Lands tend to be confined to a single nation (or even a single city) and last less than two human generations (children can often carry on the business ventures of a parent, but it is rare for the grandchildren to continue with the same diligence). Many mercantile enterprises concentrate on one specific type of product, such as farm equipment or spell components. Perhaps this is due to the fact that those companies who avoid dealing in arms and armor are far less apt to be bought or forced out of business by the greedy House Asuras.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Bluff, Craft (any, depending on the league), Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (any, depending on the league), Profession (merchant), Profession (other, depending on the league), Sense Motive.

Preferred Feats: Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Fence (see Appendix One), Iron Will, Leadership, Skill Focus (any skill above), Well Connected (see Appendix One).

Charek's Fellows

Though not precisely a mercantile league per se (certainly not a legal one by any means), Charek and his "fellows" are nevertheless included in this section because they deal almost exclusively in the buying, selling, transport and manufacture of goods. Never mind that these goods are almost exclusively stolen, smuggled or forged. Though most prominent in western Ghelspad, Charek seems to have recently reached some kind of alliance with the Scaled, and

his business is growing faster than ever before. His "fellows" (a wide variety of men and women who, for various reasons, answer to Charek's will) often disguise themselves as ordinary merchants and bureaucrats, providing their services to thieves and other outlaws everywhere. Like the Scaled, Charek's Fellows are forbidden to deal in slavery and the organization uses murder only as a last resort.

Location: Charek's Fellows have no official central headquarters. Charek himself winters in Moor, Vesh, disguised as a jolly caravan captain.

Alignment: Any; usually chaotic, rarely evil. Charek personally oversees the chastisement of those who fail their comrades or endanger the organization.

Allies: The Scaled.

Enemies: None, aside from local law enforcement wherever they operate, that is. Charek himself seems to bear a personal grudge against House Asuras (with which he was once involved by marriage of a sort).

Notable Personages: Charek of Moor (*male human Exp6/Rog5/Ftr4, CN*) is a large, red-bearded man in his 50s, strong as an ox and wilier, some say, than Enkili himself. He hates Calastia, House Asuras, and all forms

of authority with a passion (officially he even refuses to admit that he is the leader of his own organization), and he loves smuggling. He has been operating as a freelance smuggler and fence, in conjunction with the Scaled, for nearly twenty years. Recently he has been able to build up his operations to such an extent that even an organization as large and active as the Scaled rarely need turn to anyone else for their outside smuggling, fencing and forgery requirements.

Signs of Brotherhood: Because of Charek's open romantic preference for comely men, his organization tends to attract rogues and criminals who share his inclination. Though probably less than a quarter of Charek's operatives are actually homosexual, the organization has developed a reputation. While conducting business, Charek's Fellows make an effort to blend in wherever they are, and most do an excellent job of appearing to be ordinary citizens. Even Charek himself has never once been caught in any form of illicit activity, and all business agreements must go through Charek personally.

Preferred Skills: Though there is some variety depending on whether the character's expertise is as a smuggler, fence or forger, many skills remain consistent within the organization. Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Forgery, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Profession (usually merchant), Sense Motive and Spot are all common.

Preferred Feats: Alertness, Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Fence (see Appendix One), Honest Face (see Appendix One), Skill Focus (any skill above), Well Connected (see Appendix One).

HOUSE ASURAS

The single most powerful merchant house in Ghelspad, and probably the world, is House Asuras. Lead by the aging but shrewd Telos Asuras, this extended and largely internally loyal family of merchants has financial clout in every major city in Ghelspad, and they deal in almost every market. Indeed, their transactions in arms and armor have gained them a great deal of political pull within many different governments as well.



House Asuras is also known for the amorality of their business dealings. Rumor has it that they will sell to both sides of any given conflict without qualm — even including doing business with titanspawn. They are widely suspected of having dealings with several major thieves' guilds, such as with the Kilharman League and with the Sa'an cartel in House Asuras's home city of Shelzar. There is also talk on the street, however, that there is tension of some sort between House Asuras and the Scaled, though no one claims to know why, specifically.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Forgery, Profession (merchant) and Sense Motive.

Preferred Feats: Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Fence (see Appendix One), Iron Will, Leadership, Learned (see Appendix One), Skill Focus (any skill(s) above), Well Connected (see Appendix One).

The Stalcho Burghers' Alliance

The term, alliance, is used loosely here, as more often than not the wealthy merchants of the small city of Stalcho (located in Sunharrow on the northwestern coast of Termana) behave as anything but allies. Constantly competing for control of what by Ghelspad's standards is hardly a city at all, these eleven men and women are still perhaps the most powerful merchant guild in western Termana. Certainly their wealth and that of their mostly anarchic town is sufficient that if they could ever achieve any kind of stable unity, they would easily have it within their power to seize control of Sunharrow from King Lanesh and to restore order and prosperity to the country.

Unfortunately, speculation abounds that the influence of the Laughing Man in the nearby Blood Bayou, perhaps with the aid of spies from Sunharrow's various enemy neighbors, makes it all but impossible for the Stalcho Burghers' Alliance to take action in any kind of allied manner. Nevertheless, Kyla Tananz, the current Alliance Minister, has ruled already for six months — an unprecedented record. It is said she has not only the local mercenary captains but also King Lanesh himself in her pocket, and she has so far survived fully four assassination attempts. If Minister Tananz turns out to be all that she seems, perhaps both Sunharrow's enemies and the greedy merchants of Ghelspad will soon be facing new and formidable competition.

Location: Stalcho, Sunharrow.

Alignment: Any but lawful good or chaotic evil. The eleven members of the Stalcho Burghers' Alliance are extremely varied in outlook — one of many

reasons why they have such difficulty reaching consensus.

Allies and Enemies: This “organization” is so chaotic that its allies and enemies are one and the same: each other, King Lanesh of Sunharrow, and the local mercenary guilds. Everyone else tends to ignore them. This may soon be changing, however, as things begin to stabilize under Minister Tananz's steady hand.

Notable Personages: Though there are eleven official members of the Stalcho Burghers' Alliance, only three currently hold much significant power.

Kyla Tananz (female human Exp5/Rog4/Ari3, N): A recent heiress and a brilliant mind, Kyla Tananz is not only a much better merchant but also a much more ambitious thinker than her late father ever knew or ever could have been himself. He died ashamed of his life's work and mourning the assassinated son that he had hoped would carry on in his footsteps. Those in the know claim that he never even spoke to Kyla on his deathbed. Some speculate that her iron will and careful plans are her way of proving to her father's ghost that she was worth more than he realized.

Tevep Hamryn (male human Ari4/Exp4/Wiz3, NE): Even younger than Kyla and often accused (without evidence) of murdering his late father in order to take his seat on the Alliance, Tevep is probably the single wealthiest of the eleven Alliance members. Rumor has it that he and Minister Tananz are lovers, and this is perhaps how she has managed to keep young Tevep so staunchly allied to her cause.

Karek Dale (male human Ari6/Exp5, NG): Said to be a childhood mentor of Minister Tananz, this aging but still shrewd businessman has long been one of the most stable elements of the Stalcho Burghers' Alliance. He and Kyla are still on the best of terms, in spite of his dislike of Tevep Hamryn.

Signs of Brotherhood: None. The eleven burghers and their houses and retainers vary widely in dress and habits; and the Alliance is, officially at least, not sufficiently secretive to have shared codes and signals or the like.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Forgery, Gather Information, Intimidate, Listen, Profession (merchant), Sense Motive, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Alertness, Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Fence (see Appendix One), Iron Will, Leadership, Learned (see Appendix One), Skill Focus (any skill above), Well Connected (see Appendix One).

ASSASSIN GUILDS AND CULTS

Typical assassin cults in the Scarred Lands are exactly that: cults. They usually center around a single charismatic leader and swear fealty to some deity or titan, with Belsameth, Vangal, the demigoddess Sethris, and the titaness Mormo being the most common objects of their devotion. Killing is a religious ecstasy for these fanatics, and as such they make little distinction between paid targets and those who simply get in the way. They will kill anyone for the right fee or simply because they find it expedient in terms of the cult's long-term goals. The largest and most well-known of these typical groups is the Belsamite faction of the Cult of Ancients. Most assassins who do not fit the above description or simply work "freelance" for many different organizations, either belong to one of the exceptional groups listed below, or they are instead directly affiliated with a thieves' guild or other organization (such as Chardun-worshipping governments, for example).

Preferred Skills: Balance, Climb, Disguise, Gather Information, Hide, Jump, Knowledge (religion — usually centered around their own particular cult), Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Spot, Tumble, Use Magic Device.

Preferred Feats: Acrobatic, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Burglar (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick (see Appendix One), Urban Track (see Appendix One), Weapon Finesse.

ANGELS OF NEMORGA

Though most followers of Nemorga the Gatekeeper consider these assassins to be grossly misguided or even blasphemous, it certainly cannot be said that they are greedy or indiscriminate in their kills. Funded by some secretive private source, the Angels of Nemorga do not accept payment or recompense of any kind for their contracts. Rather, if a supplicant can convince this council of assassins that a person is violating the balance and harmony of the world in some major way, they will kill the offending party in silent secrecy. Never evil in alignment, these assassins are not eligible for the Assassin prestige class and are instead simply wizard-rogues (often necromancer-rogues). Nemorga's Angels are never clergy of Nemorga.

Location: Though they operate almost anywhere, the Angels of Nemorga are secretly based in Hedrad.

Alignment: Neutral or sometimes lawful neutral. Though they pride themselves on perfectly unbiased preservation of balance, the prevailing philosophy of their home city does sometimes have an effect on the council's policies.

Allies and Enemies: None, though they must, of course, keep themselves carefully hidden from the law.

Notable Personages: None. The Angels of Nemorga are a completely democratic council, and all members strive for passivity, lack of personal ambition, and a purely objective outlook. Most also maintain separate lives as ordinary Hedradan citizens, and all members strive to keep their daylight lives as completely mundane and unremarkable as possible. No one seems to know



who started the organization or who continues to fund it.

Signs of Brotherhood: Those who wish to plead a case before the Angels of Nemorga need simply put the word out and wait for the Angels to find them. A popular means for doing this is to leave a note in some public place depicting a set of scales bisected by a sword, along with a meeting time and place and some subtle means for the Angels to recognize the supplicant. Care must always be taken for secrecy and safety, however. Even seeking audience with the Angels of Nemorga is a punishable offence in Hedrad.

Preferred Skills: Balance, Climb, Concentration, Disguise, Escape Artist, Gather Information, Hide, Jump, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Sense Motive, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Acrobatic, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Burglar (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick (see Appendix One), Urban Track (see Appendix One), Weapon Finesse.

CHARDUN'S MERCY

Though finding assassins working for one of Chardun's governments is hardly surprising, Chardun's Mercy still deserves mention here as perhaps the finest and most efficient group of assassins in the world. Originating in the Charduni Empire, these murderer-priests seek out and kill individual enemies of the Charduni or of Chardun himself — such as key political figures, generals of enemy armies and traitors to Chardun's goals. It is said that Chardun's Mercy can penetrate any fortress, bypass any defense and traverse any barrier, no matter how impossibly secure. Certainly they have never been known to fail.

Called Chardun's Mercy because their methods are usually quick and silent — presumably Chardun could cause an enemy much more suffering if he chose to do so — the Charduni assassins were once Chardun's favorites of all his clergy. As their creator loses his fascination with the Charduni, however, members of Chardun's Mercy receive direct communication from their god less and less often. Though these assassins have lost none of their skill, the past few decades have seen Chardun's Mercy reduced to little more than a band of elite law-enforcers, killing in their beds any notable personages who have lost favor with the empire.

Location: Theoretically world wide, but lately confined to the Charduni Empire.

Alignment: Usually lawful evil; always empowered priests of Chardun as well as skilled assassins.

Allies and Enemies: The organization itself has no direct enemies or allies. In theory, at least, it is little more than an extension of Chardun's will. Lately, it has been more an extension of the will of the Charduni government.

Notable Personages: The highest ranking member of Chardun's Mercy is currently Vekran Bokmal (*male charduni dwarf Clr10/Asn9, LE*). Bokmal is a hard and unforgiving man who lives in denial about Chardun's waning interest in his people. Any suggestion that Vekran Bokmal is not directly carrying out the wishes of his god might very well be met with a night-time visit from Chardun's Mercy.

Signs of Brotherhood: Members of Chardun's Mercy never wear any color but the charcoal black of wrought iron, and all of their weapons are of the same hue.

Preferred Skills: Balance, Climb, Concentration, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Gather Information, Hide, Intimidate, Jump, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Spellcraft, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Acrobatic, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Burglar (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick (see Appendix One), Urban Track (see Appendix One), Weapon Finesse (often dagger).

CULT OF ANCIENTS

In recent years, the Cult of Ancients has been divided into two factions: the traditionalists and the Belsamites. The Belsamites are a fairly typical assassins' cult, fanatically devoted to a god or titan (in this case Belsameth), led by the charismatic Talina Som, and largely lacking in principle or rigorous training. Belsamite members of the Cult of Ancients are still known to kill traditionalists whenever they get the chance, but this is a rare enough occurrence as the average traditionalist is far more skilled than the average Belsamite.

Traditional members of the Cult of Ancients, on the other hand, are the epitome of the refined gentleman assassin. They only take the most important of assignments, and they generally have a strict code of ethics on how, when and where assassinations can be committed — and even who can be assassinated. The traditionalist members of the Cult of Ancients tend to be cultured people, often of aristocratic lineage, and are unified in their disdain for the Belsamites. Lacking the numbers to reclaim their cult from Talina Som and her glorified cutthroats, the traditional Cult of Ancients assassins are beginning slowly to distance themselves from the name. Among those who can afford the exceptional skill of a traditional cultist, they have recently been dubbed the Society of Assassins, or simply "the Society."

To learn more about both factions of the Cult of Ancients, see **Secrets and Societies**. Talina Som is also detailed in **The Wise and the Wicked**. Preferred skills and feats below apply mostly to the traditional Cult of Ancients.

Preferred Skills: All rogue class skills and knowledge skills.

Preferred Feats: Acrobatic, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Burglar (see Appendix One), Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Improved Initiative, Learned (see Appendix One), Lightning Reflexes, Quick (see Appendix One), Urban Track (see Appendix One), Weapon Finesse, Well Connected (see Appendix One).

WITCHES OF VENOM

This sub-faction of the Dar al Annot differs from the typical assassin cult in several ways. The most immediately obvious of these is the fact that the members of the Witches of Venom are all female, with the highest and most elite individuals belonging to the Lady of Serpents prestige class (see **Relics and Rituals 2: Lost Lore**). The second major difference, often not immediately apparent to outsiders, is that the Witches of Venom have little interest in wealth or monetary payment for their services. Trade for important political favors and compensation in the form of magical items and artifacts is a much more common arrangement among these deadly women, and may the gods help any who fail to fulfill their end of the bargain. In addition, while the Witches of Venom rarely consider the ethical implications of the murders they commit, they are very aware of their own eventual goals in healing their beloved Serpent Mother and will never agree to any contract that could endanger their long term mission.

Most of the time, the Witches of Venom work exclusively for the Dar al Annot who live in the Hornsaw Forest, site of Mormo's sundering. They also have a sister cult, however, among Mormo's druids in Khirdet. This very similar assassins' sect, called the Ophidian Sisterhood, shares aid and intelligence with the Witches of Venom whenever convenient. Women from both organizations are known to travel all over the world to complete assignments, sometimes infiltrating enemy organizations for months or even years in order to further the plans of Mormo's most devoted servants.

Location: Though they take their orders from the Dar al Annot in the Hornsaw Forest, there are rarely more than three or four Witches of Venom together in any given location. One specific mentor personally trains each new recruit, with the apprentice serving as a servant after her initiation among the Dar al Annot.

Alignment: Usually neutral evil. All Witches of Venom must remain loyal to Mormo at all times and in all their actions.

Allies: The Dar al Annot and the Ophidian Sisterhood.

Enemies: As titan-worshippers in a land ruled by the followers of the gods, the Witches of Venom suffer no shortage of enemies. The followers of the Gods, especially those loyal to Denev, will kill these witches whenever they discover them — so their operations must be secretive indeed.

Notable Personages: Raika Lenoar (*female wood elf Rog8/Los10, NE*) resides in the Hornsaw among the Dar al Annot, and indeed was born in the forest among the Broadreach elves before the Divine War. She converted to worship of Mormo at a young age and has been fanatically devout ever since. In fact, she was one of Mormo's very first ladies of serpents during the Titanswar and has personally trained dozens of new initiates. In recent decades she formed an alliance with the Dar al Annot and began the Witches of Venom. She rarely "works" anymore, but she does help to coordinate the efforts of all the witches, rogues, assassins and ladies of serpents in her service.



Signs of Brotherhood: Because they often seek to blend in with their enemies for long periods of time, the Witches of Venom avoid obvious or consistent signs of their sisterhood; but those few who are actually ladies of serpents almost always bear a small scar from having survived a viper's bite (a requirement of their class).

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Forgery, Gather Information, Hide, Intimidate, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Sense Motive, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Alertness, Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Great Fortitude, Honest Face (see Appendix One), Improved Initiative, Infiltrator (see Appendix One), Lightning Reflexes, Spy (see Appendix One), Weapon Finesse.

OTHER CARTELS

Though the following organizations are nearly as varied and distinct as it is possible for them to be, nevertheless, they have in common a roguish nature and members who at very least began their adventuring careers as rogues. Naturally, no generalizations can be made about these groups, save to say that what follows are only a few of the largest or most widely known examples. GMs are encouraged to be creative in extrapolating ideas for the creation of smaller and more localized organizations.

ASSOCIATION OF EXPLORATION

The Association of Exploration is a coalition of aristocrats obsessed with discovery and the secrets of the ancient world. This society was created approximately the same time as the much more notorious Order of Ancients. Unlike said order, however, the Association of Exploration has always been and remains a rather lighthearted and adventurous group. Most members are roguish bored aristocrats with various forms of dangerous intellectual hobbies. The most common of these pursuits has always been archeology, consistent with the fad among the noble classes just after the Divine War to pine for the grandeur of pre-war civilization. Again unlike the bookish Order of Ancients, these bold men and women set out on expensive voyages to sift through dangerous ruins with their own hands, seeking wealth and glory at least as passionately as knowledge.

In recent years, the Association has also seen a great many explorers of geography and foreign cultures, with expeditions to Termana's jungles and dangerous sea voyages in search of a legendary lost continent becoming more and more common. While true scholars often belittle the motives and methods of these impetuous adventurers, it is certain that their courage and cleverness has served well the cause of uncovering the many secrets that these

Scarred Lands conceal. Also, selfish and shallow as the Association's goals may sometimes be, they have certainly never strayed into the path of corruption that currently bisects the Order of Ancients

Location: Chapter houses for the Association of Exploration exist in most major cities of eastern Ghelspad, and occasional smaller chapters can be found in Darakeene and throughout the Calastian Hegemony.

Alignment: Any, but members who give the Association a bad name are expelled.

Allies and Enemies: None, though members of the Association take a condescending and competitive attitude toward the surviving remnants of the original Order of Ancients.

Notable Personages: Most members of the Association are notable in some way or other, but perhaps the best known member of this coalition was Kestrus Benrick, the magnetic and energetic voyager who's most famous feat was to be the first man to "rediscover" the continent of Termana after the Divine War. Sadly, he fell victim to one of the many plagues of that Chern-cursed land and died on the voyage home. A storm blew his men far south of their plotted course as well, allowing Benrick's journals to be intercepted and confiscated by the Calastian navy before his ship could return home. His loyal men did return to Mithril, however, and made known far and wide his amazing tale of courage and discovery.

Signs of Brotherhood: Aside from being filthy rich dilettantes, the members of the Association of Exploration are highly individualistic and avoid appearing too similar to one another. There is very little in the way of secrecy about the Association as well, so enigmatic signs and codes are largely unnecessary.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Decipher Script, Disable Device, Gather Information, Knowledge (any), Open Lock, Search, Use Magic Device.

Preferred Feats: Burglar (see Appendix One), Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Endurance, Fence (see Appendix One), Great Fortitude, Honest Face (see Appendix One), Iron Will, Leadership, Learned (see Appendix One), Lightning Reflexes, Trap Springer (see Appendix One), Well-Connected (see Appendix One).

COURTESANS OF IDRA

Though on the surface the goals and purposes of this organization are about as straightforward as they come, the Courtesans of Idra are much more complex than their name implies. Almost no one knows anything concrete about this group of beautiful women (and no small number of beautiful men) — even many of the courtesans them-

selves aren't aware of the intrigues that are linked to their own society. The as yet unknown leaders of this group are thought to probably be based in Albadia (certainly there is a school for ordinary courtesans in Albadia claiming to be run by the "real" Courtesans of Idra), but so little can be found out for certain about these elusive servants of the demigoddess of passion, that even their goals and bases of operation are a mystery.

What is known, is that Courtesans of Idra have from time to time been found insinuated into positions of intimacy and trust with some of the most powerful and influential people in all of Ghelspad. These charming companions seem to be gathering information and relaying it to their enigmatic superiors. It can be assumed that whoever the Courtesans of Idra truly represent (perhaps the demigoddess herself?), and whatever their purpose and eventual objective, they probably have access to more information about the current state of affairs in the Scarred Lands than does any other single group of people.

For more information on the Courtesans of Idra, as well as the prestige class, see **Secrets and Societies**.

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Concentration, Decipher Script, Diplomacy, Disguise, Escape Artist, Forgery, Gather Information, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Perform (amorous), Profession (courtesan), Sense Motive, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Burglar (see Appendix One), Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Endurance, Honest Face (see Appendix One), Infiltrator (see Appendix One), Iron Will, Quick (see Appendix One), Skill Focus (any skill above), Spy (see Appendix One), Urban Track (see Appendix One), Well Connected (see Appendix One).

EMPIRE OF THE SEA

The epitome of the dashing and romantic pirate empire, the self proclaimed Empire of the Sea is perhaps the largest of many bands of Toe Island pirates. While securely controlling most of the island of Roh Ahnon, these seafaring rogues are in constant competition with their hated fellow pirates, the Japhinian Dynasty. These often deceptively lighthearted buccaneers are known for capturing the vessels of only the wealthiest and most pretentious merchants, and even prefer to loot ships on their way *out* of Mithril so as not to deprive the city of necessary supplies; while merchants certainly lose cargo to these sea brigands, they only purposefully

kill to defend their own lives or when absolutely necessary to successfully take a ship.

Because of their less than malevolent nature, they have never been at the top of the Mithril Navy's list of enemies. However, in recent years (and for good reason) the pirates' fiery "Empress," Kariosa Nephantaros, has been waging a personal war against house Asuras; now, pressures on the city law enforcement from this powerful merchant house are finally beginning to retaliate and threaten the "Empire's" livelihood. In all probability, if House Asuras succeeds in destroying this pirate empire, Mithril will in fact find itself far more threatened by piracy than ever before, as the crueler and more evil Toe Island pirate factions suddenly find themselves lacking in honorable competition.

For more information on the Empire of the Sea and Empress Nephantaros, see **Mithril: City of the Golem**.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Balance, Bluff, Climb, Gather Information, Intimidate, Jump, Listen, Profession (sailor), Spot, Swim, Use Rope.

Preferred Feats: Acrobatic, Ambidexterity, Brawny (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Endurance, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lighting Reflexes, Quick (see Appendix One), Sturdy (see Appendix One), Weapon Finesse.



JAPHINIAN DYNASTY

Half-orcs have a dangerous reputation in most lands, being bigger, stronger and smarter than ordinary orcs and at the same time often retaining an orc's foul disposition. Though this is certainly not a fair assessment of all half-orcs, when one combines this stereotype with a vengeful turn of ethics, sorcerous powers, a close relationship with Kadum the Mountainshaker and piracy on the Blood Sea... well, then you have the Japhinian Dynasty. These terrors of Ghelspad's eastern coastline are just one of the many pirate factions centered in the Toe Islands, but they are quite possibly the deadliest pirates of that area or anywhere else in the Scarred Lands. Although members of the Japhinian Dynasty prestige class (found in the *Player's Guide to Wizards, Bards and Sorcerers*) are not typically rogues, the actual dynasty as a whole is, in truth, a large extended family of half-orcs from many different classes, rogue being one of the most common. After all, how can there be piracy without rogues involved?

Preferred Skills: Balance, Climb, Craft (any nautical), Intimidate, Jump, Listen, Profession (sailor), Spot, Swim, Use Rope.

Preferred Feats: Brawny (see Appendix One), Endurance, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Quick (see Appendix One), Sturdy (see Appendix One), Toughness.

PENUMBRAL PENTAGON

Though primarily intended to be an organization of penumbral lords and shadow worshiping wizards, the relatively small number of actual members of the Penumbral Lord class (as well as embarrassing previous defeats) have led this shadow-obsessed collective to resort to fairly mundane illegal activities. Using local intermediaries and underhanded deceit, they embroil ordinary people and common criminals in their schemes. Thus, the Penumbral Pentagon indirectly oversees a significant amount of illicit activity in the Bridged City and parts of Mithril (where they have competition from Goblin Bear leader and former Pentagon lord, Shan Thoz who defected after deciding that penumbral leader DarTan was insane), and they continue to try to gain a foothold in Ontenazu with little success.

For more information on this organization and its dark elf leader DarTan see **The Penumbral Pentagon**, as well as **Relics and Rituals** and **The Wise**

and the Wicked. Shan Thoz (also known as Mykis, criminal leader of the Goblin Bears) appears in **Mithril: City of the Golem**.

Preferred Skills and Feats: None of the leading members of the Penumbral Pentagon are rogues, and their numerous rogue underlings vary too wildly from one another to make many generalizations about their preferences.

The Shadow Walkers

Before the gods and titans banded together to destroy the Slarecians, these ancient and evil beings managed to capture the demigoddess Drendari and hold her captive, extracting from her the secrets of the shadow magic that made up her very essence. When Drendari was finally freed of her cruel prison, she vowed revenge on the Slarecians and anyone else who dared to profit from the knowledge they had raped from her. Against the Slarecians, that revenge came quickly, and her original tormenters are no more; but against their students and their students' students, the penumbral lords, Drendari has yet to fully prevail.

Though her very nature cries out against the thought of organization and authority, as Mistress of Shadow, Drendari has both a right and a responsibility to put the haughty penumbral



lords in their place. To this end, she maintains a hodgepodge of rogues, shadow dancers, and other devotees of the marriage of light and dark, to work her will and seek the end of penumbral magic. These Shadow Walkers as they are called, are for the most part descended from Drendari's Faithful (those who helped the demigoddess of shadow to gather intelligence for the gods during the Divine War) and are really barely organized at all. But while they travel the world — alone and in small bands, thieving here and freelancing there — they stay in loose communication with one another, ever seeking out Drendari's enemies and slowly hunting them down.

Location: The Shadow Walkers maintain no permanent base of operations.

Alignment: Always within one step of chaotic neutral. Those who stray too far from Drendari's own outlook both lose her favor and cease to feel connected to the cause. No one expels them, but they inevitably leave by their own accord.

Allies: The Shadow Walkers have no formal allies, but most priests of Enkili and many thieves will help them at need.

Enemies: The Penumbral Pentagon and all other unrepentant penumbral lords.

Notable Personages: The Shadow Walkers have no official leaders, but the following two living members are significant to the fellowship.

