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Produced by the Council of Greyhawk

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**The Council of Greyhawk is an informal organization of gamers dedicated to keeping the World of Greyhawk a viable campaign world. At present, this group meets and communicates primarily on America Online and through regularly-scheduled IRC chats at [www.empnet.com/cog](http://www.empnet.com/cog). Send inquiries to [TikaMaj@aol.com](mailto:TikaMaj@aol.com).**

## The Editor's Notebook

### Everything Old Is New Again

My first time was in college, sophomore year. I'd had some experiences before then, but nothing wonderful, nothing more than half-hearted attempts. I had gone to a Catholic high school, where that sort of behavior was strongly discouraged, and it'd taken a full year at college before I was comfortable enough to open up to people about it.

I'm talking about AD&D®, of course -- what did you think I meant?

Seven of us in a classroom (blackboards are a DM's best friend). I'd been elected Dungeon Master, since I had all the books -- never mind that I'd never played a real game of Dungeons & Dragons. I pulled out all the cliches I'd ever heard or read about, and used them. A tavern. The evil priest of a dark god. A brawl. A quest to rescue a prisoner and stop an invasion. It was ad hoc, pulled together from my imagination and 17 years of fairy tales, mythology, and fantasy, and it started 3 years of memorable characters and events. Maara Leetz, the frightening warrior from the barbaric tribes