Hannan Drenda (female human Rog6/Cbr14, CN): Hannan Drenda is currently the most powerful of Drendari's few clergy members. As such she often serves as something of a mouthpiece for Drendari or for her herald, Twilight. Drenda never presumes to lead the Shadow Walkers and has no desire for authority of any kind, but she is

nevertheless the closest thing to leadership that the ragtag "organization" can claim. Her old age helps secure this status, as it keeps her from moving too fast in her wanderings and gives other Shadow Walkers the chance to routinely find her. Wherever Hannan Drenda happens to be tends by default to become a temporary and informal meeting place for any Shadow Walkers in the region.

Keften of Shelzar (male human Sor8/Pen2/Shd4, CN): The one and only penumbral lord to ever be forgiven by Drendari and her followers, Keften only discovered the shocking relationship between penumbral magic and the demigoddess of shadows *after* acquiring ranks as a penumbral lord. In his horror, he broke his apprenticeship at great peril to his own life and then spent an entire night and day praying to Drendari (whom he had always loved) for forgiveness, which she granted. Though Keften's handsome face and Drendari's well-known weakness for her attractive male followers may have been a factor in her forbearance, Keften has certainly turned out to be a staunch ally of the cause. His ability to infiltrate penumbral gatherings and strongholds has proven invaluable. He never uses his penumbral lord powers except against other penumbral lords.

Signs of Brotherhood: The Shadow Walkers always wear at least a single gray item of clothing. Either this will be the only gray item in their possession, or they will dress entirely in gray from head to toe. Safe houses and meeting



places often fly a plain gray flag. Naturally, the Shadow Walkers also employ more secretive codes and symbols to guard against impostors and cases of mistaken identity (some people simply like to wear gray), but the color serves at least to point them toward each other.

Preferred Skills: Balance, Bluff, Disguise, Gather Information, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Spot, Tumble.

Preferred Feats: Acrobatic, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Burglar (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick (see Appendix One), Urban Track (see Appendix One), Weapon Finesse (any), Well Connected (see Appendix One).

Vigils of Vesh

Another group not typically considered to be comprised of rogues is the Vigils of Vesh. Indeed, ordinary vigilants are only rarely rogues, but what few people know is that another type of vigil watches Ghelspad's cities and capitals, infiltrating and spying in populated areas that most standard vigilants would find impenetrable. Few people (even other vigilants!) have heard of these vigil stalkers, but it is certain that they are just as loyal to Vesh and sometimes even more vital to the task of keeping their leaders informed of the state of the known world.

More information about the Vigils of Vesh can be found in Chapter Two, and the Vigil Stalker prestige class is detailed in Appendix Two. The feats and skills listed below are for vigil stalkers only, rather than for all Veshian vigilants.

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Decipher Script, Diplomacy, Disguise, Escape Artist, Forgery, Gather Information, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Profession (any), Search, Sense Motive, Speak Language, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Burglar (see Appendix One), Charming (see Appendix One), Clever (see Appendix One), Dashing (see Appendix One), Endurance, Honest Face (see Appendix One), Improved Initiative, Infiltrator (see Appendix One), Learned (see Appendix One), Quick (see Appendix One), Skill Focus (any skill above), Spy (see Appendix One), Sturdy (see Appendix One), Urban Track (see Appendix One), Well Connected (see Appendix One).

LEGENDARY ROGUES

The individuals who follow are both rogues of great fame and renown in the Scarred Lands (or infamy and notoriety as the case may be). Many other living rogues of legendary stature are described in localized Scarred Lands sourcebooks; particularly rogue oriented resources include **The Wise and the Wicked**, **Shelzar: City of Sin**, and **Secrets and Societies**.

Temsheh the Witty

Temsheh the Witty is perhaps the single most legendary rogue in the Scarred Lands. Tales of his cleverness abound and

grow more fantastic with every passing generation. Legend attributes him with miraculous magical powers and places him in any number of different time periods. Unfortunately records of the real Temsheh are sparse, so little is known for sure about this extraordinary rogue. It is fairly certain that Temsheh actually lived during the early to mid part of the Ledean Empire's decadent Argent Dynasty, when the empire was nearing its end. He was probably very well known even during his own time, as his wit and many humorous crimes — that went unpunished — were quite memorable. Some have called him a revolutionary and attributed the first Argent Dynasty uprisings to his leadership, but it is more likely that he was simply a talented prankster and an accomplished rogue.

The most remarkable thing about Temsheh the Witty, however, is that records of the period indicate he served on fully five separate occasions as Enkili's page and messenger to various leaders and dignitaries. As Enkili is known for never keeping a page for more than a day at a stretch (and thus the vast majority of his/her pages serve only once), Temsheh is therefore truly one of Enkili's most favored servants of all time. It is perhaps because of his association with the god of tricksters that Temsheh's legend has grown so much over the centuries, and indeed many of Enkili's own myths are sometimes told with Temsheh's name in place of the god's. Enkili doesn't seem to mind; and some say that when he/she is prowling in trickster guise, sometimes to this day, the god actually claims to be Temsheh the Witty.

Lillatu the Assassin

Lillatu (*female human Aril/Rog12, CG*) has led an undeniably interesting career. She was raised a princess, though where or of what family she has never revealed. Perhaps this is because she was disowned when some sort of elf or fey creature (she's never been sure) cursed the spoiled young princess to become a kind of were-dragon. Cast from her home, the former princess turned to a life of crime and became a well-respected assassin in eastern Ghelspad. Eventually she was hired to kill Vladawen — the same forsaken elf priest who ultimately defeated Chem during the Divine War. From there things get strange.

To make a long story short, Lillatu (or Lilly as her friends call her) is no longer a were-dragon, nor really an assassin, and she and Vladawen are expecting a child. Lilly is especially good at sneaking unnoticed almost anywhere (Dex 18 and maximum ranks in Hide and Move Silently), and she uses her agility to its best advantage when placed in any battle situation (Weapon Finesse feat). Lilly hates dark elves, penumbral magic and punch daggers rather more passionately than one might expect.

Lillatu is a leading character in the **Dead God Trilogy**, Scarred Lands novels by Richard Lee Byers. Her first appearance as a Scarred Lands character was in "Three Dreams of Belsameth," a short story by James Stewart in the **Champions of the Scarred Lands** anthology.



MULTICLASS ROGUES

Many are the adventurers who began their careers as rogues of some kind. The following is a directory of some plausible multiclassing options for the wily and ever-adaptable rogue.

- **Barbarian:** Rogues and barbarians share an unflattering reputation in many civilized countries, so many would assume that the barbarian and the roguish lifestyle go hand in hand. Indeed, some of the most famous barbarians of legend were also clever scoundrels, but it must be remembered that these wily barbarian adventurers are the exception rather than the rule; they are so well known outside their homes precisely because they turned their backs on the traditions of their peoples and set out for the adventure of city life. Ordinarily, the paths of the rogue and the barbarian are ill-suited to travel together. Nevertheless, some few barbarians do embrace the stealth and trickery of the rogue class to help them survive the unfamiliar perils of urban adventuring, to aid in classic heroic pursuits such as treasure hunting and exploration, or even simply as another way to continue the raiding that their tribes are known for.

- **Bard:** Many rogues multiclass as bards. After all, a bard's charm, broad (if not terribly deep) base of knowledge and versatility in learning new skills have often been known to stand rogues of all types in good stead. Such multiclassed characters can range from thieves who use their bardic talents as a cover, or minstrels who leave tokens at the sites of their own burglaries and then compose songs to mark their growing fame. So common is the association, in fact, that though bards are always welcomed and well-treated in the Scarred Lands, they are often also carefully watched — in case they turn out to be swindlers or petty thieves (or mighty wizards in disguise, but that's a whole other story).

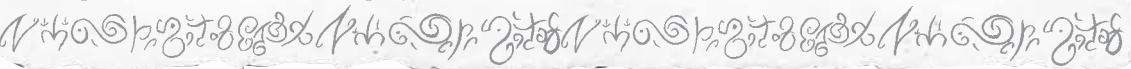
- **Cleric:** One would think that the cleric and rogue classes would be a bad match indeed, but in the Scarred Lands it is really not so rare an occurrence. Clerics of Enkili often consider roguish behavior to be a part of their priestly duties, and clerics of Tanil who craftily and stealthily struggle against the cruelties of tyrants are certainly not either. On the darker side, both Vangal's and Belsameth's priests are known to involve themselves in all manner of nefarious activity. Among the major demigods, Drendari, Hwyrdd, Idra, and Sethris have all been known to commonly support rogues among their clergy. Certainly rogue-cleric mixes are least common among the lawful deities, but even within the bastions of law their unique abilities can find a place. A rogue's versatility and wiliness can be very useful, for example, to missionaries in hostile territory or to loyal spies infiltrating titanspawn armies.

- **Druid:** In the Scarred Lands, the most common combination of the druid and rogue classes arise from one of two situations. The first, unfortunately, are those titan-worshipping spies who seek to infiltrate the cities and armed forces of lands loyal to the gods. The second (in the eyes of many, just as unfortunately) are followers of Denev who feel that the land is not being properly cared for and are willing to go to any lengths to stop the continuation of this damage.

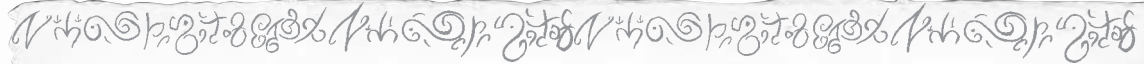
Certainly there are druid-rogues in the Scarred Lands who do not fit either of these ill-reputed categories — indeed, there are many druid-rogues who seek to aid and foster the animals and plants of urban areas, teaching their neighbors that the simple erection of walls does not cause Denev to turn her back on those things of the natural world.

- **Fighter:** Rogues often develop and value the skills of the fighter. In fact, the rogue-fighter is only slightly less common than the ever-present bardic-rogues that are to be found in most taverns. Many thieves' guilds and other roguish organizations prize the combined stealth and toughness of a rogue with heightened martial ability, and most common mercenaries find the skill and adaptability of the rogue class to be a great advantage in their line of work. Indeed, the fighter-rogue is probably one of the most common types of multiclassed adventurers in all the Scarred Lands.

- **Monk:** A monk-rogue is a difficult combination, due to the monk's inherently lawful outlook and the rogue's so often chaotic nature. It is important to remember, however, that rogues of lawful alignment are possible. For example, a monastery that teaches roguish abilities is located in the Bronze Hills of southwestern Ghelspad, several days' journey north of Fangsfall. These monks are devoted to rescuing and freeing slaves all over Ghelspad, and they use the thief's stealth and craftiness to help them in stealing living valuables from under slavers' noses. Evil monk-rogues are also possible, and often are employed as skilled assassins.



CHAPTER FIVE: THE POWER OF THE GUILDS



- **Paladin:** By far the least common class to combine with that of rogue, many assume that no paladin could ever take advantage of rogue abilities and retain the powers inherent in the paladin class. This is not the case. Certainly, paladin-rogues are exceedingly rare and most of those few who do exist refuse to make use of their “less honorable” abilities (such as Sneak Attack, for example); nevertheless, paladin-rogues do exist. Most started out as rogues before they realized their true callings and have since learned to turn their roguish abilities to the cause of righteousness.

- **Ranger:** Rangers are, in many ways, the rogues of the wilderness. Both are skilled in stealth as well as survival in harsh conditions. Those rogues who regularly have reason to venture into the dangerous wilds tend to find the ways of the ranger quite welcome and useful. Similarly, rangers in the midst of a large city often turn instinctively to the path of the rogue, both stealth and survival coming as second nature to them. The dashing, forest-dwelling knave who robs the rich to feed the poor, as well as the wicked wilderness guide who sells her clients out to bandits, are prime examples of typical ranger-rogues.

- **Sorcerer:** Of the major spellcasting classes, sorcerers are most apt to multiclass as rogues. The main reason for this association is that a sorcerer’s talents, due to their highly instinctive nature, lend themselves more easily to the wild and wily rogue’s life. In addition, the social stigma against sorcerers in many parts of the Scarred Lands sometimes leads them to a roguish lifestyle. Still associated with Mesos the titan, sorcerers are sometimes seen as bearers of an ungodly talent and are shunned by their communities. Such ill treatment tends to drive many to roguish behavior of one type or another; some might become wandering explorers, while others turn to spell-enhanced thievery.

- **Wizard:** Under most circumstances, the combination of wizard and rogue is a rare one. The years of careful study required of a wizard forces the aspiring student to show discipline and dedication, things for which an average rogue is not well known. Nevertheless, there is one organization in the Scarred Lands wherein rogue-wizards are not only common but actually the norm, and that is none other than the single largest thieving organization in Ghelspad (if not the world) — the Scaled.



CHAPTER SIX

TRICKS OF

THE TRADE

Oh, you think you know what it means to be one of us, do you? You know nothing. Lass, I've met a noblewoman who is a better hand at picking pockets than you're likely to ever be — she considers it a point of pride to clean out your pocket while you think you're being clever and lifting her necklace, which will turn out to be shiny tin and paste jewels. I know a city guard detective who can stab someone in the vitals quick enough to surprise a man with his own death, and a portly shopkeeper who makes a side income picking locks. Don't tell me you know what it means to be one of us, m'dear — we are a mad and varied lot. The minute you think you've got the crook pegged, the merchant will make off with your purse!

— Tinnian Three-finger, notorious pick-pocket, to his niece and apprentice.

There is far more to being a successful rogue than simply disabling traps and attacking foes from behind for extra damage. Rogues are a vibrant and diverse bunch, and they fulfill a great many roles in a civilized society — whether the paladins want to admit it or not. Most rogues know better than anyone that “you are whatever you make of yourself.” In the urban centers where most rogues make their livings, what individuals make of themselves depends largely on who they know and how they fit into the complex web that is city life. In this chapter are rules for keeping track of a character's network of friends and contacts, followed by a list of common roles that rogues often fulfill in society.

CONTACTS

In all walks of life, but never more profoundly than in the life of a rogue, a reliable network of contacts is the key to success. Everyone needs a helping hand once in a while, and rogues are certainly no different. In fact, when dealing with the criminal underworld, it's almost impossible to get anything done at all without a healthy list of established contacts and well-connected friends. Without such a network, a rogue is operating without

a safety net; and in their precarious line of work, rogues find it all too easy to fall.

Though connections can be generated through roleplaying alone, it is sometimes both convenient and character-building to maintain a specific list of contacts that a character knows well and may rely upon. However, especially during character generation, this process of listing out who a character knows can be quite vague and even arbitrary. During play, it is often difficult to sort out which NPCs have grown to the level of actual contacts and which are merely acquaintances. Even once that's understood, many players fail to realize how powerful these contacts and acquaintances can be to actually helping out a character.

In order to simplify and clarify this state of affairs, we have devised the following optional rules for establishing NPC contacts.

ESTABLISHING CONTACTS

At character generation and whenever a character goes up in level, the player will roll “contact dice” for the character. The results of the contact dice are added together to represent the number of “points” a character has in contacts. “Contact points” can be divided up

between as many contacts as the player and GM wish. Contacts from PC classes cost one contact point per character level. NPC classes cost the contact's character level -1 in contact points, with first level NPC classes costing 1/2 a point. Contacts with prestige classes cost their total character level +1 in contact points. At the GM's discretion, contacts of the aristocrat class may cost as much as a PC or even prestige class, to reflect an aristocrat's level of wealth and influence.

Contact Class	Cost in Contact Points
NPC class*	Contact's character level -1**
PC class	Contact's character level
Prestige class	Contact's character level +1

* At GM's discretion, the aristocrat class may cost as much as a PC or prestige class.
 ** Level 1 NPC contacts cost 1/2 a contact point.

Thus, a character with 8 contact points can have, for example, a single Rog5/Asn2 contact, or a Ftr4 contact and a Clr4 contact, or one Exp8 and two different Com1 contacts (or any other combination that follows the point formula and is appropriate to the character in question). Characters may buy contacts at every level, use contact points to increase the character levels of current contacts (at a 1 for 1 point cost, regardless of class), or may save up contact points for someone more powerful.

Standard contact dice are d4. Most characters receive a single d4 contact die each level plus an additional d4 for each point of their Charisma bonus. For example, a third level cleric with a Charisma bonus of +3 would have 6d4 total contact points to work with.

CONTACT ATTITUDES

Under most circumstances, a contact is somewhere between a friend and an acquaintance in loyalty and affection for the character. The contact knows and likes the character and can generally be trusted and relied upon, but she will never take unnecessary risks on the character's behalf (unless, perhaps, she is being well paid). If the character desires a service or an item from a contact, that individual will expect payment (though she may give the character a discount, depending upon circumstances). As NPC attitudes go, ordinary contacts are considered to be friendly.

As a further option, players may choose to pay double the cost in contact points for a contact that is a true friend. True friends are far more loyal than ordinary contacts (in addition to ordinary close friends, they may be family members, childhood bosom buddies or even lovers of the character). They give sizable discounts and even gifts to the character, and they are willing to take occasional risks to help and protect them. They will not typically endanger their own lives or the lives of their loved ones, but property damage, fines or even short jail sentences may be acceptable perils for the right cause. The NPC attitude of a true friend is considered to be helpful.

For an example of how this may work in play, if a character encounters a merchant (Exp 4) and has a friendly exchange with her, the character may decide to turn this NPC into a contact. The player declares his intention to spend contact points on the merchant. Assuming that the character has at least 3 contact points pooled (the cost of a 4th-level contact of an NPC class), he spends the necessary points and the merchant becomes a contact. It is recommended that this exchange be roleplayed out; the character should at least initially spend time in conversation with the merchant, buying her drinks, performing small favors, etc.

Perhaps though, in the same encounter between our character and the 4th level expert merchant, the character manages to improve our NPC merchant's attitude from friendly to helpful (perhaps by saving the life of her younger sister or protecting her caravan from bandits). Then, the player would have the option of spending 6 contact points on the merchant, instead of 3, in order to give the character a true friend (a process which is even more important to roleplay out than that of an ordinary contact).

Alternatively, a player may express to the GM a desire to have a certain type of contact, such as a mage for hire or a fence, for example. He may declare the number of contact points he has to spend on this desired contact, and the GM can create an appropriate encounter for the character. If the roleplaying goes well, the character gains his new contact.

LOSING CONTACTS

Contacts can be lost in several ways. In some cases a character might lose a contact merely because of distance — if a contact resides permanently on another continent, she is unlikely to be of much use to a character. Sometimes contacts die or have other misfortune befall them. Some contacts can even be convinced to turn against a character. Under any circumstance where the character is not to blame for such a loss, the contact points for the lost contact should be reimbursed at the character's next level increase. Indeed, GM's may choose to rule that players can voluntarily give up contacts that are no longer useful and spend those contact points on someone new. Such losses and changes should be roleplayed out whenever possible, of course. The contact rules are generally more fun and add more to the game when the NPC contacts are treated like real characters.

Along those same lines, it is very important to remember that contacts will always react to a character's actions in the same way as any other NPC. If a character mistreats or takes too much advantage of a contact, that contact will no longer wish to interact with the character. True friends will turn into mere contacts, and contacts will be lost completely. When such a loss occurs because of the character's mistreatment, all points that went into acquiring the contact are permanently lost.

SAMPLE CONTACTS

The following examples are simply a few stereotypical contacts that might benefit a rogue in the Scarred Lands. GMs should feel free to create or approve any contacts that seem appropriate to the game and the party.

CORRUPT GUARD

Imminently bribable and useful for everything from information, to a convenient blind eye, to even the occasional outright escape, corrupt guards are a boon to rogues and rascals everywhere. Smugglers especially will find this contact useful, as expedient inaction is the corrupt guard's greatest talent.

Game Information: The corrupt guard is likely to be a member of the Warrior class (usually between 1st and 5th level), with appropriate weapons and armor for his duties.

FENCE

Every thief needs a good fence. Any rogue character who makes a living by stealing the valuables of others will benefit immensely from a contact who will gladly buy and re-sell such valuables, no questions asked. A fence is also a good source of local underworld information and gossip.

Game Information: A fence is usually multiclassed as an expert/rogue (total character level is usually between 2nd and 6th, but can be much higher), with an established business (usually at least partially legal) that can be used as a front for the fencing operation.

INNKEEPER

An innkeeper contact is mostly useful for information. People talk when they've been drinking, and the person serving the drinks hears it all. However, for the right price, an innkeeper can also provide a good source of shelter when rogue characters need a place to hide from the law for a few days.

Game Information: The innkeeper is usually a commoner or expert (usually between 1st and 5th level, or sometimes higher) who owns and operates an inn, including all the necessities of a restaurant, tavern, stable and guest rooms.

JADED NOBLE

Conceited though they may be, it can't be denied that nobles have their uses to rogues. Whether as a source of illicit employment or a much needed loan, every rogue could use a bored, spoiled and amoral sponsor willing to pull strings now and again to keep their favorite scoundrels out of trouble.

Game Information: The jaded noble is usually from the Aristocrat class (any level), with all the weapons, armor, wealth, lands, servants, bodyguards, and authority (etc.) that befits her station and level.

LOCAL CRIME LEADER

If a character needs some information, quick cash, a lucrative assignment, or a strange favor, the head of the local criminal organization can probably set it up. But keep in mind, once a character gets involved with such a person, it can be expected that the local crime



leader will occasionally need a favor as well — and disappointing someone with so many dangerous underworld connections is not considered to be the best road to peace and a long life.

Game Information: The local crime leader is usually a rogue (level 6+) with the weapons, equipment, henchmen, local “business” operations and intelligence networks necessary to maintain his position of authority.

MADAM/PANDER

Even more so than an innkeeper, the head of a brothel has access to all the latest local news and gossip. Sometimes she, or at the very least one of her employees, even hears of things before they happen. And when this useful contact doesn’t know something, she probably at least knows who does.

Game Information: The madam (or pander) is in most cases a rogue/expert (usually between 6th and 10th level) in charge of a number of “working girls” (or boys) appropriate to her leadership abilities. She also is usually equipped with hidden weapons and has bodyguards. If she does not own a building to house her brothel, she will likely have a business arrangement with an innkeeper or two.

PRIESTESS OF TANIL

Tanil’s clergy care little for the law when it comes to healing and good deeds. A sick, wounded or starving rogue can have no greater friend than a cleric willing to ask no questions. Rogues should probably be careful not to let these clerics know *why* their help is so desperately needed, however. Good clerics can get squeamish at the strangest things sometimes.

Game Information: The priestess of Tanil is of the Cleric class (any level). She has access to all the weapons, armor, spellcasting ability and equipment associated with her work and her level, and she is often closely associated with a temple of Tanil (though many clerics of Tanil are also solitary wanderers).

MAGE FOR HIRE

Every rogue can use a little magical aid now and again. There are always enemies to be cursed, treasures to be checked for enchantment and distracting illusions to be cast at just that right moment. Most cities have a few skilled magic-users willing to hire their powers out for those who can pay, and knowing who is willing to do what is a useful boon to any rogue’s business.

Game Information: The mage for hire is usually of the Sorcerer or Wizard class (usually between 1st and 5th level, but can be of any level) with all of the spellcasting ability, equipment and supplies normally associated with arcane spellcasting at his level of skill. Often, he will also own or have access to a magical laboratory.

THUG

Big, tough and usually dumb, thugs make good guards and backup (and even decent walls) when a rogue needs a little more muscle than usual. Professional thugs usually enjoy a good fight too; so whenever a rogue needs help beating payback out of someone’s hide, thug contacts are often happy to oblige — as long as they’re being paid, of course.

Game Information: The thug is likely to be of the Warrior class (usually between 1st and 5th levels) with appropriate weapons and armor for her profession.

The Roles of the Rogue

The rogue class is an especially versatile one. From deadly cutthroats to dashing revolutionaries, from impoverished pickpockets to cultured courtesans, rogues permeate every aspect of Scarred Lands’ society. It would be a grave mistake, then, to limit rogue roleplaying opportunities to the “common thief” stereotype. Below are listed some examples of typical roles for the rogue character class, as well as their preferred skills and feats. Feats marked with an asterisk (*) are detailed in Appendix One.

BANDIT

Perhaps the most rural sort of rogue, bandits are found throughout the passable wilderness of the Scarred Lands. Usually found in bands of a dozen to a few score, bandits make a large portion of their living by waylaying travelers and caravans or even by raiding settlements. Most bandits are desperate outcasts from polite society — hunted murderers or those simply too unpleasant of disposition to find any work other than banditry. They tend to be filthy, impoverished and ignorant ruffians, with little in the way of redeeming qualities.

Not all bandits can be tarred with the same brush, however. Some are known to be, oddly enough, quite honorable in their conduct toward their wealthy victims. These often debonair highwaymen tend to become somewhat legendary in their local regions and are just as renowned nuisances to fathers of beautiful maiden daughters. This more polite sort of bandit is sometimes found working with revolutionaries of various sorts, but as often as not they are simply rebels without a cause, living by theft because it is more exciting than settling down to help run father’s inn.

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Hide, Intimidate, Move Silently, Ride (cross-class), Spot, Survival (cross-class).

Preferred Feats: Alertness, Brawny*, Charming*, Clever*, Dashing*, Lightning Reflexes, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Quick*, Sturdy*, Track.

BOUNTY HUNTER

There are times when the only way to catch a rogue is by sending another one. In such circumstances,



the services of the bounty hunter are called upon. Whether hauling wanted criminals back to serve their legal sentences or retrieving wayward debtors for the benefit of the local crime cartel, a bounty hunter can track down anyone and bring them back to face — well, whatever it is they were running from.

Bounty hunters tend to be solitary but well-connected sorts, who live by their wits and think little about the subtle nuances of morality or justice. Some ally themselves exclusively with one organization, like a gambling den or moneylender, but most will work freelance, even on the side of law and government. Many bounty hunters refuse to deal in killing — leaving that sort of work to assassins — but nearly all will nonchalantly deliver a target to certain death at the hands of whoever has paid them.

Preferred Skills: Disguise, Gather Information, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Spot, Survival (cross-class), Use Rope.

Preferred Feats: Alertness, Brawny*, Clever*, Combat Expertise, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Quick*, Sturdy*, Track, Urban Track*, Well Connected*.

BURGLAR

A thief who specializes in stealing things that are carefully locked away, a burglar is a skilled rogue indeed. Whether infiltrating the homes of the wealthy for personal gain, or hiring out to acquire specific objects from impossibly well-guarded locations, burglars are the bane and nightmare of every rich merchant

and hoarding wizard. In truth, the very fact that a burglar's business is to violate the sanctity of people's homes makes them feared in every quarter of society, even by those who have nothing of value to be stolen.

The burglar's fearsome reputation is largely unmerited for all but the most grasping of souls, however. For one thing, very few rogues have the necessary skill of the true burglar, so burglars are far more rare than some might suppose and certainly can't be bothered with the petty valuables of the average person. A seasoned burglar is offended when lumped together with brutish ruffians who break into a house by destroying the door and seek their booty by ransacking every room. By contrast, a burglar's passing is rarely noted, sometimes even after a valuable goes missing. In addition, a burglar's habit of never being seen allows for many to adopt a remarkably non-violent lifestyle as thieves go. Most burglars consider a job poorly done if someone is hurt or killed in the process of their professional activities.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Balance, Climb, Hide, Jump, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Acrobat*, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Burglar*, Clever*, Fence*, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick*.

COURTESAN

Easily the fairest of all rogues, courtesans make their way in life through love and pleasure. The term, courtesan, is normally reserved for those highly refined upper class women whose charming time is so valuable

that one must pay for their company — with gifts and favors if company is really all that is sought, or with hefty sums in gold should one's desires be more intimate. In this case, however, the term courtesan is referring to the entire range of women and men who sell pleasure and physical love; these rogues range from common street prostitutes all the way up to the paid companions of nobles.

Though most courtesans are content with their chosen trade and ply it as honestly as can be expected, there are also many who are corrupt, greedy or at best being used by characters less savory than themselves. At the lower end of the spectrum, these individuals may simply work with pickpockets or ruffians to steal from those who seek their "business." On the higher end, courtesans may hoard secrets and then use them to manipulate or even blackmail their way to greater power and social influence. One should be wary, therefore, of underestimating these rogues.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (gossip or local politics; cross-class), Perform (amorous), Perform (other, usually dance), Profession (courtesan), Sense Motive, Use Rope.

Preferred Feats: Charming*, Clever*, Dashing*, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Honest Face*, Learned*, Quick*, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (any skill above), Sturdy*, Weapon Finesse (whip), Well Connected*.

COURTIER

Courtiers, in essence, are those who seek power and wealth through their social connections. By the sheer force of their charm, wit, diplomacy and careful manipulation, these roguish characters, often not even members of the nobility to begin with, manage to insinuate themselves into the highest and most powerful social circles. In order to maintain such — often precarious — social positions, courtiers are careful to always keep up to date on the very latest court politics and gossip, both in their local area and in the world at large. As such, courtiers are usually among the first to know of any impending shifts in the balance of power, and they are extremely careful to ally themselves with whoever can best help them to achieve their ambitions at any given moment.

Courtiers are known neither for their honesty nor their sincerity, and crossing a powerful courtier can be dangerous indeed — usually by indirect and untraceable actions. "That brutal mugging was certainly unfortunate. Common street ruffians, of course. Such bad luck that they happened to uncover *and* leave behind that contraband that landed you in jail — what? You weren't carrying contraband? But it was found right in your saddlebags..." Even the snubs and insults of these rogues are of a careful subtlety than only the intelligent can catch.

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (politics; cross-class), Listen, Sense Motive.

Preferred Feats: Alertness, Charming*, Clever*, Dashing*, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Well Connected*.

CUTTHROAT

The cutthroat is the poor man's assassin. Cutthroats may lack an assassin's finesse and subtlety, but they make up for this by being much less expensive or discriminating. In any case, cutthroats, like assassins, kill people for money. They rarely have scruples of any kind in this area (though some may balk at torture or the killing of children), and they even more rarely have the skills to make a death look like an accident. Nevertheless, one way or another, the person a cutthroat is paid to kill generally winds up dead.

Needless to say, cutthroats tend to be the least social and charismatic of all the different sorts of rogues, despite the fact that they are rarely found far from the largest cities. Many are worshippers of Belsameth or Vangal, and consider their profession a sort of service to their deity; but some kill out of sheer viscous enjoyment or a general hatred of life. There are even a rare few who feel that they are serving Nemorga, the neutral demigod of death. Perhaps the most frightening sort of cutthroat is the kind who feels nothing whatsoever about his profession, but simply finds that he is good at killing and likes the money.

Preferred Skills: Climb, Gather Information, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Acrobat*, Alertness, Blind Fight, Brawny*, Burglar*, Clever*, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick*, Sturdy*, Urban Track*, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger).

FENCE

It is said that behind every wealthy thief is an even wealthier fence. The fence is one of the more obvious links between the criminal underworld and the rest of society, and nearly every thief in a given district must do business with the local fence in order to turn theft into profit. A fence buys practically everything of value — from stolen goods and jewels to forged coins and works of art — and then sells these items, at excellent rates, to ordinary people who may or may not realize the goods are not perfectly legitimate.

Naturally, a fence must have a legal front for such an operation, as well as enough skill as an ordinary merchant to make this "above-board" business believable to the local government. The most common type of front is a pawn shop, where neither used merchandise nor a highly diverse and occasionally seedy clientele is apt to arouse much suspicion. However, fences must be very well connected indeed, for those times when a stolen item is simply too recognizable to be taken for

anything other than someone else's property. Such is often the case with the finest works of art and jewelry as well as many stolen magic items. For such expensive exchanges, a far higher quality of front establishment is required, as well as much greater discretion on the part of the thieves who supply such a business.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Forgery, Profession (merchant), Sense Motive, Speak Language (cross-class).

Preferred Feats: Alertness, Charming*, Clever*, Dashing*, Fence*, Honest Face*, Learned*, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Appraise), Well Connected*.

FORGER

There are two main types of individuals who practice forgery. First and most common are those who craft artificial money. These forgers create, for example, coins that look and feel like gold but are actually formed mostly of cheaper metals. Some of these talented "artisans" may even fashion beautifully colored and cut bits of glass to resemble fine gemstones. Though the work of such forgers can rarely stand up to inspection by an expert, by the time these false valuables are discovered the forger is usually long gone with the prize, and whoever was fooled is left to take the loss. Though usually confined to money and gems, these forgers sometimes branch out into fake works of art (plaster casts of gold sculpture, copies of ancient pottery and other historical "artifacts") and may even create ineffectual magic items (weapons, armor and the like that "look magical" but do nothing). Forgers of this type are typically seeking only money — and occasionally fame — but are basically harmless except to a buyer's money pouch.

The far more rare and significantly more dangerous type of forger, are those who forge other, more political items, such as royal seals and legal documents. Unlike the merely greedy sort described above, such criminals must see to it that their work can withstand the scrutiny of experts; they cannot rely on the gullibility of simple commoners, and thus their work requires enormous skill and attention to detail. In addition, political forgers hold an enormous amount of illicit power. Not only can they facilitate such dealings as smuggling or the escape of dangerous criminals, both activities in which they commonly participate, but they also potentially have the power to start a war, decide its outcome, depose whole governments or instate their own. Though such tactics can be employed by highly ethical organizations, such as the Vigils of Vesh, they are also practiced by followers of the titans and evil organizations like the Penumbra Pentagon and the necromancers of Glivid Autel.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Bluff, Craft (alchemy, glasswork, metalwork, or other — often taken more than once for several types of craft), Diplomacy, Forgery, Sense Motive.

Preferred Feats: Clever*, Fence*, Learned*, Quick*, Quick Draw, Run, Skill Focus (Forgery), Skill Focus (other skill above), Well Connected*.

PICKPOCKET

Pickpockets are usually the closest type of rogue to the stereotypical "common thief." Many steal just enough to get by, and some work for a larger organization to which they must pay a significant portion of their daily "take." Often, pickpockets are very poor (indeed, the vast majority of street orphans are pickpockets) and are just as apt to beg as they are to steal. All pickpockets do not fall into the same category, however. Some rogues steal purely as a test of skill or for their own amusement, with little monetary need at all. No matter the reason for the theft, however, a pickpocket is a thief skilled at stealing small items off the very personages of victims. Purses, jewelry and food are the most common targets because these items are easily palmed and concealed, as well as immediately used or re-sold.

Some pickpockets also use their skill at sleight of hand to perform works of what would appear to be (and isn't at all) magic — awing and distracting the credulous while the "magicians" or their friends "magically" make the audience's valuables disappear. Often these thieves draw appreciative coins and applause from their victims and are long gone before anyone realizes the deception. Though many honest bards are also accomplished at such semblances of magic, it cannot be denied that the two skills are complimentary. Nevertheless, however their skills are employed in the course of lightening their fellow citizens' loads of valuables, very few pickpockets are truly malicious, and they are no more likely to be evil than any other commoner (though lawful pickpockets are exceedingly rare and probably insane).

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Bluff, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Perform (sleight of hand), Sleight of Hand, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Acrobat*, Alertness, Burglar*, Clever*, Fence*, Honest Face*, Improved Initiative, Quick*, Run, Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand), Urban Track*, Well Connected*.

PIRATE

Pirates are the bandits of the sea. Like bandits, pirates work in groups — always large enough to man the ships they sail and rarely larger (to keep from spreading the booty too thin). Also, like bandits, pirates tend to be desperate and ignorant outcasts from civilization. Many pirate crews think nothing of leaving a ship to sink with all its sailors still stranded aboard, for example, so long as they themselves can safely escape with the cargo. Naturally, the cruelest and most reckless pirates are those who sail the tainted Blood

Sea, but no pirates anywhere are known for their gentle compassion.

Nevertheless, again like their land-bound bandit cousins, the pirates of legend are romantic and brave and basically decent at heart. Though the vast majority of such tales are rubbish, certainly not all pirates can be expected to behave the same way. As rare as the legendary charismatic and honorable pirate-adventurers may be, they do exist; there are indeed some crews who treat their prisoners well and will even rally on the side of the gods when titanspawn armies attack.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Balance, Climb, Intimidate, Knowledge (navigation; cross-class), Profession (sailor), Survival (cross-class), Swim, Use Rope.

Preferred Feats: Acrobat*, Brawny*, Burglar*, Clever*, Dashing*, Endurance, Fence*, Lightning Reflexes, Martial (or Exotic) Weapon Proficiency (any), Quick*, Sturdy*, Weapon Focus (any).

RELIC HUNTER

Whether sifting through the crumbling ruins of the Asaatthi Empire, or skillfully navigating the twisted tunnels of an ancient Slarecian compound, the relic hunter is a master at unearthing the ancient treasures of Scarn. Skilled in the avoidance of deadly snares and pitfalls — both magical and mechanical — unfriendly natives, and enemy titanspawn, a relic hunter has the Combat Expertise necessary to gracefully explore the physical remnants of the lost civilizations of Scarn. Without these intrepid rogues, much in the way of lost riches and enlightening historical artifacts would still be inaccessible and the Scarred Lands would be a far poorer place.

Some relic hunters do what they do in hopes of great wealth or glory, and others are sincere scholars of Scarn's ancient past, but all of them are drawn to adventure and exploration like birds to flight. Ancient history may seem boring to some, but to relic hunters the past is still vibrant, dangerous and inherently fascinating.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Disable Device, Jump, Knowledge (ancient history; cross-class), Search, Spot, Tumble, Use Magic Device.

Preferred Feats: Acrobat*, Brawny*, Burglar*, Clever*, Dodge, Fence*, Learned*, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Quick*, Skill Focus (any skill above), Sturdy*, Trap Springer*.

REVOLUTIONARY

Revolutionaries have chosen the path of the rogue for ideological reasons. They are the cunning heroes who regularly smuggle slaves out of Dunahnae and back to their homes, the clever scoundrels who rob the rich to feed the poor in the Heteronomy of Virduk, the fervent followers of Denev who will stop at nothing to

heal and protect the land, and the titan-worshiping terrorists happy to die of horrendous magical plagues in order to infiltrate and infect populations faithful to the gods. Some revolutionaries are mad, some inspired, and many are a mixture of both, but all of them have devoted their lives to changing the world they live in. Those who succeed live on — in fame or in infamy, in history and in legend — sometimes for scores of generations.

Depending on the cause and the alignments of the specific revolutionaries involved, there are almost no crimes — even the truly heinous ones — that are beyond a genuinely fanatical revolutionary. On the other hand, when times are corrupt and people are suffering, it is most often a revolutionary who steps forward to overthrow oppression. Revolutionaries are intense people, usually either very charismatic, very strange or simply very scary, and they believe with all their hearts in whatever cause they have adopted.

Preferred Skills: Diplomacy, Gather Information, Hide, Intimidate, Knowledge (usually either politics or religion; cross-class), Move Silently, Open Lock, Perform (public speaking).

Preferred Feats: Charming*, Clever*, Dashing*, Dodge, Honest Face*, Iron Will, Leadership, Learned*, Quick*, Skill Focus (any skill above), Sturdy*, Well Connected*.

RUFFIAN

Ruffians are a slightly more brutal version of the stereotypical “common thief.” Usually bigger and tougher than pickpockets, ruffians are the type of rogue who will stop their fellow citizens in dark alleys and force them to empty their pockets. When no opportune travelers through dark alleys are available, a ruffian will simply break into ordinary houses at random to ransack them for valuables. In many ways, ruffians are the lowest of all the rogues, as their methods require the least skill and delicacy. The only redeeming characteristic these thieves possess is that they do tend to have somewhat higher incomes than pickpockets.

Something like urban bandits, ruffians often work in small groups or gangs. In larger organizations, ruffians usually make up the main body of the “work force.” In such larger cartels, ruffians may also participate in such activities as kidnapping or the collection and safe transport of illicit funds. Ruffians are rarely good or lawful in alignment.

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Bluff, Gather Information, Hide, Intimidate, Spot.

Preferred Feats: Brawny*, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Quick*, Sturdy*, Toughness, Urban Track*.

SMUGGLER

A smuggler is a rogue who specializes in the transportation of things that are not allowed to be transported.

This can include illegal items or substances, stolen goods, escaping criminals, or perfectly ordinary cargo whose owners wish to avoid expensive taxes or tariffs. Most smugglers pose as ordinary merchants or freighters, and keep hidden compartments in their wagons or ships for the illicit portion of their load. But some smuggling operations are so delicate that they must be done covertly, requiring these rogues to reject any pretence of legality and instead sneak past the border guards under cover of darkness.

Smugglers tend to enjoy the excitement of slipping things past the authorities, and they often give little thought to what they are carrying and who has asked them to carry it. They are rarely dishonest or violent sorts except where they must be in the course of an assignment, and some smugglers can turn out to be remarkably honorable.

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Escape Artist, Forgery, Hide, Move Silently, Profession (merchant or freighter), Speak Language (cross-class).

Preferred Feats: Charming*, Clever*, Dashing*, Endurance, Fence*, Honest Face*, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick*, Quick Draw, Sturdy*, Well Connected*.

Spy

One of the most dangerous roguish occupations, spies infiltrate the territory of their enemies in order to uncover secrets or sometimes to harm those same adversaries from within. Spies can work for or infiltrate almost any cause or organization, and are especially

common in governments and crime cartels — though they tend to be looked down upon in particularly lawful regions.

This disdain comes from a spy's need to behave like a traitor within the infiltrated organization. After all, to truly damage a given group from within, a spy must first falsely gain the trust of its members; this practice is often a very difficult moral issue for spies of good alignment, such as the Veshian urban vigilants (see Appendix Two).

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Decipher Script, Disguise, Escape Artist, Forgery, Gather Information, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Speak Language (cross-class).

Preferred Feats: Alertness, Burglar*, Charming*, Clever*, Dashing*, Honest Face*, Improved Initiative, Infiltrator*, Learned*, Lightning Reflexes, Quick*, Skill Focus (any above), Spy*, Sturdy*, Urban Track*, Well Connected*.

SWASHBUCKLER

Second only to the courtesans in charm and charisma, swashbuckler rogues are almost always delightful to be around. Their lives are filled with adventure and merrymaking, mischief and romance. Never mind that many are liars, swindlers, lechers or even cowards of a sort, nor that in many cases their greatest skill is to make themselves appear to be more accomplished, brave, learned and generally virtuous than they actually are. Somehow this does not detract a whit from their magnetism, at least to those who know them well.




CHAPTER SIX: TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Swashbucklers are usually wandering adventurers, and many are of noble blood or wealthy backgrounds. They typically *claim* to keep no home because their wanderlust and thirst for adventure is so great they simply cannot settle down. In fact, though this is undoubtedly a part of the truth, it is also the case that many swashbucklers keep moving to avoid the retribution of those they have most recently double crossed;

and many of these rogues left home in the first place to avoid unwanted responsibility.

Preferred Skills: Bluff, Disguise, Escape Artist, Open Lock, Perform (stage fighting), Perform (other, often storytelling), Ride (cross-class), Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, Survival (cross-class).

Preferred Feats: Acrobat*, Charming*, Clever*, Dashing*, Honest Face*, Lightning Reflexes, Quick*, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Bluff), Weapon Finesse (often rapier).



APPENDIX ONE

The ways of SHADOW

From the filthy city streets to the dark catacombs of the wilderness, secrets are the stock-in-trade of those who dwell in the shadows. For a rogue, the knowledge of clever fighting techniques and the skills of stealth and stalking can spell the difference between success and a miserable death. This appendix details new feats and rogue special abilities for your character or your campaign.

New Feats

STRONG

The character is strong, and knows how to use this strength to his best advantage.

Prerequisite: Strength 13.

Benefit: On the level that this feat is taken, the character gains a number of bonus skill points equal to his Strength bonus. These skill points may only be spent on skills that are based on Strength. Additionally, he gains +1 skill point (that may only be spent on Strength skills) each level thereafter.

BURGLAR

The character is skilled at finding hidden valuables.

Benefit: The character gains a +2 bonus on all Open Lock and Search checks.

CHARMING

The character is likeable, using his charisma to manipulate and persuade others.

Prerequisite: Charisma 13.

Benefit: On the level that this feat is taken, the character gains a number of bonus skill points equal to his Charisma bonus. These skill points may only be spent on skills that are based on Charisma. Additionally, he gains +1 skill point (that may only be spent on Charisma skills) each level thereafter.

CLEVER

The character is quick-thinking, and uses her wits to aid her in all manner of endeavors.

Prerequisite: Wisdom 13.

Benefit: On the level that this feat is taken, the character gains a number of bonus skill points equal to

APPENDIX ONE: THE WAYS OF SHADOW

her Wisdom bonus. These skill points may only be spent on skills that are based on Wisdom. Additionally, she gains +1 skill point (that may only be spent on Wisdom skills) each level thereafter.

CLOTH DANCING

In some areas, the use of heavy armor is impractical, due to intense heat or other conditions. In these situations, warriors who wear flowing clothes learn to use the movement of their garments to distract an attacker's aim. Some tribes of the deserts are especially known for their whirling warriors, draped in cloth that whips about them as they battle.

Prerequisite: Dodge.

Benefit: This feat grants a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class, which stacks with other dodge bonuses as normal. Using this feat relies on both movement and elaborate clothing, so a character may not apply the dodge bonus when bound or naked. Any situation that causes the loss of a Dexterity bonus to AC likewise negates the dodge bonus. The benefits of this feat apply only when wearing light or no armor. Additionally, this feat may not be used when grappling.

Special: Fighters may select this feat as one of their fighter bonus feats.

DASHING

The character is quite charming, appearing to be skilled and believable.

Benefit: The character gains a +2 bonus on all Bluff and Diplomacy checks.

FENCE

The character has the knowledge and aptitude for the buying and selling of illicit or stolen goods.

Prerequisites: Rogue.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Appraise and Diplomacy checks.

HONEST FACE

People are more apt to trust the character than they would most people.

Prerequisites: Cha 13.

Benefit: The cost of raising a regular contact to a true friend is halved for this character. In other words, instead of costing twice the price of a regular contact, a true friend only costs 1 and 1/2 times regular for this character (round up to the nearest half point for first level NPC class contacts).

IMPROVISED WEAPON

Most warriors are only fierce when they have their favored weapon in hand. However, those with this feat are never caught unprepared, as they can turn just about anything in their reach into a deadly weapon.

Prerequisites: Dex 15, Wis 13.

Benefit: With this feat, common items can be wielded as weapons. A character can improvise and fight with all manner of things — chairs, manacles, belts, bottles, plates, or just about anything that can inflict damage.

Items that resemble normal weapons are treated as that similar weapon. Common examples include: broken table legs (club); ale steins, rocks (gauntlet); belts, ropes, harnesses (whip); bed sheet, drapery (net). If a character lacks proficiency in the weapon the item resembles, this feat reduces the attack roll penalty to -2 (rather than the normal -4). Additionally, it is possible to elect to take Exotic Weapon Proficiency (improvised weapons) to eliminate the penalty from using any ad hoc items.

As noted on Table A1-2: Improvised Weapons, some makeshift weapons have special bonuses

TABLE A1-2: IMPROVISED WEAPONS

Common Item	Similar Weapon	Damage	Critical	Range	Type	Special
Small Improvised Weapons						
Long leather belt	Whip	1d2	x2	10 ft.	Slashing	—
Pint bottle/plate	Dart	1d4	x2	15 ft.	Bludgeoning	Shards on floor act as caltrops
Broken bottle	Dagger	1d3	x1	—	Slashing	—
Medium Improvised Weapons						
Light wooden chair	Unique	1d4	x1	—	Bludgeoning	+2 trip and disarm
Belt with heavy buckle	Rope and weight*	1d4/1d6	x2	5 ft.	Bludgeoning	—
Light Manacles	Spiked chain	1d4	x1	10 ft.	Bludgeoning	—
Heavy Manacles	Chain and weight*	1d4/1d6	x1	5 ft.	Bludgeoning	—
Large Improvised Weapon						
Heavy wooden chair	Unique	1d8	x2	—	Bludgeoning	—

*See Appendix Three for weapon description.

and effects. Lighter items do a degree less of damage, while heavy items might do more. A chair may be lightly built, doing no more than 1d4 damage, but is +2 to disarm and trip. Criticals are usually poor, even for items that resemble weapons with a broad critical threat range and critical multipliers. The GM determines specifics.

Special: Fighters may select this feat as one of their fighter bonus feats.

INFILTRATOR

The character knows how to blend into hostile situations.

Benefit: The character gains a +2 bonus on all Bluff and Disguise checks.

LEARNED

The character is smart, and uses this intelligence to great benefit.

Prerequisite: Intelligence 13.

Benefit: On the level that this feat is taken, the character gains a number of bonus skill points equal to his Intelligence bonus. These skill points may only be spent on skills that are based on Intelligence. Additionally, he gains +1 skill point (that may only be spent on Intelligence skills) each level thereafter.

QUICK

The character is agile, and benefits from this dexterity in all applicable situations.

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13.

Benefit: On the level that this feat is taken, the character gains a number of bonus skill points equal to her Dexterity bonus. These skill points may only be spent on skills that are based on Dexterity. Additionally, she gains +1 skill point (that may only be spent on Dexterity skills) each level thereafter.

SPY

The character is skilled at acquiring secret information and falsifying letters and documents.

Benefit: The character gains a +2 bonus on all Forgery and Gather Information checks.

STALKER [GENERAL]

The stalker knows the ways of her enemies so well that she is better able to shadow their movements — or ambush them.

Prerequisites: Favored Enemy class ability.

Benefit: The character with this feat may use her favored enemy bonus as an insight bonus to her Hide and Move Silently checks, but only when used against her favored enemies.



STURDY

The character is tough, and uses the benefits of his constitution in all manner of situations.

Prerequisite: Constitution 13.

Benefit: On the level that this feat is taken, the character gains a number of bonus skill points equal to his Constitution bonus. These skill points may only be spent on skills that are based on Constitution. Additionally, he gains +1 skill point (that may only be spent on Constitution skills) each level thereafter.

TRACK BY HEARING

Some trackers learn to hone their hearing to such an extent that they are able to track the movements of others through sound alone. This ability is particularly cultivated in areas where quarry may leave no easily discernable tracks (such as through the hard stone of the mountains or badlands), or in places where sight may fail to detect such clues (such as the darkness of underground tunnels).

Prerequisites: Listen 5 ranks, Track, Wis 13.

Benefit: Tracking a creature for one mile by hearing alone requires a Listen check. The tracker must make another Listen check every time the sound of the creature's movement becomes difficult to follow, such as when the target stops moving or when other noises drown out the sound of its movement.

The character moves at half normal speed (or at normal speed with a -5 penalty on the Listen check). The DC depends on the size and number of the creatures being tracked, as well as other conditions:

Size*	DC
Colossal	2
Gargantuan	6
Huge	8
Large	9
Medium	10
Small	11
Tiny	12
Diminutive	14
Fine	18

*For a group of mixed sizes, apply only the modifier for the largest size category.

Condition	DC Modifier
Every three creatures in the group being tracked	-1
Poor audibility**	
• Loud noises or distractions	+6
• Mild noises or distractions	+3
• Tracked party moves at half speed	+5

**Apply only the largest modifier from this category.

If the character fails a Listen check, he can retry the roll after 15 minutes (outdoors) or 5 minutes (indoors). Keep in mind, however, that the target must be within one mile for this ability to be effective.

Special: A character who possesses this feat gains a +3 synergy bonus on all Survival checks made in conjunction with the feat Track.

Normal: A character without this feat cannot attempt to track by hearing alone.

TRACK BY SCENT

Some trackers' sense of smell is so great that they can pick up the scent of their quarry.

Prerequisites: Track, Wis 15.

Benefit: The character with this feat can detect other creatures within 30 feet by sense of smell alone. If the quarry is upwind, the range increases to 60 feet, while it drops to 15 feet if the quarry is downwind. When the character detects a scent, he is not aware of the exact location of the creature within that range. Determining the direction of the scent is a move action. If he moves within 5 feet of the source of the scent, he can determine its exact positioning.

When tracking by scent, the character must make a Survival check. The DC for a fresh trail of any kind is 10. This DC increases or decreases depending on the creature's odor, as well as the number of creatures tracked and the age of the trail. For each hour that passes, the DC increases by 2. In all other respects, this feat follows the normal rules for tracking, except that the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility may be ignored.

Special: A character who possesses this feat gains a +3 synergy bonus on all Survival checks made in conjunction with the feat Track.

Normal: A character without this feat cannot attempt to track by scent alone.

TRAP SPRINGER

The character is adept at locating and disarming traps of all sorts.

Prerequisites: Rogue.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Disable Device and Search checks.

URBAN TRACK

The character can follow the trails of creatures and characters through most urban settings.

Benefit: This feat works in the same manner as the Track feat, but instead of a Wilderness Lore check, it requires a Search check. In addition, Urban Track grants a +2 bonus to all Search checks in an urban setting. Urban Track can be used in wilderness settings, but with a -5 penalty instead of the +2 bonus.

WELL CONNECTED

Character has more contacts than usual.

Benefit: All a character's contact dice are advanced by one die type; i.e. a d4 becomes a d6, etc. This affects all contact dice from the current level forward, but has no effect whatsoever on contact dice that have already been rolled at previous levels.

WHIRLING DEFENSE

The character has learned to use a series of whirling movements to distract and confuse foes.

Prerequisites: Cloth Dancing, Combat Expertise.

Benefit: This feat must be used in combination with Cloth Dancing. When using either an attack action or a full attack action in melee, the character can choose to take a penalty of as much as -5 on that attack roll. The character receives a +2 dodge bonus to Armor Class for each -1 penalty taken. This feat replaces the effect of Combat Expertise and may exceed the character's base attack bonus. The changes to attack rolls and AC last until the next action. The benefits of Whirling Defense stack with any other dodge bonuses, including the dodge bonus from Cloth Dancing.

Special: Fighters may select this feat as one of their fighter bonus feats.

TERRAIN FEATS

These feats are available only to characters with one or more class levels in ranger. Terrain feats grant a ranger bonuses while traveling or acting within the specified terrain. In most cases, terrain feats work equally well in all climates; it is the terrain that matters. However, exceptions are possible at the GM's discretion, especially when the climate greatly affects the terrain — such as in the case of cold and aquatic environments.

DESERT WALKER [TERRAIN]

The desert walker knows the secrets of life in the desert, including the methods to locate and conserve the precious resource of water.

Benefit: The character with this feat gains a +2 bonus to any Spot and Survival checks made while in a desert. In addition, he can go without water for one day plus a number of hours equal to twice his Constitution score.

Normal: Characters may normally go without water for one day plus a number of hours equal to their Constitution score.

FORESTER [TERRAIN]

Foresters know the wisdom of the trees and can use this knowledge to their advantage.

Benefit: The character with this feat gains a +2 bonus to Climb and Survival checks made while in a forest. In addition, characters who have climbed within the foliage of the trees are considered to have cover, as they know the best ways to use the placement of branches to slow attacks directed at them.

HILL WALKER [TERRAIN]

The hillwalker has no problem finding her way through the rolling hills — or noticing others who are doing the same.

Benefit: The character with this feat gains a +2 bonus to any Survival and Spot checks made while in hilly terrain. In addition, the character's movement is not adversely affected by steep slopes, allowing her to move normally through such areas.

Normal: Characters moving uphill must normally spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of steeply sloped terrain.

MARSHLANDER [TERRAIN]

For the marshlander, traveling through a swamp is no more difficult than traveling through any other terrain — and is perhaps even easier.

Benefit: The character with this feat gains a +2 bonus to any Survival and Move Silently checks made while in a marsh. In addition, the character gains the benefits of the druid's *trackless step* ability within the bounds of the marsh only.

MOUNTAINEER [TERRAIN]

The mountaineer can scale mountains with ease and has no difficulty traversing the lofty heights.

Benefit: The character with this feat gains a +2 bonus to any Climb and Survival checks made while in a mountainous environment. In addition, she gains a +2 bonus to any Fortitude saves made to resist the effects of high altitude oxygen deprivation (see DMG, Chapter Three, "Wilderness Adventures," *Mountain Terrain*).

PLAINSMAN [TERRAIN]

Despite the uniformity of the plains, the plainsman has no difficulty evading his enemies or using the terrain to his advantage in ranged combat.

Benefit: The character with this feat gains a +2 bonus to any Survival and Hide checks made while on the plains. In addition, thanks to the expansive horizon, he gains the benefits of the Far Shot feat for any missile or thrown weapons used while in this terrain.

Special: If a character already possesses the Far Shot feat, the benefits of this feat do not stack with it.

Spelunker [TERRAIN]

The spelunker can navigate underground environments with confidence.

Benefit: The character with this feat gains a +2 bonus to any Climb and Survival checks made while underground. In addition, she gains darkvision with a 10-foot range.

Special: If the character already possesses darkvision, this feat does not increase its range or otherwise enhance it.

Waterman [TERRAIN]

The waterman is so at home in aquatic environments that he can function there as if he were on land.

Benefit: The character with this feat gains a +2 bonus to any Survival and Swim checks made while in an aquatic environment. In addition, he can hold his breath much longer than the average person. The character is able to resist breathing underwater, without penalty, for a number of rounds equal to twice his Constitution score. After that, he must make a DC 10 Constitution check every round in order to continue holding his breath. Every other round, this DC increases by +1.

Normal: The Constitution DC for a character to continue holding his breath normally increases by +1 per round, rather than every other round.

New Rogue Special Abilities

At levels 10, 13, 16 and 19, rogues may choose from a list of optional special abilities. The following abilities are intended to add to that list, in order to give rogues more opportunity for diversity and specialization.

Adaptability

The rogue selects a number of skills up to 2+ the character's Intelligence modifier (minimum 2). All of these skills must be cross-class skills in which the character already has at least one rank. These skills are now considered to be rogue class skills for this character.



DIRTY FIGHTING

The rogue is so skilled at distracting, unnerving, deceiving and otherwise upsetting her opponent with dishonorable fighting techniques that once per day she may choose to do any one of the following: automatically succeed on a single roll to hit; cause her opponent to fail a single attack roll; make a single attack and then move away from the opponent, treating the square the action starts in as not threatened; or perform a single sneak attack, even while the opponent is not flanked and retains his full Dexterity bonus.

ENKILI'S LUCK

The rogue is inordinately lucky — most of the time. Once per day, the rogue may turn a single unsuccessful roll into a 20. This ability may be used on any roll that requires a d20. Enkili's luck can be used to confirm a critical hit; but if used as a regular attack roll, it does not create a critical threat. For every three times this ability is used, the GM may choose to turn one of the rogue's successful rolls into a 1. The GM may not use this ability on a natural 20.

HONED SENSES

The rogue notices things that others miss. Once per day, the rogue may choose to use his honed senses on any one of the following rolls: Appraise, Gather Information, Knowledges, Listen, Search, Sense Motive or Spot skill checks, as well as all attempts to save vs. illusions. The rogue is considered to have rolled a 20 for this roll. The rogue may not use this ability after he has already rolled and failed.

IMPROVED DEFENSIVE ROLL

This ability is basically similar to defensive roll except that instead of half damage, the rogue takes no damage at all. Since all rogues with this ability are required to already have defensive roll, they may now make two defensive rolls per day — one for zero damage and one for half damage.

Prerequisite: Defensive Roll.

IMPROVED SLIPPERY MIND

If a rogue with improved slippery mind is affected by any enchantment cast by a magic user, whose caster level is less than half the character's rogue levels, the rogue succeeds automatically at her saving throw. The effects of the slippery mind special ability still apply to the enchantments of higher level casters.

Prerequisite: Slippery Mind.

INCONSPICUOUSNESS

The rogue is difficult to notice unless he is actively trying to attract attention. Unless the

rogue is choosing to stand out, or unless others are specifically searching for him, the rogue is considered at all times to be hiding. The DC to spot a rogue with the inconspicuousness ability is the rogue's Dexterity modifier + his ranks in Hide. Characters purposefully searching for the rogue see him normally (unless of course the rogue actually is actively hiding). In addition, any time a magic user wishes to target the rogue with a Divination spell, she must first succeed at a Concentration check, with a DC equal to the rogue's Intelligence modifier + his ranks in Hide.

INTUITION

Once per session, the player of a rogue character may privately ask the GM a single in-character yes or no question. The GM must answer the question truthfully, and the player may then use this information as an in-character "hunch." This question cannot pertain to things that are randomly determined (since the GM cannot possibly know the answer in advance), but all other in-character yes or no questions are acceptable. If the question cannot be answered as it is phrased, the player may ask another until an answerable question is found.

ROGUSH CHARM

The rogue is very likable, in spite of all evidence to the contrary. Once per day she may choose to perform any one of the following two near-magical effects.

First, the rogue may tell a single brief lie to one person and have it be believed unquestioningly until the rogue leaves the victim's line of sight for more than a minute. The lie must be believable to a sane person — "the sky is green," will not work, for example, but "of course I didn't steal the jewel," would work on anyone who hadn't witnessed the incident directly. The lie cannot be longer than a single simple sentence.

Second, the rogue may talk someone into doing her a favor. This task must take less than 30 minutes to perform, and cannot directly endanger the victim or his loved ones in any way. Asking to borrow money is a good example, but requesting someone to hold off angry guards is not — unless the person is so high in level (or authority) that turning back the guards poses no threat whatsoever.

These abilities can only be used on sentient creatures with whom the rogue shares a common language. They can only be used on one person at a time. Characters of higher total level than the rogue character's levels in rogue may make a Will save at a DC of 10 + the rogue's Charisma modifier + the rogue's ranks in an appropriate skill

(usually Bluff for the first and Diplomacy for the second). Those who make their saves are fully aware of the rogue's attempt to manipulate them. These abilities can never work on the same person twice, and the rogue must always be within the target's line of sight to attempt either ability.

SEARCH MASTERY

The rogue is highly proficient at finding things. In fact, the rogue is so adept that he always finds something interesting on a roll of 20 or more, whenever he looks. Naturally, what the rogue finds will not always be what he was looking for — especially if he is searching in the wrong room — but it will be interesting in some way. GMs are encouraged to use this in whatever manner best fits the game. Rogues may find coins or jewelry, clues and plot devices for this or future sessions, bits of local gossip (a love note from the

lord's wife to a fellow rogue!), things of no interest to the rogue personally but useful to other members of the party, or anything else useful or worthy of comment. Often the information or items a rogue finds in this manner may seem irrelevant at the time and only turn out to be interesting much later on in the campaign. Coins are a good fall-back if this ability ever threatens to slow down the game, but GMs should try to make the ability as interesting and diverse as they possibly can.

Prerequisite: Search 10+ ranks.

SKILLED OPPORTUNIST

This functions identically to the special ability, opportunist, except that the rogue may use it as many times in a round as she has attacks of opportunity.

Prerequisite: Opportunist, Combat Reflexes.



APPENDIX TWO

THE MASTERS OF SHADOW

There are many secrets in the Scarred Lands. These secrets transcend simple knowledge of who has done what to whom and what they might be willing to pay to avoid anyone else knowing (though it might be argued that these are some of the best secrets to know). Rather, these secrets are paths to great power and skill, unlocked by the rare visionary and passed on to others. The secrets here are similar — in general the knowledge that allows the average ranger or rogue to perform some of the amazing feats herein is guarded. Sometimes by an oath to use the abilities responsibly, and sometimes by simply keeping knowledge of their existence in the shadows, where they truly belong.

In these descriptions, magic items and spells marked with a single asterisk (*) are from **Relics & Rituals**; those marked with a double asterisk (**) are from **Relics & Rituals 2: Lost Lore**.

CORE PRESTIGE CLASSES

Though the place of those prestige classes presented in Scarred Lands supplements is obvious, what might not be readily apparent is where the basic prestige classes from the *DMG* fit in. What follows is a description of how each of these classes is appropriate for use in the Scarred Lands; ultimately, however, these are simply suggestions for the GM, who has the final word on such things.

ARCANE TRICKSTER

Many are those rogues who learn to augment their sneak-thief's skills with magic. Found most often among those members of the Scaled who don't ever aspire to hold the rank of Master, the secrets of the arcane trickster are credited by folklore and tales to a halfling sorcerer from the distant past.

ASSASSIN

The Cult of Ancients is a name rarely spoken — and then, only in whispers. Practitioners of murder and a unique form of hedge wizardry, these assassins practice their art for the glory of Belsameth and to further the goals of their assassin's organization.

HORIZON WALKER

The horizon walker is something of a myth in the campside tales of ranger brotherhoods throughout the Scarred Lands. It is said that this knowledge was long lost when the Ledeane Empire was young, but restored to mankind by Tanil at the onset of the Divine War. Indeed, those few horizon walkers still in existence are nearly all in the service of the Huntress' church, though rumors speak of the Hunter Beyond, a powerful plane-travelling ranger of Hrinruuk who left Scarn shortly after the Divine War and has spent the decades since hunting down myriad dangerous extraplanar prey.

SHADOWDANCER

Those who discover the very heights of Drendari's mysteries are rare, indeed. Gifted with the ability to become one with the inbetween places that are Drendari's own, those who would learn to dance the shadows learn it only from those who already serve Drendari.

The shadowdancers are often caught up in a holy crusade against the so-called penumbral lords, who took the lore stolen from Drendari's mind by the Slarecians and turned it to their own whims, forcing shadows to bend to their will rather than becoming one with them.

BLACK THORN RANGER

The Great General is general of many things. Indeed, Chardun's mind races faster than the quickest tactician, in trickier ways than the most crafty of Hedradan lawmakers and is ever-insightful into the hearts of greedy men. Why, then, does it come as a surprise that the almighty divine general is capable of maintaining an elusive group of elite soldiers and hunters? Perhaps it is not merely the idea of linking Chardun and subtlety that causes disbelief in people, but, rather, the unbelievable tale that accompanies this mysterious order.

Indeed, the Order of the Black Thorn used to simply be known as the Order of Thorns. When Emperor Liam Takhuul, first lord of the Takhuul Dynasty, overthrew the Sam'Marith Dynasty in 732 OC, one of the new emperor's first acts was to create an elite order of scouts who would precede his legions. The Order of the Thorn was thus born as a group of rangers dedicated to the unhindered spread of the Ledeian Empire by any means necessary. Frighteningly effective, merciless and noted for their resourcefulness, the Order was forever after considered indispensable by all those who would come to occupy the throne.

Forever is a long time, however. During the last great age of Lede, the Thael Dynasty, enraged by their own impotence and inability to keep the provinces under Aurimar's control, disbanded the Order of

the Thorn under the false accusation that they were aiding the provinces in abandoning Lede. In the lands that still remained loyal to the Thael Dynasty, the Order's members — those who could be found, that is — were summarily executed as traitors; in all other provinces the Order simply disbanded itself to flee in fear. Unfortunately for Lede, this served only to hasten the fall of the Empire, as the Order of the Thorn was perhaps one of its few remaining loyal factions.

The teachings of the Order lived on, however. Those who fled to the western ends of Ghelspad passed their knowledge down until, filtered by the ages, many of their combat precepts wound up with the Dark Motak Vigil. By contrast, those who fled into what is now Dunahnae managed to keep their teachings pure and unfettered with the losses of time. These Dunahnae rangers accomplished something else, as well. They

found strength and power by adding the force of Chardun to the Thorn doctrine. Without the law of Lede around, they naturally fell back on the most powerful driving force they could: the Church of Chardun.

Who else but the Great General could match the might that Aurimar had shown during her glory days? Who



else desired the expansion of his own kingdom and consolidation of power by any means? What else did the Order of the Thorn represent?

Thus, the Order of the Thorn became known as the Order of the Black Thorn. Dedicated to the expansion of Chardun's Church as a whole, they have managed to remain outside of the political games of Calastia and Dunahnae. With great delicacy, the Order supports Chardun's Church in both nations, as well as in other lands across Ghelspad and even occasionally in Virduk's Promise, without bias for any one in particular. This deadly dance can only be kept up for so long though, and the Order cites the fact that it has lasted as long as it has already, as proof that Chardun blesses them and their cause.

Rumors abound that, since the Blackguard Orders take too long to create adequate soldiers — and even then they often live only in the shadow of their paladin brothers — Chardun has recently given serious consideration to making the Order his open and mighty arm. The rangers and scouts who train as Black Thorns are a match for their Silver and Gold Knight counterparts, and they require far less resources and are ready for combat much quicker than are the Blackguards. Whatever the gossip, however, what these facts portend is another matter entirely.

Use in Other Campaigns: The Black Thorn ranger, while tied to the Church of Chardun and the history of the Scarred Lands, is easily adaptable to other campaign settings. Chardun is an archetypal lawful evil deity; most settings have an equivalent god that could assume his place. Black Thorn rangers then become his special servants, hunting down his enemies and acting as advance scouts and agents provocateur for the forces of evil. This prestige class makes a nice alternative (or complement) to the blackguard, as well, which makes it a worthwhile addition even outside the Scarred Lands.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Black Thorn ranger, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Ability: Favored enemy class ability.

Alignment: Any evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +4

Faith: Chardun.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Skill: Hide 6 ranks, Survival 6 ranks.

Spellcasting: Ability to cast *Chardun's glory* (see **Relics & Rituals 2: Lost Lore**).

Special: Must be a member of the Order of the Black Thorn.

CLASS SKILLS

The Black Thorn ranger's class skills are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Black Thorn ranger prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Black Thorn rangers are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with light and medium armor, and with shields.

Spells: Beginning at 1st level, a Black Thorn ranger gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. To cast a spell, the Black Thorn ranger must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level; a Black Thorn ranger with a Wisdom of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Black Thorn ranger bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the Black Thorn ranger's Wisdom modifier. When the Black Thorn ranger gets 0 spells of a given level, he gets only bonus spells — therefore if he has no bonus spells he for that level he cannot yet cast a spell of that level. The Black Thorn ranger's spell list appears below. A Black Thorn ranger has access to any spell on the list and can freely choose which to prepare, just like a cleric.

Favored Enemy (Ex): Beginning at 1st level, a Black Thorn ranger may choose a favored enemy from the list of ranger favored enemies. The character gains a +2 to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot and Survival checks against such creatures. Likewise, he gets a +2 bonus on weapon damage rolls against such creatures.

Additionally, at 4th, 7th and 10th levels, the Black Thorn ranger chooses another favored enemy. His bonus against any one favored enemy (including the one just selected, if desired) increases by 2.

Poison Use: Black Thorn rangers are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a weapon.

Combat Perception (Ex): Members of the Order of the Black Thorn are renowned for their lightning fast reflexes and reaction times in combat. The ancient Ledeian idea of war is simple at its core: strike hard, strike first. Naturally, this carries over into the modern thinking of this Order, meaning a Black Thorn ranger is always prepared for combat and naturally perceives a coming battle. At 2nd level, they receive a +1 bonus to initiative because of this combat perception. This bonus increases by +1 every three levels thereafter (+2 at 5th level, +3 at 8th level).

TABLE A2-1: BLACK THORN RANGER (BTR)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day			
						1	2	3	4
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Favored enemy, poison use	0	—	—	—
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Combat perception +1	1	—	—	—
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Detect good	1	0	—	—
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Favored enemy	1	1	—	—
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Combat perception +2	1	1	0	—
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Dark blessing	1	1	1	—
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Favored enemy	2	1	1	0
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Combat perception +3	2	1	1	1
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Eye of the General	2	2	1	1
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Favored enemy	2	2	2	1

Detect Good (Sp): At will, a Black Thorn ranger of 3rd level or higher can *detect good* as a spell-like ability.

Dark Blessing (Su): Beginning at 6th level, a Black Thorn has gained enough favor in Chardun's service that the Great General grants the ranger Dark Blessing. A Black Thorn applies his Charisma modifier (if positive) as a bonus to all saving throws.

Eye of the General (Su): At 9th level, a Black Thorn's knowledge of his enemy exceeds the normal ability of other rangers to second-guess their opponent's moves. A Black Thorn ranger knows precisely where to hit an opponent, and, with the divine help of Chardun, how to deal the hardest blow as quickly as possible. Once per day, providing he is fighting one of his favored enemies, a Black Thorn may declare his next attack to be an automatic critical hit; this means that if the Black Thorn successfully strikes, it is treated as though he had rolled a critical threat and confirmed it. This must be declared before rolling to hit.

BLACK THORN SPELL LIST

Black Thorn rangers choose their spells from the following list. Spells marked with an asterisk (*) are from **Relics and Rituals**; those marked with a double asterisk (**) are from **Relics and Rituals 2: Lost Lore**.

1st level — *bane*, *chardun's glory***, *command*, *cure light wounds*, *ears of the wolf***, *inflict light wounds*, *protection from good*, *rabbit feet**

2nd level — *bladethirst***, *cure moderate wounds*, *foreaction***, *hunter's stalk**, *inflict moderate wounds*, *shocking missile***.

3rd level — *assassin's senses**, *chardun's torments*, *cure serious wounds*, *enhanced senses***, *inflict critical wounds*, *prayer*.

4th level — *chardun's presence***, *cure serious wounds*, *haste*, *inflict moderate wounds*.

BLOOD SEA PIRATE

Many scoundrels and outlaws have sailed the crimson waters of the Blood Sea. Some of these maritime bandits call themselves pirates, forming leagues and confederations in order to deal with the threat of navies from those powerful governments who oppose them—which range from the ships of Mithril to the mighty Calastian Navy.

However, the greatest threat that pirates on the Blood Sea face comes not from the forces of national navies, nor even from predation by their fellow pirates. Rather, the Blood Sea itself takes its toll on most of those who sail its waters, leading to sickness and early death after only a few years. A rare few, however, have found a way to not only survive the fury of the Blood Sea's power, but to harness it.

These pirates and sailors immerse themselves in the water of the Blood Sea, drawing strange and unnatural abilities from its very taint. One of the most feared pirates of this stripe is Captain Erlick "Bloody Yard-arm" Thesk. His ship, the *Crimson Tide*, has already plundered numerous vessels—hanging many a man, woman and child all along his ship, decorating the bow and sides with the bodies of those he has killed. Some of these unfortunates return as Blood Sea zombies. In fact, some even serve him as crew, though none know how he manages to harness these creatures.

Most Blood Sea pirates are of a lesser variety, however, and work mainly as crewmates on any ship that will pay well for their services. Some even work with the League of Hydros and other piracy organizations such as the growing Japhinian Dynasts, lured by tales of adventure and gold. Through knowledge of the lore handed down by prior buccaneers, they dilute and use the magical properties of the Blood Sea to enhance their seamanship as well as their fighting skills. Most of those who serve as pirates started out as commoners, experts, rogues, or fighters of a sort. Many are just adventurers looking for the next big haul, who have somehow found themselves beholden to the Blood Sea. Most of these tainted pirates, however, are disreputable rogues, thieves and murderers of the lowest sort; even their own shipmates view them with a mixture of disgust and fear.

Use in Other Campaigns: The Blood Sea pirate requires some reworking because of its close ties to the geography of the Scarred Lands. In campaign settings that have no large magically or divinely tainted body of water like the Blood Sea, the GM will need another explanation for some of the pirate's abilities, especially Blood Sea alchemy. One possibility is that a deity or outsider blesses

members of this prestige class in exchange for service. Alternately, the secrets of the class might be wholly mortal in origin and passed down from one pirate to the next after being initiated into their maritime brotherhood. Whatever its ultimate nature, the GM should provide an explanation for



TABLE A2-2: BLOOD SEA PIRATE (Osp)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Rage of the Blood Sea
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Blood Sea alchemy
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Skills of the sea
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Blood Sea alchemy
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Fierce fighting+1, Rage of the Blood Sea
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Blood Sea alchemy, buccaneer's defense +1
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Fierce fighting+2
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Blood Sea alchemy
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Buccaneer's defense +2
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Corsair of the sea, Rage of the Blood Sea

Skills of the Sea (Ex): At 3rd level, the sudden rocking of her ship and the mighty swells of the Blood Sea no longer hold any surprises for the Blood Sea pirate. The character gains a +2 competence bonus to all Balance checks and Use Rope checks. Additionally, while moving using the Balance skill, the Blood Sea pirate may always move at her normal movement with but a single successful skill roll.

Fierce Fighting (Ex): At 5th level, the Blood Sea pirate has acquired a proficient understanding of ship-board combat on the Blood Sea. Thus, she gains a +1 insight bonus to her attack and damage rolls while on a ship or boat in the Blood Sea. This bonus increases at 7th level to +2.

Buccaneer's Defense (Ex): Defending one's ship is often a necessity on the Blood Sea. Thus, Blood Sea pirates become quite capable at defending their ship from any threat. At 6th level, when engaged in combat aboard his ship, a Blood Sea pirate gains a +1 morale bonus to her AC and saving throws. If she leaves her ship while this ability is still active, she receives a -2 morale penalty to her attack, saving throw rolls and AC. This ability can be used a number of times per day equal to 1 + her Cha modifier, and lasts for a number of

minutes equal to her levels in the Blood Sea pirate prestige class. The bonuses associated with this ability increase to +2 at 9th level.

Corsair of the Sea (Su): When a Blood Sea pirate achieves this level of power, she can cause awe-filled fear in her enemies and inspire great loyalty and confidence in those who serve her. At 10th level, by taking a full round action, a Blood Sea pirate may choose to rally her allies, granting them a +3 morale bonus to their AC, attack and damage rolls.

Additionally, all opponents within 30 feet of the character must make a Will save (DC 10 + level in Blood Sea pirate + Cha modifier) or be affected as if by a *fear* spell. The caster level of this effect is 10 + 1/2 her character level to determine dispelling checks. Creatures immune to fear effects are likewise immune to this effect.

This ability can be used a number of times per day equal to 1 + the Blood Sea pirate's Cha modifier, and lasts for 1 round/per level in the Blood Sea pirate prestige class. After utilizing this effect, the Blood Sea pirate is considered to be fatigued for one hour; however, if she is in the midst of her rage of the Blood Sea, the fatigue does not set in until after that has subsided.

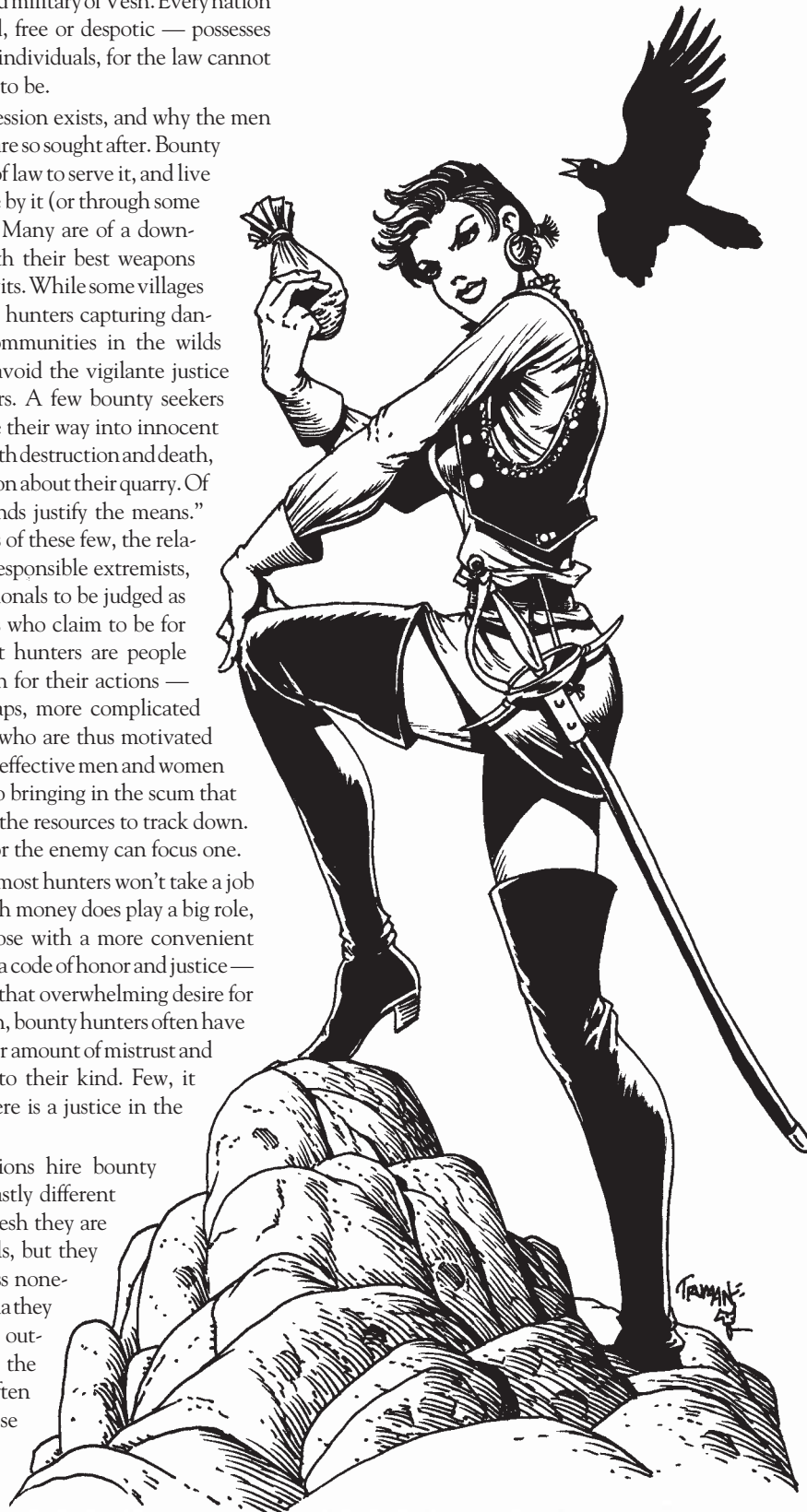
BOUNTY HUNTER

Bounty hunters are known to the agents of law nearly everywhere, from Hedrad to the tribes of Albadia, and even among the disciplined military of Vesh. Every nation — civilized or uncivilized, free or despotic — possesses some of these resourceful individuals, for the law cannot be in every place it needs to be.

That is why the profession exists, and why the men and women who follow it are so sought after. Bounty hunters exist on the edge of law to serve it, and live by the sword until they die by it (or through some similarly violent means). Many are of a downright unfriendly type, with their best weapons being sheer brutality and wits. While some villages have benefited by bounty hunters capturing dangerous fugitives, most communities in the wilds believe that it is best to avoid the vigilante justice practiced by these hunters. A few bounty seekers have been known to force their way into innocent peoples' homes, causing both destruction and death, due to mistaken information about their quarry. Of course, they insist "the ends justify the means." Unfortunately the actions of these few, the relatively small number of irresponsible extremists, have caused these professionals to be judged as savages and misanthropes who claim to be for the law. Regardless, most hunters are people who do have a real reason for their actions — simple revenge, or, perhaps, more complicated revenge. Bounty hunters who are thus motivated are often some of the most effective men and women there are when it comes to bringing in the scum that civilized lands don't have the resources to track down. After all, pain and hate for the enemy can focus one.

Unlike mercenaries, most hunters won't take a job *only* for the cash. Although money does play a big role, bounty hunters (even those with a more convenient sense of morality) do have a code of honor and justice — and some, of course, have that overwhelming desire for revenge. In the end though, bounty hunters often have to struggle against an unfair amount of mistrust and even animosity directed to their kind. Few, it seems, remember that there is a justice in the jobs that hunters do.

Numerous organizations hire bounty hunters, sometimes for vastly different reasons. In the wilds of Vesh they are not tolerated by the Vigils, but they exist and conduct business nonetheless. Likewise, in Calastia they are officially banned and outlawed, while in practice the Calastian government often hires and pays well those hunters who will do business with them.



In all that is wrong with the image of those professionals who are collectively called bounty hunters, there is still one sect who acts as a shining beacon of the law in the eyes of the people. The clergy of Hedrada train a specific group of soldiers to act as Hedrada's ever-just hand in the wilderness where the clergy cannot reach. They hunt, and bring to justice, those who flee civilization after committing truly terrible crimes.

Surprisingly enough, the church of Chardun also despises, at least officially, the use of bounty hunters. The Slaver's dogma views these hunters to be simply loose weapons, beyond the control of him or his church. On the other side of the coin, their domineering use of the law, as well as their "by any means necessary" unspoken credo, does hold a certain attraction to the Church. Thus, the Chardunite clergy often willingly, and gleefully, hires bounty hunters to take out problems who they don't deem worthy of passing on to more trusted elements of their church. Of course, the hunters see a different motivation behind the chardunites' actions. These often arrogant rogues claim, rather sardonically, that the "mighty slavers" just aren't as good at capturing people as they say they are. Sure, they can enslave families in their own homes, or apprehend fleeing commoners, but when the fugitives get tough they call for a bounty hunter. Fortunately, hunters do have the common sense to make these statements away from areas of chardunite control.

Use in Other Campaigns: Bounty hunters works well in just about every type of campaign setting, regardless of their lack of similarity to the Scarred Lands. Historically, all but the most hidebound or primitive societies have given birth to individuals who, for a variety of reasons, have taken up the vocation of tracking down and capturing wanted criminals. In some settings, bounty hunting might be the purview only of evil characters, while in others it might be respectable enough that good characters could take it up. In any case, this prestige class requires only minimal tweaking to be usable in other settings.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a bounty hunter, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Improved Disarm, Improved Unarmed Strike, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Skill: Intimidate 5 ranks, Sense Motive 3 ranks, Survival 4 ranks, Use Rope 6 ranks.

CLASS SKILLS

The bounty hunter's class skills are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Search (Int), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the bounty hunter prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Bounty hunters are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light and medium armor and with shields.

Mighty Unarmed Strike: A bounty hunter's unarmed damage when using the Improved Unarmed Strike feat increases to 1d4 nonlethal damage. This increases to 1d6 at 5th level and 1d8 at 9th.

Disarm Trap: Beginning at 2nd level, a bounty hunter may actively search for and disarm traps, both magical and mundane, with Search and Disable Device DCs higher than 20. This operates as though she were a rogue.

Manacle Snap: At 2nd level, a bounty hunter's skill with the use of manacles and cuffs to detain prisoners becomes refined for use in combat. If a bounty hunter has a set of manacles in hand and succeeds at a grapple check against a Small or Medium opponent, she may automatically slap the manacles onto her target.

TABLE A2-3: BOUNTY HUNTER (6th)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Mighty unarmed strike (1d4)
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Manacle snap, disarm trap
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Hunt quarry
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Batter (+1d6)
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Mighty unarmed strike (1d6)
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Hunt quarry
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Batter (+2d6)
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Mighty unarmed strike (1d8)
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Hunt quarry
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Improved manacle slap

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(rather than as a grapple action, as would be normal). While this does not automatically disarm an opponent, it does bind the victim's hands, inflicting a -4 penalty to attacks with a single weapon (the target may not attack with dual or two-handed weapons) and rendering the person unable to cast spells that have somatic components. As having bound hands also causes balancing problems, a manacled individual receives only half of the normal dexterity bonus to AC (rounding down) and is counted as being flat-footed for the purposes of receiving sneak attacks or making attacks of opportunity.

Hunt Quarry: Prior to ever starting out on a mission, bounty hunters typically take great amounts of time to thoroughly research their targets. The effort they spend — reflecting upon the previous tactics, strategies and common habits of a particular enemy — can often determine the difference between success and deadly failure. Thus, at 3rd level, if a bounty hunter spends at least one hour studying any history of her quarry (such as legal records, or eye witness reports) or simply observes the individual in question for one hour, she gains a +1 to all hit rolls, Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive,

Spot and Survival checks against that person. At 6th level, this bonus increases to +2, and at 9th it becomes a +3.

Batter: Starting at 3rd level, if a bounty hunter can catch an opponent when he is unable to defend himself effectively, the hunter may deal an extra 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. This ability works in the same manner as a rogue's sneak attack damage, except it only deals nonlethal damage — most hunters are trying to take a prisoner, not make a corpse. A bounty hunter who succeeds at a manacle slap also inflicts batter damage. At 7th level, this damage increases to +2d6.

Improved Manacle Slap: Bounty hunters of 10th level have reached a pinnacle of efficiency when it comes to detaining criminals. As such, a hunter may make a special attack with the manacles in her off hand if she is fighting with a weapon in her primary hand. This off-hand attack suffers all the usual penalties and is considered an opposed grapple check, but does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If the bounty hunter wins the grapple check, the opponent has been manacled.

BROTHER OF THE CRIMSON TEMPLE

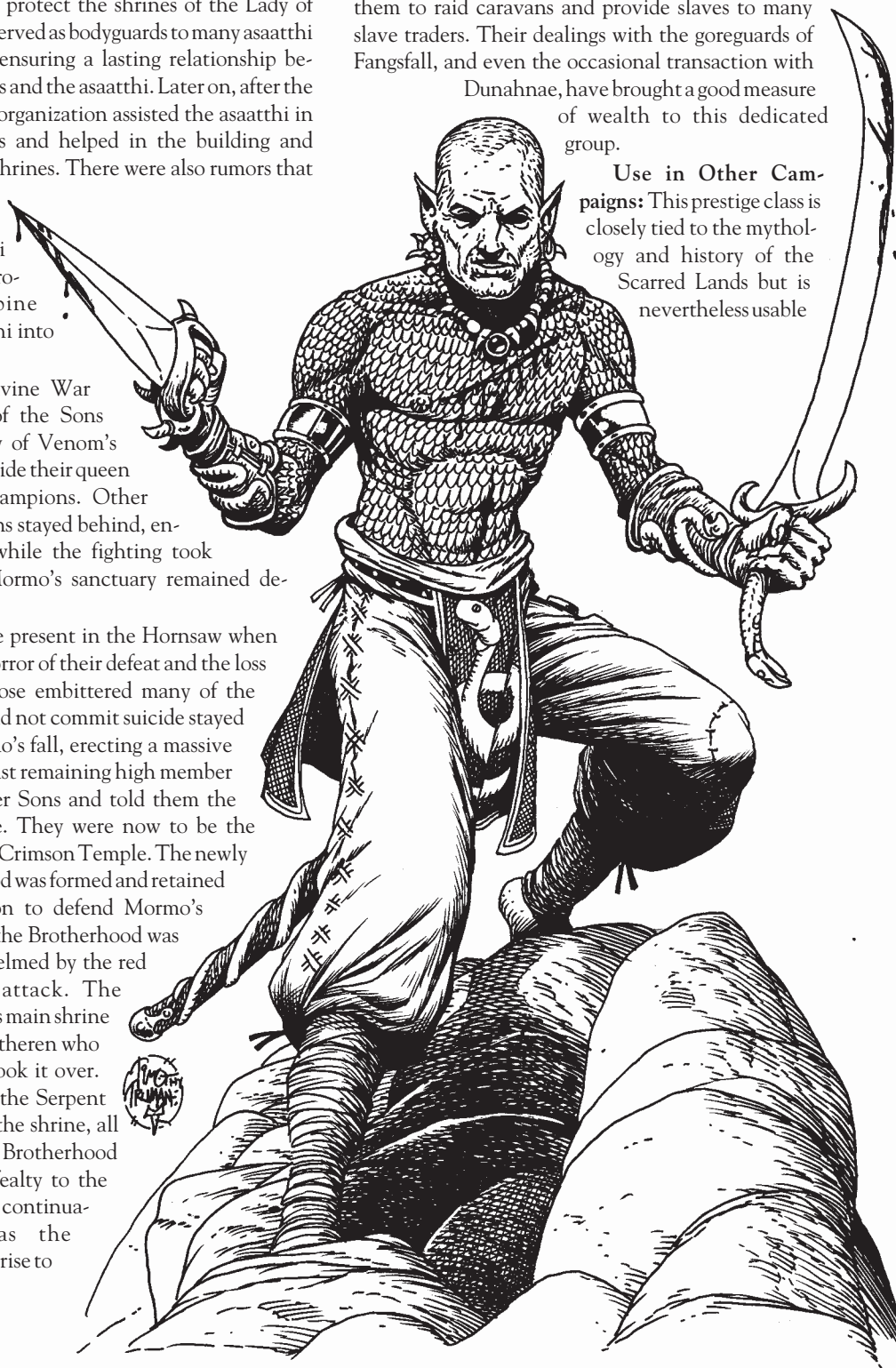
In the time of the Second Takhuul Dynasty, a small sect of men devoted to Mormo organized themselves into what became known as the Sons of the Serpentmother. The group was composed exclusively of men, mainly rangers and druids, who pledged themselves to serve and protect the shrines of the Lady of Venom. They also served as bodyguards to many asaatthi ambassadors, thus ensuring a lasting relationship between these humans and the asaatthi. Later on, after the Dynasty's fall, this organization assisted the asaatthi in securing new lands and helped in the building and defending of their shrines. There were also rumors that the Sons initiated, with the blessings of the asaatthi nobles, a breeding program to combine humans and asaatthi into a single race.

When the Divine War broke out many of the Sons answered the Lady of Venom's call, fighting alongside their queen and her many champions. Other members of the Sons stayed behind, ensuring that even while the fighting took place far afield, Mormo's sanctuary remained defended.

The Sons were present in the Hornsaw when Mormo fell. The horror of their defeat and the loss of their life's purpose embittered many of the Sons. Those who did not commit suicide stayed at the site of Mormo's fall, erecting a massive shrine there. The last remaining high member contacted the other Sons and told them the order was no more. They were now to be the Brotherhood of the Crimson Temple. The newly dubbed Brotherhood was formed and retained its previous mission to defend Mormo's shrines. However, the Brotherhood was eventually overwhelmed by the red witch Slitheren attack. The Brotherhood lost its main shrine to the red witch Slitheren who then temporarily took it over. When the Cult of the Serpent Ascendant retook the shrine, all of the remaining Brotherhood swore an oath of fealty to the Cult, ensuring its continuation as well as the Brotherhood's own rise to prominence.

The Brotherhood still retains shrines as old as those established by the ancient Asaatth Empire, as well as more recent shrines and sites dedicated to the now defeated Mormo. Currently, the Swamps of Kan The have proven useful for the Brotherhood, allowing them to raid caravans and provide slaves to many slave traders. Their dealings with the goreguards of Fangsfall, and even the occasional transaction with Dunahnae, have brought a good measure of wealth to this dedicated group.

Use in Other Campaigns: This prestige class is closely tied to the mythology and history of the Scarred Lands but is nevertheless usable



in other settings. As written, brothers of the Crimson Temple are connected to a cult devoted to a deceased titan. That need not be the case. The brothers could serve a deity connected to snakes or poison instead. Alternately, they may serve no higher master, being fanatics who model their hunting and fighting techniques on snakes, even going so far as to inoculate themselves against their venom. Other possibilities abound. What is important is that the GM provide some explanation and/or rationale for the brothers' serpent-related special abilities.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a brother of the Crimson Temple, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any non-good.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Faith: Must be a follower of Mormo.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (kukri or scimitar).

Gender: Male only.

Skill: Craft (alchemy) 3 ranks, Hide 4 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 7 ranks, Move Silently 4 ranks, Speak Language (Dark Speech of Mormo).

Spellcasting: Must be able to cast 1st level druid or ranger spells.

Special: Must be initiated into the Brotherhood, which involves being bitten by a venomous snake from a serpenthold.

CLASS SKILLS

The brother of the Crimson Temple's class skills are Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the brother of the Crimson Temple prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Members of the brotherhood are proficient with simple and martial weapons, and with all light armor.

Spells per Day: At 2nd level (and every even level thereafter), the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (more wild shapes, favored enemies, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of brother of the Crimson Temple to the level

of some other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

If a character had more than one spellcasting class before he became a brother of the Crimson Temple, he must decide to which class he adds each level of brother of the Crimson Temple for purposes of determining spells per day when he adds the new level.

Favored Weaponry (Ex): The Crimson Temple teaches its initiates many tactics, usually involving the scimitar and kukri. Thus, by using these specialized maneuvers, brothers become better all around fighters. At 1st level, a brother gains a +1 bonus to his attack and damage rolls when fighting with his favored weapons. This bonus increases to +2 at 7th level.

Envenoming Weapon (Ex): As part of their training, the Brotherhood often employs poisons to disable and/or kill those who violate their shrines. At 2nd level, therefore, brothers have no risk of poisoning themselves when applying poison to their own weapons.

Blood of Venom (Su): As they draw on more of Mormo's nature, the brothers also become more ophidian themselves. At 3rd level, a brother can envenom his weaponry using his own blood. However, coating the weapon in blood requires inflicting self-injury according to the following table.

Weapon Size	Damage
Light weapons or ammunition	1 hp
One-handed or ranged weapons	2 hp
Two-handed	5 hp

The poison has the following stats:

Type: Injury DC [10 + levels in this prestige class + Charisma modifier]; *Initial and Secondary Damage* [character's Constitution modifier, minimum 1].

Alternately, the brother may use his blood to augment poisons already present on the blade. This still requires the sacrifice of hit points as noted above, but doing so increases the poison's Fortitude save DC by +4.

Strike of the Serpent (Ex): As the brother becomes more adept in the use of his favored weapons, his damage becomes even more vicious. At 4th level, a brother's weapon damage dice increases by one step; thus, a brother's Medium scimitar now inflicts 1d8 damage, and his kukri inflicts 1d6. This ability doesn't change the weapon itself, but is instead a reflection of the brother's increasing power and skill.

Bonus Feat: At 4th and 8th level a brother of the Crimson Temple can select a bonus feat. This feat must be from the following list: Alertness, Blind-fighting, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Improved Two Weapon Fighting, Lighting Reflexes, Track.

Scales of the Serpentmother (Ex): As their connection to Mormo increases, members of the brotherhood find their very skin hardening to a snake-like texture. At

TABLE A2-4: BROTHER OF THE CRIMSON TEMPLE (OCC)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Favored weaponry +1	—
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+1	Envenoming weapon	+1 of existing spellcasting
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Blood of venom	—
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Bonus feat, strike of the serpent	+1 of existing spellcasting
5th	+5	+4	+4	+2	Scales of the Serpentmother (+2)	—
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Ophidian affinity	+1 of existing spellcasting
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Favored weaponry +2	—
8th	+8	+6	+6	+3	Bonus Feat	+1 of existing spellcasting
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Scales of the Serpentmother (+3)	—
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Serpent apotheosis	+1 of existing spellcasting

5th level, a brother of the Crimson Temple gains a +2 natural armor bonus to his Armor Class. This bonus increases to a +3 at 9th level.

Ophidian Affinity (Su): At 6th level, a member of the brotherhood gains the ability to communicate and command any ophidian creature within a 30 ft. radius. This acts like *dominate animal*, save it works only on intelligent ophidians and lasts for a number of rounds equal to 1 + the brother's Charisma modifier. This does not work on magical creatures or creatures with any type other than Animal. He can affect animal companions, but such creatures receive a Will saving throw (DC 10+ levels in brother of the Crimson Temple + his Cha

modifier). He may use this ability once per day and the communication is non-verbal.

Serpent Apotheosis (Su): Eventually, the brothers' dedication to the tenets of Mormo result in a special transformation. At 10th level, a brother of the Crimson Temple gains the Reptilian descriptor, as well as the Scent ability. However, this does mean that any spell or spell-like ability that affects ophidians also affects him. He can also now command any ophidian within 50 feet when using his ophidian affinity ability, and will be able to control those creatures for a longer time span (one hour per level in the brother of the Crimson Temple class). All other effects of this ability still apply.

GOREGUARD

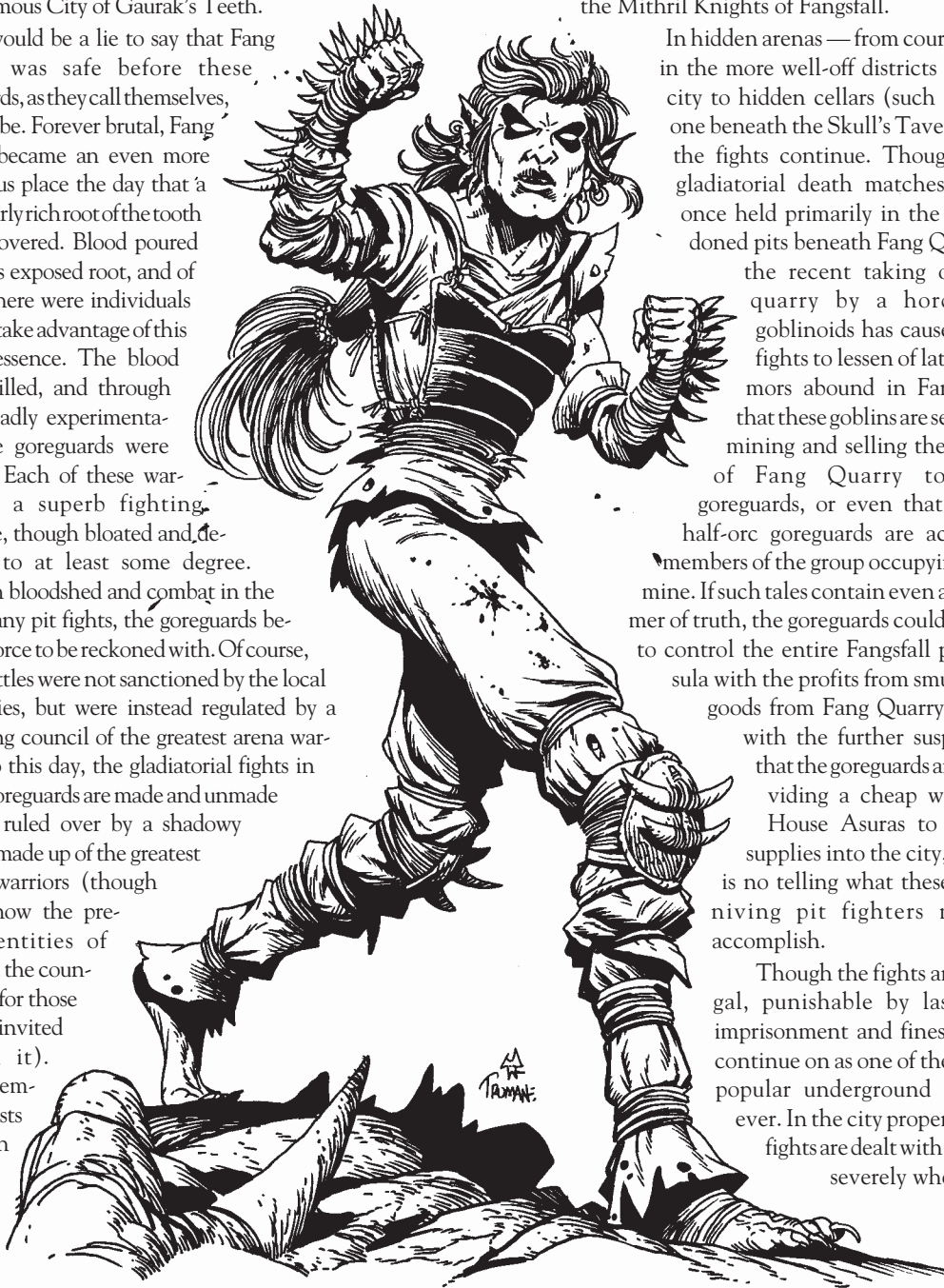
The City of Teeth, as they call it, is a wonderful place for an individual to survive against the odds. Enkili's smile seems to forever warm the city — for good or ill is another matter, but the smile is there — and from that Trickster's grin come many things. While the goreguard are not directly linked to Enkili, they have found favor in the eyes of the Mistress of Fortune because they amuse her. This, especially because of their titanic connection, can be considered quite a feat. What is even more amazing is that the goreguard have managed to stay in his good graces for nearly as long as the founding of Fangsfall — the infamous City of Gaurak's Teeth.

It would be a lie to say that Fang Quarry was safe before these goreguards, as they call themselves, came to be. Forever brutal, Fang Quarry became an even more dangerous place the day that a particularly rich root of the tooth was uncovered. Blood poured from this exposed root, and of course there were individuals eager to take advantage of this titanic essence. The blood was distilled, and through often deadly experimentation the goreguards were created. Each of these warriors is a superb fighting machine, though bloated and deformed to at least some degree. Through bloodshed and combat in the city's many pit fights, the goreguards became a force to be reckoned with. Of course, these battles were not sanctioned by the local authorities, but were instead regulated by a governing council of the greatest arena warriors. To this day, the gladiatorial fights in which goreguards are made and unmade are still ruled over by a shadowy council made up of the greatest of the warriors (though none know the precise identities of those on the council, save for those who are invited to join it). That seemingly exists only in bardic tales.

When the bastard Killian Vrail came to Fangsfall, and there is no other opinion of him given by a goreguard than that he is an illegitimate son of the fallen Rahoch, he forced the arena fights out of the public eye and into the realms of thieves. Goreguards, already used to the backstabbing and power games involved in their line of work (one must keep the public entertained after all), simply shifted their ponderous influence away from open spectacles to the highlife of criminal entertainment. In the shadows and night they continue into the modern day, eternally elusive and untouchable to the Mithril Knights of Fangsfall.

In hidden arenas — from courtyards in the more well-off districts of the city to hidden cellars (such as the one beneath the Skull's Tavern) — the fights continue. Though the gladiatorial death matches were once held primarily in the abandoned pits beneath Fang Quarry, the recent taking of the quarry by a horde of goblinoids has caused the fights to lessen of late. Rumors abound in Fangsfall that these goblins are secretly mining and selling the fruits of Fang Quarry to the goreguards, or even that some half-orc goreguards are actually members of the group occupying the mine. If such tales contain even a glimmer of truth, the goreguards could stand to control the entire Fangsfall peninsula with the profits from smuggled goods from Fang Quarry. And with the further suspicion that the goreguards are providing a cheap way for House Asuras to move supplies into the city, there is no telling what these coniving pit fighters might accomplish.

Though the fights are illegal, punishable by lashing, imprisonment and fines, they continue on as one of the most popular underground sports ever. In the city proper, such fights are dealt with rather severely when ex-



posed — and even more severely punished are those who expose the Goreguard's wealthy enterprise. Of course, to date, not a single goreguard has been caught; but this should come as little surprise, for the goreguards themselves only take part in the most carefully monitored, expensive and spectacular fights in all of Fangsfall. In these grand spectacles of carnage, anything goes. What matters is victory — and, of course, the money that the victor inevitably brings in.

Use in Other Campaigns: The goreguard is more than a simple gladiator but he has enough in common with that archetypal character that they could, with some effort, find a home in settings other than the Scarred Lands. Their unique and sometimes frightening powers come from the ingested blood of titan, meaning that GMs need to find an alternate explanation for their special abilities, whether it be the blessing of a god or the possession of some magical amulet. Whatever the GM decides will have an impact on how the goreguard is used in his campaign setting. If they are divinely sanctioned (possibly by a god of slaughter or gluttony), for example, they play a different role than if they are victims of some horrible magical plague that slowly transforms them into ravenous beasts.

Hit Die: d6

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a goreguard, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any non-good.

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Net), Two-Weapon Fighting.

Skill: Intimidation 7 ranks, Perform (act) 11 ranks.

Special: Must have ingested distilled blood of Gaurak.

CLASS SKILLS

The goreguard's class skills are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy

(Cha), Disable Device (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Use Magic Device (Cha), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the goreguard prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Goreguards are proficient with all simple weapons and with light and medium armor. In addition, a goreguard is also proficient with the following martial and exotic weapons: guisarme, spiked chain, trident, and two-bladed sword (the skill required makes it an excellent weapon to show off to the crowds).

Bite (Ex): At 1st level, a goreguard's teeth sharpen and extend a tiny bit. Although her jaw becomes slightly distended, this cosmetic change is barely noticeable due to the monumental fatness shared by all goreguards. What this does confer, however, is the ability to make a bite attack. A Medium goreguard deals 1d6 bite damage while a small goreguard does 1d4.

Corpulence (Ex): Ingesting the blood of Gaurak often provides unique benefits. Aside from being able to devour absolutely anything for the first three hours after ingesting the blood, as described in **Relics & Rituals** (this hunger is the reason that new goreguards are generally kept bound and tied for the first three hours after drinking), a goreguard also begins to grow obscenely fat. At 1st level, a goreguard gains a +2 bonus to her Constitution, while suffering a -1 penalty to her Dexterity permanently and increasing her body weight by 50% of her original weight. At 5th level, the goreguard's body widens again, granting her another +2 bonus to Constitution and a +1 bonus to Strength. At the same time, she suffers another -1 penalty to her Dexterity and gains another 25% of her current body

TABLE A2-5: GOREGUARD (GGD)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Bite, corpulence
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Weaponry of the pit +1
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Sneak attack +1d6
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Showboating
5th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Corpulence
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Sneak attack +2d6
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2	Weaponry of the pit +2
8th	+6	+6	+2	+2	Hunger of the Glutton
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Sneak attack +3d6
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3	Corpulence

APPENDIX TWO: THE MASTERS OF SHADOW

weight in pounds. Finally, at 10th level, the goreguard reaches the pinnacle of her obesity, gaining another 15% of her total body weight and suffering a -2 penalty to Dexterity while gaining one last +1 bonus to Strength.

Weaponry of the Pit (Ex): Goreguards train themselves to be particularly nasty when using weaponry specially crafted for use in pit fights. With their own particular style of love and care for their opponent, a goreguard learns to use these weapons to inflict gruesome injuries—often scarring an opponent or disfiguring him. These “weapons of the pit” are the guisarme, net, spiked chain, trident and the goreguard’s own bite. At 2nd level the goreguard gains a +1 to hit and damage while using one of these weapons. At 7th level, this bonus increases to a +2.

Sneak Attack: This is exactly like the rogue ability of the same name. At 3rd level, this bonus is +1d6. The extra damage dealt increases to +2d6 at 6th level and +3d6 at 9th level. If a goreguard gets a sneak attack

bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses on damage stack.

Showboating (Ex): At 4th level, a goreguard has become so proficient with arena fighting that she learns to use the arena itself as a weapon. A goreguard gains the Improvised Weapon feat (see Appendix One) for free, and treats any such weapons as Weaponry of the Pit. Even people may be used as a weapon in some circumstances, although the GM may call for an opposed grapple check in order to throw a bystander or otherwise use that person as a weapon.

Hunger of the Glutton (Su): At 8th level, a goreguard gains the supernatural ability to inspire the hunger of Gaurak. Once per day, a goreguard may give out a very loud and disgusting belch that inspires a terrible hunger in one target located directly in front of her. This works like a *gluttony* spell (see **Relics & Rituals**), except that it may only affect one target of the goreguard’s choice. The DC to resist this effect is 10 + 1/2 the goreguard’s level + her Charisma modifier.

HUNTSMASTER

For the most part, the elven nation of Vera-Tre keeps to itself, policing its borders when necessary and aiding its few allies (such as Amalthea) when called upon. However, the elves prefer to disentangle themselves from events on Ghelspad, especially when the price of not doing so is to draw the attention of hostile powers. This attitude has served Vera-Tre well over the years, even as it has earned the elves the reputation of being aloof and unconcerned about the plight of others.

Huntsmasters serve Denev, and through her they have learned many secrets that aid them in their missions. Each huntsmaster bonds with a wolf animal companion — of whom he is both master and student. These wolves obey the huntsmasters but also teach them their own ways; in the process these warriors become as cunning and ferocious as the animals themselves. Thus, huntsmasters owe their remarkable powers and abilities not to special training, but to the mystical bond they have with their animal companions. As they grow more attuned to the wolves who share every aspect of their lives, huntsmasters increase in strength and potency — a gift perhaps from Denev, although no one truly understands the nature of their powers.

Huntsmasters fight in small groups and show little mercy to their foes. They prefer to strike quickly and decisively, since doing so guarantees surprise and therefore success. Occasionally, huntsmasters will form larger groups, such as the Great Hunt, to strike against foes who cannot otherwise be easily confronted. The Great Hunt is a deadly military force and a sight to behold, as these deadly warriors roam across their territory with a huge pack of wolves.

Many outside of Vera-Tre fear huntsmasters, and with good reason. They are commonly viewed as little better than barbarians, with their animalistic ways and predilection for hunting under

cover of darkness. On nights when Belsameth's moon is full, this stereotype has even more validity, as the huntsmasters gain the ability to enter a rage that gives them superhuman strength and endurance. Anyone who has seen them fight on such nights is understandably frightened by the thought of facing even one huntsmaster in battle — and this attitude by outsiders gives the huntsmasters no small degree of satisfaction.

Most huntsmasters are elves, as one might expect. There are, however, members of other races as well; after all, the mission of the group is one that appeals to all who follow Denev, not just those who wish to defend Vera-Tre.



This has led, over the years, to the accusation that the huntsmasters are little more than opportunistic mercenaries. Some believe that any outsiders who travel to the Virgin Woods of Denev may join the organization, provided they show the necessary talent and ability to bond with their animal companions. The leaders of the huntsmasters have never paid much heed to this charge. From their perspective, it makes no difference how the world at large (or even within Vera-Tre) regards them. Moreover, they know that huntsmasters are not made but chosen; it is not their place to argue with Denev about those who she chooses to give her blessing.

In recent years, the huntsmasters have begun to cooperate more extensively with outside groups, such as the Vigils of Vesh and the Wolf Lodge Warriors (see the *Player's Guide to Fighters and Barbarians*). This cooperation is partly out of necessity, since Vera-Tre's splendid isolation is no longer tenable. There is also some genuine amity between the Huntsmasters and similar groups across Ghelspad, and with it a growing realization that no one is served — including Denev — by working alone.

Use in Other Campaigns: The huntsmaster is easily adapted to other campaign settings, because it's a fairly common archetype in fantasy literature: the wilderness fighter with an animal companion who takes on the characteristics of that animal, in this case a wolf. The specific details of the class, such as its patron or the kingdom it serves, could of course be changed without much difficulty. The role of the huntsmaster in a different setting might necessitate small tweaks to the class as written. For example, if wolves or the moon are strongly associated with the forces of evil in a setting, huntsmasters might instead travel with dogs or bears or some other savorier animal.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a huntsmaster, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Alertness, Track, Track by Scent (see Appendix One).

Skills: Handle Animal 8 ranks, Survival 8 ranks.

Special: Animal companion class ability (which must be a wolf), and the wild empathy class ability.

CLASS SKILLS

The huntsmaster's class skills are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the huntsmaster prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Huntsmasters are proficient with simple and martial weapons and with light and medium armor.

Animal Companion: Levels of huntsmaster stack with those of ranger or druid for the purposes of the *animal companion* ability.

Moon Rage: On one of the three nights of the full moon of Belsameth, a huntsmaster has the ability to enter a moon rage. This is treated as a barbarian rage, save for the following changes:

- May only be entered on one of the nights of the full moon.
- Huntsmasters gain damage reduction 5/silver while raging.
- At 9th level, the huntsmaster's rage bonuses become +6 to Strength, +6 to Constitution and a +3 morale bonus to Will saves. (The AC penalty remains at -2).

The huntsmaster may enter such a rage once per night. This increases to 2/night at 5th level, and 3/night at 9th level.

Wolf Master: The huntsmaster possesses such a close bond with his animal companion that he can train his bonded wolf various ways to improve its abilities. Beginning at 1st level and at every three levels thereafter (4th, 7th and 10th), the huntsmaster may add one of several special abilities to his companion. The abilities are listed below. All may be selected multiple times unless otherwise stated in the description. Naturally, a huntsmaster cannot select abilities to teach that he does not know himself. These abilities are taught as normal animal tricks (see Handle Animal), save that the animal's intelligence does not limit its ability to learn.

Increased Hit Die: The animal companion gains one additional hit die of its type.

Increased Intelligence: The animal companion gains +2 Intelligence.

Natural Armor: The animal companion gains a +2 natural armor bonus.

Rageful: When the huntsmaster enters a moon rage, his animal companion does as well, gaining the same bonuses and penalties while in such a rage.

Resistance to Energy: The animal companion gains permanent resistance against one type of energy. The ranger must choose the type (fire, cold, electricity, force, etc.); his animal companion then gains Resistance to Energy 10 against that kind of attack. This ability can be taken multiple times, but each time a new energy type must be selected.

Save Bonus: The animal companion gains a +2 bonus to one of its saving throws.

TABLE A2-6: HUNTSMASTER (HNT)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Moon rage 1/night, wolf master
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Fast movement, Scent
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Uncanny stealth (+2), woodland stride
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Wolf master
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Moon rage 2/night
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Uncanny stealth (+4)
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Wolf master
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Fast healing
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Moon rage 3/night, uncanny stealth (+6)
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Summon the pack, wolf master

Speech: The animal companion gains the ability to communicate telepathically with the huntsmaster, just as if the spell *Speak with animals* were in effect. If this ability is taken a second time, the companion gains the ability to communicate verbally with its master.

Fast Movement: At 2nd level, the huntsmaster gains +10 ft. to his speed when wearing no armor, light armor, or medium armor (and not carrying a heavy load).

Scent: At 2nd level, a huntsmaster gains the special quality Scent, just as described in the *DMG* (Chapter 8, "Scent").

Uncanny Stealth: At 3rd level, the huntsmaster learns to imitate the wolf's ability to stalk prey silently and without being seen. He gains a +2 competence bonus to all Hide and Move Silently checks. This bonus increases to +4 at 6th level and +6 at 9th level.

Woodland Stride: At 3rd level, a huntsmaster gains the woodland stride ability. This is identical to the ranger ability of the same name.

Fast Healing: At 8th level, the huntsmaster doubles his rate of natural healing, including the healing of ability score damage.

Summon the Pack: On nights of the full moon, a 10th level huntsmaster may let loose an unearthly howl, which summons a number of normal wolves equal to his levels in the huntsmaster prestige class + his Charisma modifier. These wolves understand and obey the huntsmaster on a very primal level. They look to the huntsmaster and his animal companion as the alphas of their pack for the evening, and are able to enter a moon rage when the huntsmaster does. While raging, the wolves receive the same bonuses and penalties as the huntsmaster.

MASTER OF THE SCALED

The Guild of the Scaled is the single largest and most widespread thieves guild in Ghelspad, and perhaps in all the Scarred Lands. One of the many secrets to this organization's vast success was its early establishment of thieving schools all over the continent, ensuring the skill and loyalty of Scaled members. The intelligent young rogues and wily young mages admitted to these Scaled colleges emerge as devoted and efficient operatives, masters of the dangerous and illicit lifestyle they have chosen.

A master of the Scaled is an advanced graduate of one of the four Scaled training schools, which are located in Yorek, Albadia, somewhere in New Venir (probably Femulyae), just outside Hedrad, and within the huge university hidden somewhere in the Gascar Peaks. A rogue, wizard, sorcerer or even sometimes other adventurer can enter a Scaled training school (assuming she passes the necessary examinations) and emerge four or five years later with any number of different specializations. Even more significant is that the new graduate is a fully recognized member of the organization and even has a chance of one day becoming a minor Scale Lord. However, the most respected and valuable members of the Scaled are those who qualify to complete the longer and more intensive mastery program — a rare group of dedicated outlaws indeed.

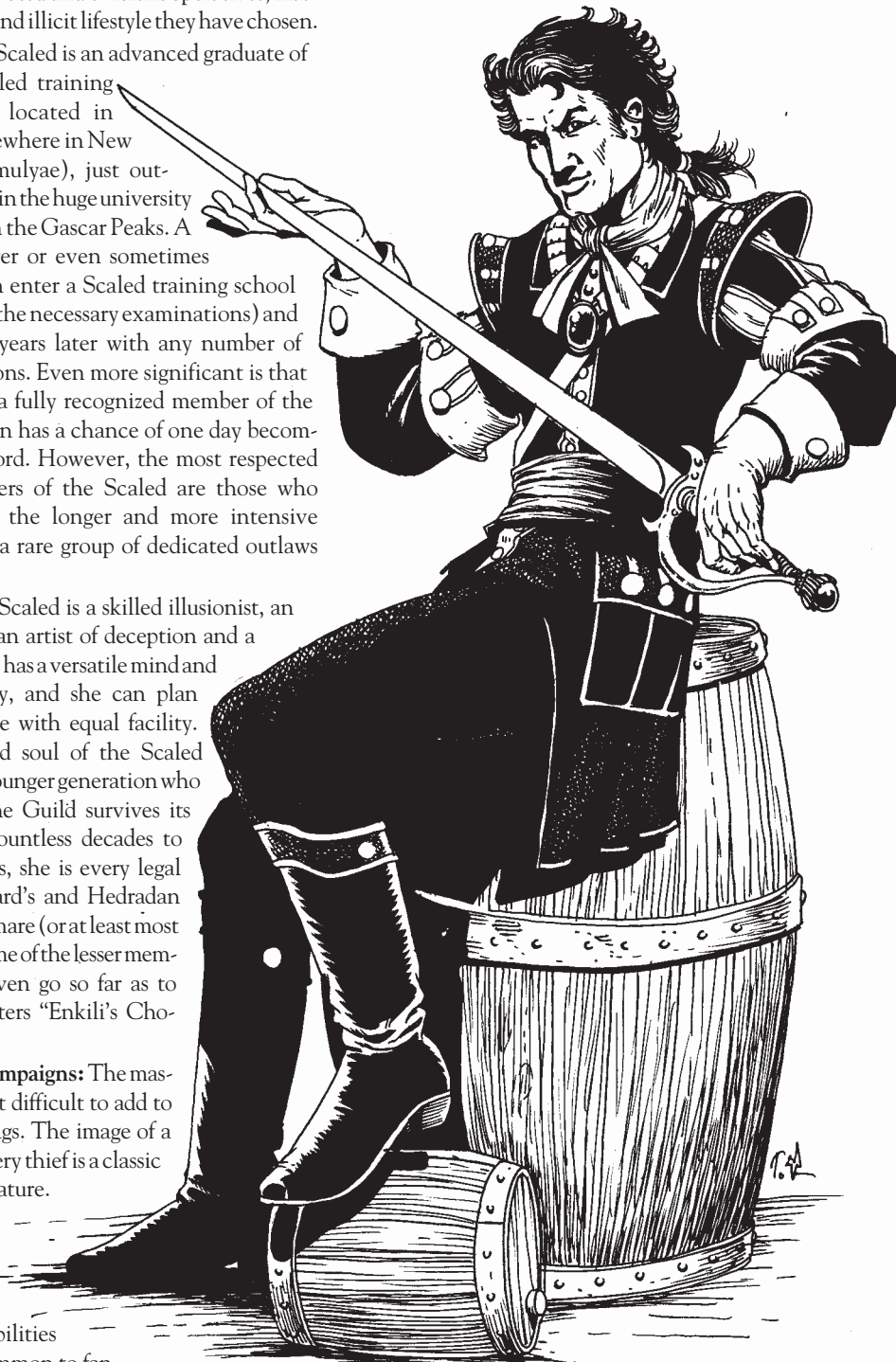
A master of the Scaled is a skilled illusionist, an untraceable burglar, an artist of deception and a superb infiltrator. She has a versatile mind and a lightning fast body, and she can plan carefully or improvise with equal facility. She is the heart and soul of the Scaled organization — the younger generation who will see to it that the Guild survives its aging founders for countless decades to come. In other words, she is every legal bureaucrat's, city guard's and Hedradan paladin's worst nightmare (or at least most powerful irritant). Some of the lesser members of the Scaled even go so far as to nickname these masters "Enkili's Chosen."

Use in Other Campaigns: The master of the scaled is not difficult to add to most campaign settings. The image of a smooth talking, slippery thief is a classic one in fantasy literature.

Very few settings — would be inhospitable homes for members of this class. The magical abilities are somewhat less common to fan-

tasy literature, but they can easily be explained in a variety of ways, from godly boons down to good old fashioned "hedge magic" taught to aid members of the class in their roguish activities.

Hit Die: d6



REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a master of the Scaled, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Ability: Evasion.

Base Reflex Save: +3

Feats: Dodge, Silent Spell.

Skill: Bluff 5 ranks, Move Silently 7 ranks, Search 5 ranks, Spellcraft 5 ranks.

Spellcasting: 2nd level arcane spells.

Special: Must undergo extensive training in a Scaled academy and work for the Scaled organization.

CLASS SKILLS

The master of the Scaled's class skills are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (all skills chosen individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language, Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the master of the Scaled prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Masters of the Scaled are proficient with the same weapons as rogues and with light armor (though not with shields). Armor heavier than leather interferes with the master of the Scaled's arcane gestures, which can cause his spells to fail (if those spells have somatic components).

Spells per Day: Beginning at 1st level, a master of the Scaled gains the ability to cast a number of arcane spells. To cast a spell, a master of the Scaled must have an Intelligence score of at least 10 + the spell's level; a master of the Scaled with an Intelligence of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Masters of the Scaled bonus spells are based on Intelligence, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the master of the Scaled's Intelligence bonus (if any). When the master of the Scaled gets 0 spells per day of a given spell level, she gains only the bonus spells she would be entitled to based on her Intelligence score for that spell level. The master of the Scaled's spell list appears below. A master of the Scaled casts spells just as a bard does (includ-

ing, in the Scarred Lands, with a lack of arcane heat).

Upon reaching 6th level, and at every even-numbered level after that (8th and 10th), a master of the Scaled can choose to learn a new spell in place of one he already knows. The new spell's level must be the same as that of the spell being exchanged, and it must be at least two levels lower than the highest-level master of the Scaled spell the master of the Scaled can cast.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): A master of the Scaled gains the ability to react to danger before her senses would normally allow her to even be aware of it. She retains her Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. (She still loses any Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.)

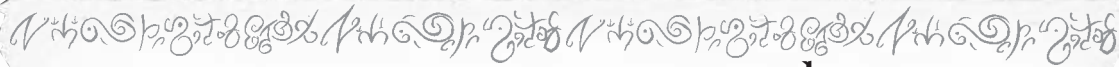
If a character gains uncanny dodge from a second class, the character automatically gains improved uncanny dodge.

Sneak Attack (Ex): This is exactly like the rogue ability of the same name. The extra damage dealt increases by +1d6 at 2nd, 5th and 8th levels. If a master of the Scaled gets a sneak attack bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses on damage stack.

Fast Talker (Ex): A master of the Scaled can talk her way out of almost anything. At 3rd level, she gains the ability to automatically succeed, three times per day, at any Bluff or Diplomacy check. If the master of the Scaled must speak only true statements while using this ability (because of enchantments or other magic, or simply by choice), she does not succeed automatically but is still considered to have rolled a 20 — due to her creative phrasing, convoluted logic and intimate understanding of local law.

Guild Master: At 3rd level, the master of the Scaled attracts a number of lesser rogues and thieves to her service. She gains followers and a cohort as though she had just acquired the Leadership feat, though these followers are all either

Level	0-lvl	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1st	3	2*	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	4	3	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	4	3	2*	—	—	—	—
4th	5	4	3	—	—	—	—
5th	5	4	3	2*	—	—	—
6th	5	4	4	3	—	—	—
7th	5	4	4	3	2*	—	—
8th	5	4	4	4	3	2*	—
9th	5	4	4	4	3	3	2*
10th	5	4	4	4	4	4	3



MASTER OF THE SCALED SPELL LIST

Masters of the Scaled choose their spells from the following list. Spells marked with an asterisk (*) are from **Relics and Rituals**; those marked with a double asterisk (**) are from **Relics and Rituals 2: Lost Lore**.

0 level — *arcane mark*, *clean**, *dancing lights*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *distort shadow**, *Elina's perfume***, *enumerate**, *false flavor***, *filch***, *flare*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *obscuring mist*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *quick sober**, *rabbit feet**, *read magic*, *sneeze**, *spark**, *steal sleep*, *ventriloquism*.

1st level — *alarm*, *animate rope*, *arrow charm**, *chameleon skin**, *change self*, *charm person*, *comprehend languages*, *detect gold**, *detect secret doors*, *disappear**, *Elina's wardrobe***, *erase*, *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *flash**, *foreaction***, *glue**, *grease*, *hold portal*, *hypnotism*, *jump*, *message*, *Nystal's magical aura*, *protection from law*, *Salamar's quiet contemplation**, *serpent's stare***, *shade's sight**, *silent image*, *sleep*, *spider climb*, *Tensor's floating disk*, *unseen servant*.

2nd level — *alibi**, *alter self*, *arcane lock*, *aura of menace***, *blur*, *cat's grace*, *commanding presence**, *darkness*, *darkvision*, *ever scent**, *fog cloud*, *gloom**, *hypnotic pattern*, *intoxicate**, *invisibility*, *knock*, *minor image*, *mirror image*, *misdirection*, *nose of the rat***, *obscure object*, *Rie's lustful gaze***, *rope trick*, *whispering wind*.

3rd level — *blink*, *displacement*, *haste*, *illusory script*, *lure***, *major image*, *mask magic***, *mind raid**, *nondetection*, *scrying*, *secret page*, *shrink item*, *slow*, *suggestion*, *tongues*, *unbuckle**, *veil of lust***.

4th level — *accelerate reflexes***, *arcane eye*, *confusion*, *detect scrying*, *dimension door*, *emotion*, *enhanced senses***, *ghostweaver**, *illusory wall*, *improved invisibility*, *mind over matter**, *mirror safe**, *shadow form of Lyrand**, *tattoo item**.

5th level — *dominate person*, *feeblemind*, *Gulaben's ecstasy***, *gullibility***, *prying eyes*, *Rie's dance of seduction**, *seeming*, *teleport*.

6th level — *mislead*, *sequester*, *shadow walk*.

rogues, thugs and other criminals, or they are informants, spies and others who aid the master of the Scaled in hopes of rising high in the character's burgeoning criminal network. This does not prevent the master of the Scaled from also choosing the Leadership feat.

Unbindable (Ex): A master of the Scaled is extremely adept at escaping bonds and even extricating herself out of prisons. At 4th level she may, once per day, make use of any one of the following two extraordinary abilities in order to free herself.

First, she may contort and dislocate her body so thoroughly as to be able to escape from almost anywhere. This ability has a price, however. Once this ability is activated, the master of the Scaled may succeed automatically at any three consecutive Escape Artist rolls, but for each of these rolls she must take 1 point of damage for every 2 points by which the escape artist DC exceeds 20 (round up). For example, to succeed automatically at an escape from a pair of manacles (DC 30), she must take 5 points of damage as she scrapes her wrists

TABLE A2-7: MASTER OF THE SCALED (Msc)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day							
						0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Uncanny dodge	3	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Sneak attack +2d6	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Fast talker, guild master	4	2	0	—	—	—	—	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Unbindable	5	3	1	—	—	—	—	—
5th	+4	+1	+4	+4	Bonus feat, sneak attack +3d6	5	3	2	0	—	—	—	—
6th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Improved uncanny dodge	5	3	3	1	—	—	—	—
7th	+6/+1	+2	+5	+5	Special ability	5	3	3	2	0	—	—	—
8th	+6/+1	+2	+6	+6	Bonus feat, sneak attack +4d6	5	3	3	3	1	0	—	—
9th	+7/+2	+3	+6	+6	Special ability	5	3	3	3	2	1	0	—
10th	+8/+3	+3	+7	+7	Bonus feat, special ability	5	3	3	3	3	2	1	—

and dislocates her thumbs. This ability requires one full minute to execute.

Second, she may shrug off the effects of any purely magical bindings not normally subject to the *Escape Artist* skill (such as the 3rd-level wizard spell *hold person*). If the spell or effect has a saving throw, the master of the Scaled succeeds automatically at the save. If there is no saving throw, the master of the Scaled receives one (usually a Reflex save, but the GM may choose one of the others if they seem more directly applicable). In this latter case, the character must still make the save in order to free herself.

Bonus Feat: At 5th, 8th and 10th levels, a master of the Scaled gains a bonus feat. This feat must be from the following list: *Alertness*, *Brew Potion*, *Craft Magic Arms and Armor*, *Craft Wand*, *Craft Wondrous Item*, *Empower Spell*, *Enlarge Spell*, *Expertise*, *Extend Spell*, *Heighten Spell*, *Lightning Reflexes*, *Maximize Spell*, *Mobility*, *Quicken Spell*, *Scribe Scroll*, *Silent Spell*,

Spring Attack, *Still Spell*, *Weapon Finesse*, *Whirlwind Attack*.

Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 6th level, a master of the Scaled can no longer be flanked, since she can react to opponents on opposite sides of her as easily as she can react to a single attacker. This defense denies rogues the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack the master of the Scaled. The exception to this defense is that a rogue of at least four levels higher than the master of the Scaled can flank her (and thus sneak attack her).

If a character gains uncanny dodge (see above) from a second class, the character automatically gains improved uncanny dodge, and the levels from those classes stack to determine the minimum rogue level required to flank the character.

Special Ability: At 7th, 9th and 10th levels, a master of the Scaled may select a special ability from the list of rogue special abilities. A master of the Scaled may not gain a feat in place of a rogue special ability.

OAKEN SHADOW

The Ganjus has many guardians. Some of these guards are overt, so all can applaud their efforts and their victories. Some, however, are much more covert. And then there are the few who don't even exist. At least, that's the official standpoint of Vera-Tre with regards to those called the oaken shadows. If any outsider has reason to ask the inhabitants of this secretive elven city, there are no secret watchers who belong to the Shadow of the Oak. And of course, this would be no lie. There are no oaken shadows — at least, not officially. But every local elf knows they exist. Just as every inhabitant of Vera-Tre knows that their lives depend on these agents and the secret of their identity.

On the perimeter of the Ganjus, titanspawn often wander into the forest. Usually, however, they don't wander back out. Most of the inhabitants of the Ganjus aren't curious about what happens to these creatures. No, indeed, most simply wonder where the Oaken Shadow hides all those bodies! The official attitude is that the forest itself simply takes care of these threats, and to an extent this is correct — for the brothers of the Shadow of the Oak are an extension of the forest's ability to defend its secrets, much as the Jordeh are an extension of the forest's spirit.

When the Druid War finally ground to a halt, after the forces of Calastia had betrayed the elves, the great Lord of the Verdant Seat was most distraught. Lord Olithtagard of the Fiery Wing gave an impassioned speech to his people upon their victory, reassuring the elves that Vera-Tre would be reborn a stronger nation, separate from the sins of the world by remaining in but not of the political arena that is Ghelspad. In private, however, the Lord of the Verdant Seat swore an oath to his closest confidants that, as long as he and his incarnations

to come sat upon the Verdant Seat, the people of the Ganjus would never face another betrayal or invasion. Never again would the forest be forced to depend on outsiders to answer the call of war.

One of Lord Olithtagard's closest companions, a woman named Amani of the Blood, took her lord's words to heart. She gathered together some of the finest rangers that Vera-Tre had to offer, and trained them in the mysteries of Denev and the powers of the forest's shadowed regions. Amani taught her students to move within the forest's shadow; they were not to be simply part of the forest, but were rather to make the forest's hidden places their domain. Thanks to Amani's teachings, the Shadow of the Oak became a deadly force hidden within, and in defense of, the borders of the Ganjus.

The Lord of the Verdant Seat knows of the oaken shadows — indeed, he knows that they are Amani's doing — but he has made no public acknowledgment that they exist.



In recent days, Olithtagard was even forced to banish Amani from Vera-Tre, along with those individuals who belong to the Shadow of the Oak. Officially this was done because of their refusal to bow to his rule and will, for the oaken shadows insist on keeping their own counsel and personally deciding what is necessary to defend the Ganjus. Those in the courts, who well know the Lord of the Verdant Seat, understand that he exiled Amani mainly out of grief because of his love for the fierce warriorress.

Like all other things dealing with the courts, theories and whispers abound; among them is the idea that there may have been something more behind Lord Olithtagard's exile of Amani, something in her lineage that he feared even as he loved her. Amani of the Blood understands all of these things though, and she continues her struggle to protect the borders of the Ganjus—forever in exile of Vera-Tre proper. Her unspoken popularity among the wood elves has now reached an almost legendary status. Those who know Amani, know better than to wonder why she meekly accepted her banishment; she has no dreams of power, only the desire to serve king and country. This same desire she tries to instill in all oaken shadows, and, as such, the Shadows of the Oak are likewise legendary in their loyalty. They are committed first and foremost to Vera-Tre, and then to Amani herself (though she would rather her students consider their second loyalty to Lord Olithtagard).

What is unknown even to Lord Olithtagard is that the Shadow of the Oak has begun to move beyond the borders of the Ganjus. South into the Hornsaw, they have created alliances with the Renewers and the Broadreach elves in the hopes of cleaning the wicked forest and consolidating their position against Calastia. Westward they travel into the Stricken Forest, striking back at Khirdet for sins past and cleaning the forest there so that perhaps, just perhaps, one day the elves may establish a great wooded empire. Even the Hellianns in Albadia quietly wonder at the elves they see wandering through their forests from time to time, seemingly at home in the shadowy places of the icy wastes.

Use in Other Campaigns: The oaken shadow is a classic woodland fighter of the sort very common in fantasy settings, even those very different than the Scarred Lands. Consequently, it could be added without any significant change to almost any of them. The only thing a GM need worry about before introducing this prestige class is the explanation for its existence. Are the oaken shadows part of a secret brotherhood or a government-sponsored military unit? Do they follow the dictates of a religion or a personal philosophy of some ancient founder? Provided the GM has answers to these questions, he can probably use oaken shadows without much difficulty.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become an oaken shadow, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Feats: Forest Terrain, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Track.

Race: Wood elf or half elf.

Skill: Hide 8 ranks, Move Silently 8 ranks, Survival 9 ranks.

Spellcasting: Ability to cast *pass without trace*.

CLASS SKILLS

The oaken shadow's class skills are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Disable Device (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the oaken shadow prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Oaken shadows are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with light and medium armor, and with shields.

Spells per Day: Oaken shadows continue to advance in ranger or druid spellcasting ability. At each indicated level, the oaken shadow gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in the spellcasting class (either druid or ranger) she belonged to before she added the prestige class. This essentially means that she adds the level of oaken shadow to the level of either druid or ranger the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly. If a character had both of these classes before she became an oaken shadow, she must decide to which class she adds each level of oaken shadow for purposes of determining spells per day when she adds the new level.

Of the Forest (Ex): Oaken shadows live and train in the woodlands to such an extent that their hearts and bodies begin to mimic the lands they love. An oaken shadow doubles the bonuses granted by the Forest Terrain feat, granting the character a +4 to Climb and Survival checks in the forest (this has no effects on the cover bonuses granted).

In addition, while in a forested area, an oaken shadow may use the forest itself to create simple booby traps such as pit traps, and use the woods to hide them. Oaken shadows with the Craft (trapmaking) skill automatically increase the Search DCs to find traps they set in a Forest environment by +3.

TABLE A2-8: OAKEN SHADOW (Osh)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+1	+2	+2	+2	Of the forest	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+3	Favored enemy	—
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+3	—	+1 level of existing class
4th	+4	+4	+4	+4	Forest Walker	—
5th	+5	+4	+4	+4	—	+1 level of existing class
6th	+6	+5	+5	+5	Favored enemy, skin of wood	—
7th	+7	+5	+5	+5	—	+1 level of existing class
8th	+8	+6	+6	+6	Guardian of the forest	—
9th	+9	+6	+6	+6	—	+1 level of existing class
10th	+10	+6	+6	+6	Between the light and dark, favored enemy	—

Favored Enemy (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, an oaken shadow may choose a favored enemy from the list of ranger favored enemies. The character gains a +2 to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot and Survival checks against such creatures. Likewise, she gets a +2 bonus on weapon damage rolls against these enemies.

Additionally, at 6th and 10th levels, the oaken shadow chooses another favored enemy. Her bonus against any one favored enemy (including the one just selected, if desired) increases by 2.

Forest Walker (Sp): Starting at 4th level, an oaken shadow's rapport with the forest begins to grow into a mystical connection with the trees and their shadows. Three times per day, an oaken shadow may use this supernatural ability to move into shadows as per the *shadow walk* spell.

However, unlike the spell, an oaken shadow may not only move through interconnected shadows, but also through the plants that cast these shadows and into any tree or plant that touches a shadow. An oaken shadow must still start and end her walk in shadow; he may not start or end in a plant.

Skin of Wood (Su): At 6th level, an oaken shadow may, three times per day, cause her skin to take on a dark gnarled, wood-like texture, like that of tree bark under the shade of the forest canopy. This effect lasts for ten

minutes per oaken shadow level and grants a +4 natural armor bonus to AC. In addition, while in a forest and using the *Skin of Wood* ability, an oaken shadow gains a +3 circumstance bonus to Hide checks.

Guardian of the Forest (Su): At 8th level, an oaken shadow's reputation precedes her, for it is passed along by wind and leaf, it is within the pollen and sung by the hymn of the bee. Oaken shadows who make it this far in their training are considered hallowed by the very forest itself. Thus, no woodland animal or vermin may attack an oaken shadow at this echelon of power without first succeeding at a Will save (DC 10 + oaken shadow level + Cha modifier).

Between the Light and Dark (Su): Amid the trees, there is nothing that can match the simple complexity of a shadow's movements. It is between the light and the dark, Amani tells her students, that eventually the meaning of her teachings becomes clear. An oaken shadow of 10th level is always considered to have concealment while in the forest, as her form has taken on the power and appearance of the shadows themselves.

Additionally, once per day, the oaken shadow may become shadowy and only partially solid, granting her the effects of the *gaseous form* spell at her caster level.

TRAPMASTER

Deep in the jungles of the Gamulganjus, gnomes seek to eke out a meager yet fulfilling existence by living within the natural order of their jungle home. But many times, thanks to warring humans and other humanoid tribes within the Land of No Gods, conflict forces these gnomes to break away from that simple life. Thus, a small but growing number of gnomes have, in conjunction with their druidic elders, instigated a more proactive campaign of self-defense. While these gnomes rarely attack foreigners, seeing them as less of a threat than the nearby tribes, they have become increasingly aggressive toward the inhabitants of the Tepjues. They have also stepped up their campaign of border patrols against the roving bands of gnolls who prowl the jungle. It seems only the terali and those few humans who don't dwell too close to their outposts are immune to assaults.

These gnomes, having practiced the art of stealth for generations, have improvised new and interesting ways to deal with unwanted interlopers. Their skill at trap-making allows them to make even the simplest of traps far deadlier than should be possible. It is also rumored that due to their druidic influences, trapmasters also gain some kind of insight from the spirits of the land. Most trapmasters are rogues or multiclassed rogue/druids of some sort.

Only gnomes may become trapmasters; the secrets of this vocation are highly prized and never taught to outsiders. This secrecy might even be unnecessary, for the druids of the people say that the abilities of the trapmasters depend on ancient pacts between their people and the spirits of the wild places. Thus, even if outsiders somehow managed to learn the gnome's trapmaking techniques, they would never acquire the benefits enjoyed by the trapmaster.

Use in Other Campaigns: As written, the trapmaster is associated

(obviously) with a single race in a particular locale on the Scarred Lands. In addition, that race — the gnomes — is very different than its traditional presentation, being tribal and shamanistic, for example. Consequently, it might seem as if it'd be difficult to integrate into other settings, but that needn't be the case. The prerequisites (with the exception of the race) are broad enough that a GM could re-imagine the class in many different ways. Perhaps trapmasters are a brotherhood of rangers who battle against evil creatures in a wild forest. Perhaps they are all orcs who use their skills to capture elves at the behest of their god. Many other variations are possible with a little thought and consideration.

Hit Die: d6



TABLE A2-9: TRAPMASTER (TRP)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Trapmastery +2
2nd	+1	+1	+3	+1	Favored enemy trap, sneak attack +1d6
3rd	+1	+1	+3	+1	Monkey leap, slow fall (20 ft.)
4th	+2	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +2d6, wood-bound
5th	+2	+2	+4	+2	Trapmastery +4
6th	+3	+2	+5	+2	Favored enemy trap, slow fall (40 ft.), sneak attack +3d6
7th	+3	+2	+5	+2	Spirits of the Gamulganjus
8th	+4	+3	+6	+3	Sneak attack +4d6
9th	+4	+3	+6	+3	Slow fall (60 ft.), trapmastery +6
10th	+5	+3	+7	+3	Favored enemy trap, slaughter-trap

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a trapmaster, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Reflex Save: +5

Feats: Lighting Reflexes, Skill Focus (Craft [trapmaking]).

Race: Gnome.

Skill: Craft (trapmaking) 7 ranks, Hide 4 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 2 ranks, Move Silently 4 ranks.

CLASS SKILLS

The trapmaster's class skills are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Disable Device (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Tumble (Dex), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the trapmaster prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Trapmasters are proficient with simple weapons and light armors.

Trapmastery (Ex): As a trapmaster progresses in level, he gains ever-greater insight into the building of effective traps. At 1st level he acquires a +2 primal bonus to all his Craft (trapmaking) skills. This ability increases to +4 at 5th level and to +6 at 9th level.

Additionally, at 5th level, the trapmaster may choose to modify any trap design that normally inflicts lethal damage to instead cause nonlethal damage, at no change to the effectiveness or cost of the trap.

Favored Enemy Trap (Ex): Much like rangers favor hunting certain foes, trapmasters have devised specialized traps that take advantage of a particular creature's weaknesses. Beginning at 2nd level, a trapmaster may choose a favored enemy from the list of ranger favored enemies. The character then gains a +2 to the DC or attack roll of his constructed traps against any favored enemies that may trigger those traps. This increase does not affect the overall cost of the trap construction, nor does the trap gain that bonus against other creatures.

Additionally, at 6th and 10th levels, the trapmaster chooses another favored enemy. Also, his bonus against any one favored enemy (including the one just selected, if desired) increases by 2. Each trap must be constructed with a single favored enemy in mind — a trapmaster with bonuses against giants and undead may construct traps with bonuses against giants or undead, but not both.

Sneak Attack: This is exactly like the rogue ability of the same name. At 2nd level, this bonus is +1d6. The extra damage dealt increases to +2d6 at 4th level, +3d6 at 6th level and +4d6 at 8th level. If a trapmaster gets a sneak attack bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses on damage stack.

Monkey Leap (Ex): Trapmasters are fond of waiting in trees until their prey triggers a trap, and then leaping down to attack. At 3rd level, a trapmaster adds +20 ft. to his effective speed for the purpose of determining jumping distances using the Jump skill.

Slow Fall (Su): Much like the monk's ability in the *PHB*, a trapmaster can now slow his decent using the jungle trees to aid him. At 3rd level, a falling trapmaster only takes damage as if the fall was from 20 feet shorter than it actually is. This means a trapmaster doesn't take damage from falls of 20 feet or lower in

height. This ability improves by an additional 20 feet at 6th level and again at 9th level. This ability only works when falling from trees or through dense foliage.

Wood-bound (Ex): At 4th level, a trapmaster gains a +4 competence bonus to all his Climb checks, and doubles the rate at which he may normally climb. This ability only works when climbing trees and other foliage.

Spirits of the Gamulganjus (Su): At 7th level, the very spirits of the forests and jungles

aid the trapmaster in his endeavors. Thus, he gains a +4 primal bonus to his Hide, Listen, Move Silently and Search checks while in any forest or jungle environment.

Slaughter-trap (Ex): At 10th level, whenever one of the trapmaster's favored enemy traps is triggered by that favored enemy, the trap inflicts an amount of additional damage equal to the trapmaster's sneak attack damage when he constructed the trap. This applies to both lethal and nonlethal damage-inflicting traps.

VIGILANT ARCANIST

The rangers and rogues who make up the bulk of the Vigils of Vesh are justly celebrated as heroes in many parts of Ghelspad. Even the clerics and druids who belong to the organization are feted for their own unique contributions to the battle against titanspawn and their allies. Less well known, however, are the arcane spellcasters who have also joined the organization and whose magical abilities have contributed significantly to its victories. This is perfectly understandable since the arcanists who belong to the Vigils — while potent — are comparatively few in number. More significantly, many inhabitants of the Scarred Lands remain wary of arcane spellcasting abilities. They associate them with the power of the Defeated, whose minions used sorcery to spread and maintain tyranny throughout the world.

Fortunately, the Vigils of Vesh have long shown a more open-minded approach to arcanists. While there is indeed some suspicion of sorcerers, it is comparatively small and most vigilants try hard to overcome it. Provided a sorcerer abides by the oaths of the organization, they are as welcome as anyone to join its ranks and protect civilization. Wizards still have an easier time of it, for their abilities are not considered as suspect. Perhaps for that reason, there are a larger number of wizards in the Vigils than there are sorcerers.

Even so, vigilant arcanists are relatively rare within the organization as a whole. Only the Acernoth and Pelperno Vigils contain a significant number of arcanists and they are exceptions rather than the rule. At the same time, arcanists have proven themselves to be invaluable assets when facing certain enemies, especially those who possess spellcasting abilities of their own. As more and more of these foes appear, the Vigils have shifted from merely welcoming arcanists to actively recruiting sorcerers and wizards.

Vigilant arcanists are in many ways very much like their non-magical counterparts within the Vigils of Vesh. They receive training in wilderness survival and in combat. They are expected to move quickly and be able to endure the hardships of wilderness living. Of course, the remainder of their skills emphasize their spellcasting abilities, honing their magical prowess to complement their vigilant training. Like all other vigilants, arcanists learn the ways of their enemies to a great degree; in combat, that knowledge can be used to great effect. Whereas an ordinary vigilant



would learn the weaknesses of an enemy, to better strike with sword and bow, vigilant arcanists learn to use their spells more effectively — dealing greater damage and making their spells harder to resist.

Despite their relatively small numbers, vigilant arcanists are more likely to operate farther from Vesh than are ordinary vigilants. The most significant reason for this, is that arcanists are often well suited to take on solitary missions that demand extensive travel. Such magic users seek out ancient lore and explore ruins of the past — all in the name of the Vigils' goals. During these travels, some function as ambassadors for the organization, as well as recruiters of other arcanists. In time, it is quite likely that the dream of more spellcasters within the Vigils of Vesh will be realized, thanks in large part to the work of the vigilant arcanists.

Use in Other Campaigns: Vigilant arcanists are closely tied to the Scarred Lands organization called the Vigils of Vesh (see Chapter Two). This means that they need an overhaul to their background if they are used in other campaign settings. As presented here, they are rugged arcane spellcasters who have sworn allegiance to a government to act as not only its defenders but the defenders of all civilization against evil threats. Fortunately, most campaign settings are amenable to the existence of such characters, making their conversion comparatively simple.

Hit Die: d6

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Vigilant arcanist, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Feats: Endurance, Track.

Skill: Spellcraft 7 ranks.

Spellcasting: Must be able to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Special Ability: Favored Enemy.

Special: Vigilant arcanists, like all other members of the Vigils of Vesh, must pass an initiation test and swear an oath of allegiance to Vesh.

CLASS SKILLS

The Vigilant arcanist's class skills are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str) Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Vigilant arcanist prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Vigilant arcanists are proficient with simple and martial weapons. Armor of any type interferes with the Vigilant arcanist's arcane gestures, which can cause his spells to fail (if those spells have somatic components).

Spells per Day: When a new Vigilant arcanist level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (metamagic or item creation feats, etc.). This essentially means that he adds the level of Vigilant arcanist to the level of some other arcane spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

If a character had more than one arcane spellcasting class before he became a Vigilant Arcanist, he must decide to which class he adds each level of Vigilant Arcanist for purposes of determining spells per day when he adds the new level. Levels in this class do stack for the purposes of familiar advancement.

Vigilant Spells: Vigilant arcanists add the following spells to their arcane spellcaster spell lists. When the vigilant arcanist gains new spells, at least one of his new spells per level must be chosen from this list.

1st level — *calm animals*, *chameleon skin**, *delay poison*, *detect animals or plants*, *detect shapechangers***, *detect snares and pits*, *dowsing**, *ears of the wolf***,

TABLE A2-10: VIGILANT ARCANIST (VGA)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Favored enemy focus +2, vigilant spells	+1 spellcasting level
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Favored enemy damage +1	+1 spellcasting level
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Sprint, tireless	+1 spellcasting level
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Favored enemy	+1 spellcasting level
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Favored enemy focus +3	+1 spellcasting level
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5	Favored enemy damage +2	+1 spellcasting level
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	Great Fortitude	+1 spellcasting level
8th	+6	+2	+2	+6	Favored enemy	+1 spellcasting level
9th	+6	+3	+3	+6	Favored enemy focus +4	+1 spellcasting level
10th	+7	+3	+3	+7	Favored enemy damage +3	+1 spellcasting level

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*goodberry, nose of the rat***, *pass without trace*, *rabbit feet**, *resist elements*, *speak with animals*.

2nd level — *animal messenger*, *circle of sounds**, *hunter's moon***, *hunter's stalk**, *snare*, *speak with plants*, *stalker's sight***, *warp wood*, *wolf's cry**.

3rd level — *animal spy**, *enhanced senses***, *neutralize poison*, *remove disease*, *spike growth*.

4th level — *animal infusion**, *spike stones*, *wind walk*.

Favored Enemy Focus (Ex): At 1st level, the vigilant arcanist may add +2 to the DC for all saving throws against spells he casts against creatures belonging to any of his favored enemies. The bonus increases to +3 at 5th level and +4 at 9th level.

Favored Enemy Damage (Ex): At 2nd level, the vigilant arcanist may add +1 damage per die to all damage-dealing spells he casts against a creature belonging to any of his favored enemies. Thus, a *fireball* cast against a favored enemy deals 1d6+1 points of damage per caster level (up to the usual maximum dictated by the spell description). The bonus per die increases to +2 at 6th level and +3 at 10th level.

Sprint (Ex): At 3rd level, a vigilant arcanist may take a charge action to move three times his normal speed. This ability can be used once per hour.

Tireless (Ex): At 3rd level, vigilant arcanists learn to endure the hardships and constant travel associated with the Vigils of Vesh. When vigilant arcanists run for a number of rounds greater than their Constitution score, the DC of their Constitution checks does not suffer the normal cumulative penalty.

Favored Enemy (Ex): At 4th level, the vigilant arcanist has served in his assigned Vigil long enough to learn the ways of the Vigil's predominant enemy. Thus, the vigilant arcanist may select one specific creature race as a favored enemy. This ability functions identically to the ranger special ability of the same name, except the vigilant arcanist must choose a specific race, not a broader creature type or subtype. For example, a vigilant arcanist can choose guarak trolls (see **Creature Collection II**) as a favored enemy — but giants may not be chosen. The bonus stacks with any similar bonuses the vigilant arcanist might receive from other classes that grant the favored enemy special ability. This ability also stacks with the Favored Enemy Focus and Favored Enemy Damage abilities granted by this prestige class. At 8th level the vigilant may choose another favorite enemy race, and would therefore have all applicable benefits against both enemy types.

Great Fortitude: At 7th level, vigilant arcanists gain the Great Fortitude feat for free.

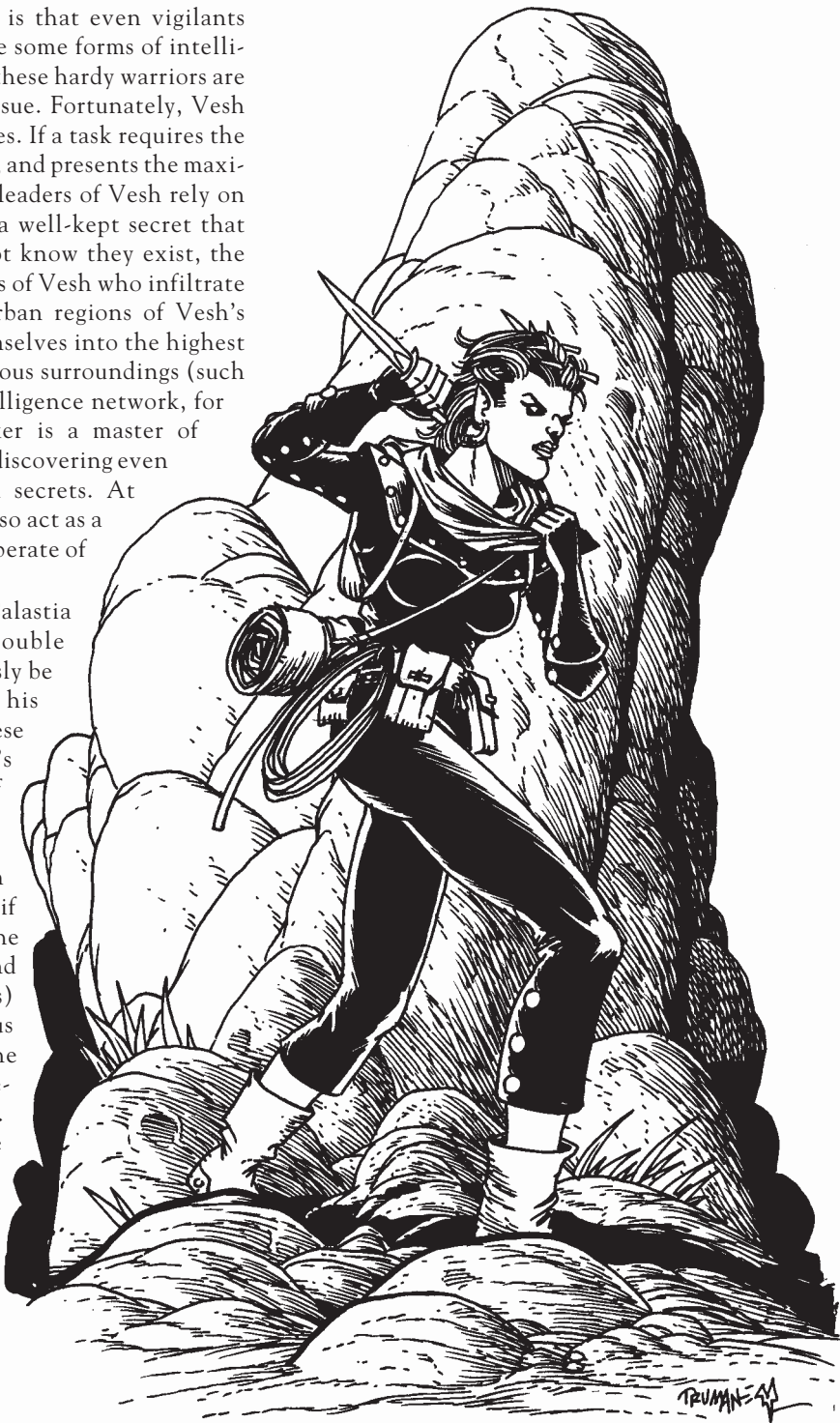
VIGIL STALKER

Everyone has heard of the Vigils of Vesh — those noble warriors who brave the wilderness and even titanspawn encampments in order to keep the people of Vesh and their allies safe and well-informed. The heroic adventures of these admirable souls are an inspiration and a comfort to the common Veshian as well as a thorn in the side of Vesh's enemies. What the common Veshian does not know, however, is that even vigilants have their limits; there are some forms of intelligence gathering to which these hardy warriors are simply ill-equipped to pursue. Fortunately, Vesh is not left without resources. If a task requires the highest level of subterfuge, and presents the maximum level of danger, the leaders of Vesh rely on their vigil stalkers. Such a well-kept secret that even most vigilants do not know they exist, the vigil stalkers are the agents of Vesh who infiltrate the courts, armies and urban regions of Vesh's enemies. Insinuating themselves into the highest positions and most dangerous surroundings (such as King Virduk's own intelligence network, for example), the vigil stalker is a master of disguise, deception and of discovering even the most closely guarded secrets. At need, a vigil stalker may also act as a burglar or, in the most desperate of cases, even an assassin.

If King Virduk of Calastia knew of these crafty double agents, he would doubtlessly be far more worried about his Veshian foes. But as yet these unsung heroes — Tanil's most devoted and loyal of liars and thieves — have continued to evade the discovery of the Black Dragon and his agents. Indeed, if anyone at all (outside the vigil stalkers themselves and Vesh's highest authorities) knows of these courageous vigil spies it would be the mysterious and knowledgeable Courtesans of Idra. Then again, if anyone knows the real truth about Idra's courtesans, it could only be the vigil stalkers.

Use in Other Campaigns: Vigil stalkers, despite their associations in the Scarred Lands with the Vigils of Vesh (see

Chapter Two), are easily adapted to most other campaign settings. They are individuals who are skilled at infiltrating enemy organizations and undertaking missions while in this precarious situation. Whether acting on their own or under orders from an organization, the vigil stalker has a lot to offer most campaigns. Nothing need be



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changed to its abilities; only its background requires alteration to make it fit better with the specifics of any individual setting.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a vigil stalker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Ability: Uncanny Dodge.

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Base Reflex Save: +4

Feats: Run, Urban Track (see Appendix One).

Skill: Bluff 5 ranks, Disguise 5 ranks, Gather Information 7 ranks, Search 5 ranks.

Special: Vigil stalkers must pass an initiation test and swear an oath of allegiance to Vesh, an oath that is enforced by their fellow vigil stalkers.

CLASS SKILLS

The vigil stalker's class skills are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int, exclusive skill), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex), Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the vigil stalker prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Vigil stalkers are proficient with the same weapons as rogues and with light armor (not with shields).

Spells per Day: Beginning at 2nd level, a vigil stalker gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. The number of spells is

indicated on table A2–11. These spells are in addition to any others the character might be able to cast from another spellcasting class. Spell slots cannot be combined, so vigil stalker spell slots must be spent on spells from the spell list below. Bonus Spells are gained for having a high Wisdom, and the DC to resist spells is 10 + the spell's level + the vigil stalker's Wisdom modifier. A vigil stalker prepares and casts spells as a druid.

Read Faces (Ex): The vigil stalker must interact on a daily and casual basis with some of his most dangerous enemies. It is vital, therefore, for him to always know what these enemies are thinking. Vigil stalkers are trained to be nearly telepathic, simply by reading the facial expressions and mannerisms of those around them. All Sense Motive DCs are halved for the vigil stalker. In addition, twice per day a vigil stalker may attempt to discern the surface thoughts of a single character by rolling a Sense Motive skill check with the target's Intelligence as the DC. This is similar to the Knowledge domain spell, *detect thoughts*, but it differs from it in the following ways.

Read Faces can only be used on humanoids and can only target one person at a time. Like the *detect thoughts* spell it takes three rounds of concentration to actually discern surface thoughts, but the first two rounds are spent in attuning oneself to the target. The first round reveals information similar to an ordinary successful Sense Motive check. The second gives the vigil stalker a fairly clear idea of the target's most common habitual emotions (such as irritation, nervousness, or contentment). The third round grants access to surface thoughts, but in the form of emotions and ideas rather than in sentences or pictures. If a vigil stalker is interrupted during this time, he may make a Concentration skill check (DC equal to the target's Bluff roll) to continue the reading. If he fails to keep his concentration, however, he has still used up a *read faces* attempt for the day. After three rounds, the

Adopted Identity:	Modifier
Is from a specific profession in which the character has no ranks	-2
Is from a different but similar culture	-2
Is from a vastly different culture	-5
Is that of a specific, real person	-10
Must fool people from the same culture as the assumed identity	-3
Must fool people of a vastly different culture than that of the assumed identity	+3
Must fool an extremely isolated and close knit culture	double modifier (whether positive or negative)

vigil stalker can learn nothing more from this ability, as it is completely non-magical.

Blend In (Ex): Vigil stalkers are masters at pretending to be things they are not. At 2nd level, with a successful Bluff or Disguise check (base DC is 15; sample modifiers provided in the table below), the vigil stalker is able to fully adopt the accents and mannerisms of whatever sort of person he is pretending to be.

In addition, the vigil stalker may use his ranks in Speak Language as if they were an ordinary skill (Intelligence based; the character is considered to have one rank per language known), in order to make himself understood in a language he does not speak well, to adopt local dialects of a language he already knows, or to attempt to get a basic understanding of a language being spoken (DCs operate similarly to those in the table below — GM's discretion).

Sneak Attack (Ex): At 2nd level, the vigil stalker gains the sneak attack ability. If a vigil stalker can catch an opponent when she is unable to defend herself effectively from his attack, he can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Basically, any time the vigil stalker's target would be denied her Dexterity bonus to AC, the vigil stalker's attack deals +1d6 points of damage. This extra damage increases by +1d6 points at 2nd, 5th and 8th levels. Should the vigil stalker score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied. Ranged attacks can only count as sneak attacks if the target is 30 ft. away or less.

With a sap or unarmed strike, the vigil stalker can make a sneak attack that deals nonlethal damage instead of normal damage. He cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to do nonlethal damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual -4 penalty.

A vigil stalker can only sneak attack living creatures with discernable anatomies — undead, constructs, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures lack vital areas to attack. Additionally, any creature immune to critical hits is similarly immune to sneak attacks. Also, the vigil stalker must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach this area to deliver the blow. The vigil stalker cannot sneak attack while striking at a creature with concealment or by striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

If a vigil stalker gets a sneak attack bonus from another source, the bonuses to damage stack.

Toughness: At 3rd and 7th level, vigil stalkers gain the Toughness feat for free.

True Lies (Ex): Vigil stalkers are adept at lying to maintain their false identities. They have

been trained so extensively in this area that all Bluff DCs are halved for them. In addition, even spells dealing with lies and truth, such as the 2nd-level Cleric spell, *zone of truth*, are easier for the vigil stalker to circumvent. If any enchantment or divination spells attempt to force a vigil stalker to betray his cause or to steal dangerous information from his mind, the vigil stalker has a greater protection against these things than do most people. If the spell does not provide a saving throw, the vigil stalker gains a will save to negate the effects. If there is a saving throw, as is the case with *zone of truth*, the vigil stalker may roll a second save any time the first save fails; this effect is similar to the rogue special ability, *slippery mind*.

Lightning Reflexes: At 4th level, vigil stalkers gain the Lightning Reflexes feat for free.

Iron Will: At 5th level, vigil stalkers gain the Iron Will feat for free.

Great Fortitude: At 6th level, vigil stalkers gain the Great Fortitude feat for free.

Perfect Disguise (Ex): The vigil stalker is extremely adept at disguise. At 8th level, once per day, the vigil stalker may create a disguise that is almost impossible to see through (+15 to Disguise roll). Though it is completely non-magical (and requires props and preparation like any ordinary disguise), it is actually more effective than most magical disguises, such as *change self* or even *polymorph*. When the vigil stalker has very lim-



VIGIL STALKER SPELL LIST

Vigil stalkers choose their spells from the following list. Spells marked with an asterisk (*) are from **Relics and Rituals**; those marked with a double asterisk (**) are from **Relics and Rituals 2: Lost Lore**.

1st — *alarm*, *chameleon skin**, *charm person*, *detect secret doors*, *disappear**, *ears of the wolf****, *erase*, *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *message*, *nose of the rat****, *rabbit feet**, *read magic*, *shade's sight**, *steal sleep**, *ventriloquism*.

2nd — *alibi**, *darkness*, *dead man's eyes**, *detect thoughts*, *intoxicate**, *invisibility*, *locate object*, *silence*, *whispering wind*.

3rd — *confusion*, *dispel magic*, *displacement*, *enhanced senses****, *illusory script*, *mind raid**.

4th — *detect scrying*, *improved invisibility*, *modify memory*, *nondetection*, *tattoo item**.



TABLE A2-11: VIGIL STALKER

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day				
						0	1	2	3	4
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Read faces	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Blend in, sneak attack +1d6 0	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Toughness feat, true lies	1	—	—	—	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Lightning Reflexes feat	1	0	—	—	—
5th	+4	+1	+4	+4	Iron Will feat, sneak attack +2d6	1	1	—	—	—
6th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Great Fortitude feat	1	1	0	—	—
7th	+6/+1	+2	+5	+5	Toughness feat	1	1	1	—	—
8th	+6/+1	+2	+6	+6	Perfect disguise, sneak attack +3d6	1	1	1	0	—
9th	+7/+2	+3	+6	+6	Undeivable	2	1	1	1	—
10th	+8/+3	+3	+7	+7	Natural Healing	2	2	1	1	—

ited access to props and makeup or insufficient time for preparation, he may still use this ability for a +7 bonus to his Disguise skill roll.

Undeivable (Su): At 9th level, the vigil stalker cannot be deceived, usually even by magical means. Attempts to use the Bluff skill against the vigil stalker fail automatically, unless the character attempting the bluff is both of a higher level than the vigil stalker *and* has more ranks in Bluff than the vigil stalker has in Sense Motive. Additionally, all illusions and any enchantments that try to convince a vigil stalker of something that isn't true are easier for a vigil stalker to resist.

If they do not have a saving throw, the vigil stalker receives one anyway to negate the magical effects. If they do have a saving throw and the vigil stalker fails his roll, he may reroll the save once more, one round later.

Natural Healing (Su): A 10th level vigil stalker has an exceptionally quick recovery time. He recovers twice his level in hit points each night, and temporary ability damage is also recovered at twice the normal rate (4 points per day of complete bed rest). Also, one point of temporary ability damage is recovered per day even if the vigil stalker is active.



APPENDIX THREE

The Tools of Shadow

The tools used by rogues and rangers to accomplish their goals are many and myriad. From small mechanical trinkets to alchemical concoctions, from magical items to spells, stalkers are prepared to use whatever is necessary to accomplish what they set out to do.

New Equipment

The following are new and interesting types of non-magical equipment that characters might use in a campaign. The GM may, of course, choose to limit the availability of these items, perhaps making them unique to a single organization, order or even individual.

Hook Crossbow

At first glance, the hook crossbow resembles an ordinary hand crossbow, but on closer inspection it becomes apparent that this tool is actually not intended to be a weapon at all. Instead of crossbow bolts, the hook crossbow shoots a slender grappling hook. The shaft of the hook is attached to 30 ft. of silk rope, which in turn is wrapped around a convenient winch at the back of the crossbow.

When the safety on the winch is released, the winch winds itself automatically; this pulls the crossbow toward the grappling hook's point of attachment at a base speed of 30 ft. for up to 200 lb. and 15 ft. for up to 300 lb. The rope and hook can support up to 400 lb. of weight, but the winch cannot wind itself if carrying

more than 300 lb. When the winch's safety is first released, a character attempting to hold onto the crossbow with her hands alone (i.e. not somehow attached to the crossbow) must make a DC 15 Reflex save or have the instrument jerk from her grasp and wind away without her. A character cannot keep hold of the crossbow if her total weight (i.e. her own weight combined with the weight of anything she is carrying) exceeds her max load capacity.

Thieves commonly use the hook crossbow to climb quickly away from danger, since it can allow a character (or object) grasping the crossbow (or tied to it) to move as much as 30 feet straight up in a single round of combat. Aiming and firing the crossbow is a standard action (and is otherwise identical to the use of a grappling hook), and releasing the safety on the winch is a free action.

Cost: 250 gp; **Weight:** 6 lb.

Itching Powder

Itching powder, as might be expected, makes people itch. Applied to a creature or person's skin, it causes such uncomfortable itching and burning that the victim receives a -1 distraction penalty to all actions for 3d4 minutes or until the powder can be washed away with large quantities of water. In addition, itching powder tossed into the eyes causes blindness for 3d4 minutes or until the eyes are well flushed with water, in addition to

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the -1 distraction penalty to all actions. Itching powder can only be removed by great quantities of water (or other non-toxic water-based liquids like wine or milk); it takes approximately 1 gallon of liquid to wash away a single dose of itching powder. A typical jar of itching powder contains 10 doses.

Itching powder must be handled with watertight gloves (such as leather), and any attempt to utilize itching powder has a flat 5% chance of accidental application to the user in addition to the target (divide duration by 2 and apply penalties to both user and target for this time period); the ability to use poisons with no chance of poisoning oneself also grants immunity from this kind of mishap. If attempting to throw itching powder into an opponent's face during combat, a character must be within 10 ft of the target and succeed at a ranged touch attack. Attempting to drop itching powder down an opponent's clothing imposes a -4 penalty to the roll, but if successful, the powder cannot be washed away unless the opponent disrobes.

Cost: 10 gp per standard jar (contains a single dose); **Weight:** 1/10 lb. per jar; **Craft (alchemy) DC:** 15

Lock Gum

Lock gum is a sticky paste that can be used to coat lockpicks. The stickiness of the paste helps the rogue to manipulate the smaller and more complex mechanisms of higher quality locks, while at the same time helping to muffle the sounds of lock picking—even on large or rusty locks. For 10 minutes after fresh lock gum is applied to a set of lockpicks, those tools grant a +2 alchemical bonus to all Open Locks skill checks, as well as to all Move Silently skill checks associated with the noise of picking a lock with those picks.

After lock gum has been used on a lock, but while the lock gum is still fresh and sticky, the lock does not work as smoothly as usual. Those who know about the use of lock gum may notice and become very wary if their locks are suddenly difficult to operate. Lock gum must be kept in a watertight container, as it dries into a fine and barely noticeable dust shortly after being exposed to air. It retains its full stickiness for 10 minutes following exposure. After this time it begins to dry and ceases to impede the regular smooth functioning of the lock. A typical container of lock gum contains enough for 50 uses, though especially large locks may require more than one application of the paste.

Cost: 10 gp per standard jar (contains 10 applications); **Weight:** 1/4 lb. per jar; **Craft (alchemy) DC:** 15



MAGICAL ITEMS

The following magical items are of great benefit to those who skirt the fringes of the law in their goals. Like the equipment above, the GM should consider possibly making one or all of these the sole province of a single order, priesthood, guild or magician.

ENKILI'S KNUCKLEBONES

Description: Enkili's knucklebones are a pair of dice carved from bone. They may have any number of sides, but the faces will not have numbers or pips and will instead appear completely blank. To use them, the owner casts the dice and asks a question. The dice will continue rolling until the query has been completed, or for 10 minutes if the roller chooses to ask no questions at all.

To people who know of Enkili's Knucklebones, the dice have an ill reputation. It is rumored that the Knucklebones only foretell bad fortune. A very few consider this a useful quality, since it helps them avoid or plan for dangerous situations. **Powers:** Once per day, a character can throw the dice and ask a question. As soon as the question has been asked, the dice stop rolling and the character receives an accurate, two-word answer to the inquiry. The answers won't always be helpful, and if the question or answer doesn't relate to a future or present danger or problem, the dice don't respond at all. Each word will appear on one of the die.

Example: Eliza Winterfell fears that the head of the local thieves' guild, the Courteous Man, wishes to have her killed. She rolls her pair of Enkili's Knucklebones and asks, "Does the Courteous Man wish my death?" The dice land, showing the words "This" and "Night." Eliza suppresses a shudder and puts the dice away, planning her escape from the city.

Moderate divination; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *commune*; Price 44,250 gp.

INTELLIGENT ROPE

Description: Though this rope is not intelligent per se, it is certainly far more responsive than your average piece of braided hemp. Able to tie, untie and coil itself on command, *intelligent rope* is very popular among burglars, spies, assassins and participants in illicit love affairs. Its most obvious use is that when climbing down an *intelligent rope* knotted at the top to a secure object — such as a building, cliff or tree — a simple combination of tugs can cause it to untie and wind itself neatly, leaving no evidence behind of the descent.

Powers: Twice per day, an *intelligent rope* can perform any one of the following two actions. Three tugs at one end of the rope, combined with a word of command, tells the rope to wrap and knot itself around the nearest solid, anchored object. Four tugs and the command word tells the rope to untie its other end and coil itself into the user's hand.

Minor transmutation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *animate rope*; Price: 2160 gp; Weight 10 lb.

PORTABLE WINDOW

Description: A *portable window* is similar in size and appearance to a *portable hole*, except that it is a very light silvery-gray color when not in use. When activated, the *portable window* becomes completely transparent. This item is very sought after, especially among spies, and it is also particularly useful to burglars, assassins and voyeurs.

Powers: When unfolded and placed flat against a solid object, such as a wall, the area directly behind the *portable window* achieves one-way transparency. For example, a person holding a *portable window* up to a wall can see through the wall as if it were completely transparent; but someone on the other side of the barrier would perceive it to remain unchanged. Thus, there is no visual way of knowing that a *portable window* has been applied, and that the actions within an enclosed area are viewable by the *window's* operator. A *portable window's* powers can work on any flat surface that is less than three feet thick. The *portable window* has no effect on sound.

Moderate divination; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *clairvoyance*; Price 30,000 gp.

SPICE OF POISON REVELATION

Description: *Spice of poison revelation* is a much more efficient means of detecting poison in one's meals than the use of food tasters. It takes effect much more quickly, makes less noise and mess than does a poisoned servant, and when applied carefully can have the added bonus of allowing the target of the poison to avoid its dangers without alerting the poisoners that their ploy has failed. Any ordinary spice can be magically transformed into *spice of poison revelation*. The decadent rulers of the old Ledeian Empire were said to have whole cabinets of different flavors to enable them to screen their food and season it to taste all in the same motion. The majority of people, of course, can afford only a single jar or two at most, so clove and ginger are popular flavors since they blend well with both sweet and savory foods.

Powers: When a dose of *spice of poison revelation* is sprinkled over food or drink, it immediately senses the presence of any type of poison on the plate or in the cup where it was placed. If there is no poison, the spice retains its original color and flavor. If poison is detected, the spice instantly changes to bright green and becomes terribly bitter to the taste. An ordinary jar of *spice of poison revelation* contains 50 doses.

Minor divination; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, detect poison; Price 1500 gp.

Thief's Friend (MINOR ARTIFACT)

Description: This pre-war artifact, as is appropriate for an artifact related to the chaotic Enkili, is of confusing origin. Some legends say it was created by Tanil and given to Enkili because she decided she didn't like it. Other tales claim it was a gift crafted for Enkili by his young daughter Drendari, back when she was still known only as the Shadow Child — and is the very first thing Drendari ever created with her divine powers. Still others assert that it was actually Enkili who fashioned the artifact as a gift for Drendari — a simple show of motherly affection after her daughter's rescue from the Slarecians. Finally, an old Ledean text asserts that when Temsheh the Witty was standing trial for both fraud and public humiliation of the emperor, Enkili appeared in person and announced that he would not allow the court to bother Temsheh any further on his birthday. He then publicly presented the artifact to Temsheh as a birthday present before turning into a duck and waddling out of the courtroom (with Temsheh following, unopposed).

Whatever its origin, however, its purpose is clear: it helps a thief to steal things. Normally similar in size to a walnut and shaped like a beetle, this tiny artifact — carved apparently out of ordinary slate — is perhaps the very best friend a thief could have (outside of a god, of course).

Powers: The owner of the *thief's friend* can make use of the following abilities:

Whenever the owner speaks the command word, the *thief's friend* will animate into a construct that can obey simple commands. Simply repeating this command word reverts the construct back to its normal inanimate form.

While the artifact is in construct form, the owner can command the *thief's friend* to do each of the following three times per day:

- Grow from size fine to size tiny (about as large as a rabbit). This transformation engenders the following changes of stats to the construct form: Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.; AC 21; Face 1 ft. by 1 ft.; Str 10. All other stats remain the same. This effect lasts for 10 minutes.
- Shrink to the size of a pea (no change in stats). This effect lasts for 10 minutes.
- Use thieves' tools. The *thief's friend* can sprout a set of masterwork thieves' tools from its mandibles and use them to pick a single lock. It uses its own Dexterity modifier for this task as well as its owner's ranks in Open Lock.

While the artifact is in construct form, the owner can command the *thief's friend* to do each of the following once per day:

- Cast *sleep* as if it were a wizard of a level and intelligence equal to the character level and intelligence of its owner.



Thief's Friend

Fine Construct

Hit Dice: 1d10 (2 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 5 ft. (1 square), fly 20 ft. (perfect)

Armor Class: 27 (+8 size, +5 Dex, +4 natural), touch 23, flat-footed 22

Base Attack/Grapple: +0/-16

Attack: —

Full Attack: —

Space/Reach: 1/2 ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: —

Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 10/magic, follow commands

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 3, Dex 20, Con —, Int 5, Wis 20, Cha 10

Skills: —

Feats: —

Alignment: Neutral

Follow Commands: In construct form, the *thief's friend* can follow all simple commands within its power (i.e. crawl under that door, fly into the orc's face, or stand still). It can remember up to three commands in a row (i.e. hook this grappling hook around that gargoyle, do it quietly, and then come back). However, it can only use its powers if specifically commanded to do so. Without instructions, it simply stands still and waits, even if attacked. It will only obey the commands of its current owner.



- Change command word. The owner may tell the *thief's friend* to respond to a new command word.
- Share sight. The owner of the *thief's friend* can look through its eyes. Wherever it goes, the owner sees its surroundings as if peering through a pair of small holes in a wall. This effect lasts for 1 minute/level of owner.
- Turn invisible for 1 minute/level of owner. This invisibility stays in effect even if the *thief's friend* uses its *sleep* ability.

The power of a *thief's friend* will never work for someone who has bought it fairly or performed any kind of trade or exchange to acquire it. It must be found, received as a gift or stolen in order to function. The *thief's friend* can only change owners while in its dormant, inanimate form. In order to take ownership, the would-be owner must know the current command word.

The *thief's friend* does not radiate magic when in its dormant state, and any means of detecting magic will not detect the magical nature of the small slate carving.

Strong divination, enchantment, illusion, transmutation; CL 20th.

NEW RANGER Spells

Rangers are generally considered mediocre spellcasters by other wielders of magic, and perhaps not without reason. Rangers do not gain the ability to cast divine spells until they reach 4th level, and even at high levels they cannot wield as many spells as their counterparts. Moreover, their spells are quite specialized in nature and have limited applicability outside their chosen vocation.

While all these points are true so far as they go, what they fail to take into account is that rangers — like every other class — are not as monolithic a group as they might appear to be to outsiders. As explained in previous chapters, rangers are highly diverse individuals, each with unique skills and abilities — including specialized spells. Thus, this appendix provides a handful of new ranger spells that both expand the repertoire of the class and provide depth for those members of it who do not fit into the stereotype of a nature-loving warrior.

BRAMBLE BLADE

Transmutation

Level: Rgr 3

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: One non-magical bladed weapon

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless, object)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless, object)

DESCRIPTION

The Vigils of Vesh are perhaps the most well known ranger brotherhood in all of Ghelspad and have been at the forefront of the battle against titanspawn for many years. Not surprisingly, vigilants have developed numerous new spells with which to continue their battle. The Pelpernoi Vigil is especially fond of creating new spells, and this one is a good example of the type of magic they often produce. This spell has since spread throughout all the Vigils and can even be found among other good-aligned ranger groups across the continent.

Spell Effect

This spell causes any single non-magical bladed weapon the caster is carrying to sprout extremely hard spikes over its length. These barbs look much like the thorns found on a bramble bush. As a result, the weapon rips at the opponent when it hits, biting deeply at any exposed flesh. Every hit is thus considered a potential critical hit, though the attacker must still roll to confirm the critical.

CORRODE

Transmutation

Level: Drd 3, Rgr 4

Components: S, M, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Area: See below

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude (see below)

Spell Resistance: Yes

DESCRIPTION

The titan Thulkas was once considered the lord of iron and claimed dominion over all metals worked by the hands of mortal beings. He taught his druids the process of corroding metals by touch, a se-



cret that they in turn taught to their protectors — the rangers. In the centuries since the destruction of Thulkas, this spell has passed into the knowledge of those not devoted to his memory, although followers of Thulkas remain by far the most likely to possess this knowledge even in the modern Scarred Lands.

Spell Effect

If the caster of this spell makes a successful melee touch attack, he causes any metallic target to corrode; the metal will immediately fall to pieces and become useless. The size of the target is immaterial — a full suit of armor rusts away as quickly as a dagger. Magic armor and weapons, and other enchanted items made of metal, must succeed at a Fortitude save or be dissolved. A successful save means that the spell has no effect. Wooden, stone, and other nonmetallic objects are immune to its effects.

Material Components: A rusted metallic object.

Detect Enemy

Divination

Level: Rgr 1

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 ft.

Area: A quarter circle emanating from the caster to the extreme of the range

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Description

This spell owes its creation to the efforts of the Society of the Manacle, a group of bounty hunters dedicated to Chardun. Its usefulness to them in their unholy mission was proved time and again, so much so that others — including their enemies — adopted it as their own. Since then, it has become an important part of the repertoire of rangers across Ghelspad, whatever their ultimate allegiance.

Spell Effect

The character can detect the presence of favored enemies. The amount of information revealed depends on how long the character studies a particular area or subject:

1st Round: Presence or absence of favored enemies.

2nd Round: Number of favored enemies in the area and the strength of the strongest favored enemy present.

3rd Round: The strength and location of each favored enemy. If a favored enemy is outside the character's line of sight, then the character discerns its direction but not its exact location.

Eavesdrop

Divination

Level: Rgr 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: Special (see below)

Targets: See below

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Description

In many parts of the Scarred Lands, rangers have long been used as spies. Though this practice has been utilized to some degree in practically every region, it is especially prominent in Albadia and Darakeene. The rangers of these areas consider such espionage to be honorable and fully within the bounds of ethical conduct. Perhaps unsurprisingly, rangers devoted to Belsameth often employ themselves in this manner as well. Independently, each group has developed this spell to aid them in listening in on the conversations of others, thereby providing each with valuable information they might otherwise not be able to obtain.

Spell Effect

Through the use of this spell, the caster can overhear anything spoken (or verbalized) by any person or creature he is able to see. For the purposes of this spell, his sight can be augmented through the use

of spells or magic items. Therefore, this spell could be used in conjunction with a *crystal ball* or other scrying device, for example. As long as the spell's duration remains in effect, he can shift his attention between multiple targets.

Material Components: A seashell.

FIERY VENGEANCE

Evocation [Fire]

Level: Rgr 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: 20 ft. by 20 ft. cube

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description

It is a commonplace expression to say that rangers are defenders of the forest. Yet that does not make this cliché any less true. Many rangers exist to defend the green places of the world from harm. During the Divine War, the titans and their servants showed little regard for Scarn and gleefully wrought untold damage upon it in their failed attempt to destroy the gods. This aroused the anger of Denev, further reminding her why she betrayed her fellow titans. While Denev's enemies went about setting her forests afire, she taught the rangers who served her how to turn back these flames — and simultaneously punish those deserving her retribution. Since the conclusion of the Titanswar, many rangers devoted to allied gods have learned this spell and continue to use it to wreak vengeance upon those who would despoil the Scarred Land's forests.

Spell Effect

This spell gives the caster the ability to channel fire from nearby burning material; the flames arc upward and descend in an attack that harms the targeted enemies. For the spell to function, the caster must be within 50 ft. of 100 lb. or more of burning material. This ma-

terial can be anything, so long as it is alight and is at least the size of a campfire. However, the fire must be wholly non-magical in nature. Magical fire cannot bring about this spell's effects. In channeling the fire, it extinguishes the source flame.

The channeled fire deals 1d4 points of damage per level of the caster, to a maximum of 10d4. The fire can be aimed at any target or targets within the range of the spell who fall within its area of effect.

Material Components: 100 lb. or more of burning material.

HATED ENEMY

Necromancy (Death)

Level: Rgr 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Living creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude partial

Spell Resistance: Yes

DESCRIPTION

The ancient Ledean scouts served their imperial masters not only as forward observers but also as opportunist attackers. They struck at enemies when circumstances allowed, often dealing great damage to immobilize or demoralize a foe. Under the tutelage of titans like Hrinruuk, these rangers learned to use their magic to deal killing blows to even powerful enemies. Though both the Empire of Lede and Hrinruuk are no more, the secret of this spell survived the centuries and is now widely known in Ghelspad, particularly among evil-aligned rangers — although it is not exclusive to them. Many rangers devoted to Tanil also use this spell, as do the few who serve Corean and even Hedrada.

SPELL EFFECT

The caster can substantially increase the likelihood of killing any one living creature, provided it is one of her favored enemies. The effects of this spell are imbued into the caster's next melee or ranged attack. If that attack misses, the spell is wasted. If it

hits, the subject must make a Fortitude save. If the save is failed, the subject dies outright; even if the save is successful, the target still suffers 2d6 +1 damage per caster level (to a maximum of 2d6 + 10) in addition to whatever damage the attack inflicts.

HUNTER'S RAIMENT

Transmutation

Level: Drd 1, Rgr 1

Components: M, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

DESCRIPTION

Denev and Tanil have long instructed their followers with the wisdom that is found in the natural world. They have encouraged their devotees to learn from the creatures that survive in some of the most dangerous portions of the Scarred Lands, hoping that in doing so they might discover new ways to protect themselves against the forces of evil. One of the most common means of protection is camouflage, the ability to blend in with one's surroundings. Many worshippers of both deities, particularly rangers, have learned to camouflage themselves so as to better hide from foes — and ambush them when necessary.

SPELL EFFECT

The caster gains a +10 primal bonus to all Hide checks made for the duration of the spell. In addition, the bonus increases by +1 for every two caster levels possessed (maximum total of +20). The spell's effects work for only a single environment (forest, hills, marsh, etc.), as specified at the time of the casting. If the caster leaves that type of terrain before the spell's duration has ended, it ceases to grant any benefit, but will immediately resume doing so once the caster re-enters the appropriate topography, provided that the spell's duration has not yet expired.

Material Components: An inanimate object found in the terrain in which the character wishes to hide (mud, stone, tree bark, etc.).

POISON THORN

Evocation

Level: Rgr 3

Components: V, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude (see below)

Spell Resistance: Yes

DESCRIPTION

Legends dispute whether Chern or Mormo was ultimately responsible for this spell, since the rangers in the service of both titans were known to use it, as were many others by the time of the Divine War. Since then, the spell has become largely unknown outside of dedicated devotees of Chern and Mormo and, ironically, rangers belonging to the Order of the Black Thorn. For these reasons the spell is considered "tainted" by most other rangers in the Scarred Lands, even evil ones, who shy away from using it.

SPELL EFFECT

This spell creates a single dart made from a large thorn. The dart flies in the direction chosen by the caster and unerringly strikes its target. The dart deals 1d4 points of damage plus an additional 1 point per level of the caster (to a maximum of +5). Furthermore, a successful hit injects a virulent poison into the target. This poison deals 1d6 temporary Strength damage as its initial damage and another 1d6 points as its secondary damage. The poison has a Fortitude save equal to the spell save DC of this spell.

The dart strikes unerringly, even if the target is in melee or has anything less than total cover or concealment. Specific parts of a creature cannot be singled out. Inanimate objects cannot be damaged by the spell.

Material Components: A single large thorn.

RANGER ARMOR

Conjuration (Creation) [Force]

Level: Rgr 1

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: You

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Description

Corean is not a common deity of rangers, but there are rangers who revere him — especially in places like Mithril and the surrounding territories. These rangers tend to wade into combat like their paladin counterparts but, unlike them, eschew heavy armor. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they have learned this spell as a means of compensating for their lack of protection. This spell is now widespread among rangers in northern Ghelspad and is popular even among those who do not worship Corean.

Spell Effect

An invisible field of force surrounds the caster, protecting her from attacks. The benefit of this spell depends on her favored enemy bonus. The caster gains a +1 AC bonus for every +1 she has against

the favored enemy that is attacking. For example, if a character has favored enemy (aberrations) +2 and favored enemy (giants) +4, the spell provides +2 AC against aberrations and +4 AC against giants. If multiple opponents belonging to different levels of the character's favored enemy bonus attack her while this spell is in effect, the character's AC varies accordingly.

Naturally, this spell provides no AC bonus against the attacks of creatures not among the caster's favored enemies. Because of its magical nature, *ranger armor* entails no armor check penalty, arcane spell failure chance, or speed reduction. In addition, incorporeal favored enemies cannot bypass it as they do normal armor, making this a favored spell by those who hunt undead.

SPOOR

Divination

Level: Rgr 2

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Description

This spell is another developed by the Society of the Manacle in order to aid in their work of hunting down “criminals.” Its true origin is shrouded in mystery, but some sages have gone so far as to claim that rangers devoted to Hrinruuk once possessed an identical spell — a charge the Society has neither confirmed nor denied. If that claim were true, one might expect to find *spoor* used by other rangers, particularly those devoted to the memory of the titans.

Spell Effect

This spell works almost identically to *locate creature*. It differs primarily in that the caster does not have to know the creature for which he is looking, provided he has found tracks made by his quarry. The tracks of the target cannot have been made prior to 10 hours + one hour per level of the caster. After that period has elapsed, the spell can no longer locate the creature who made the tracks.

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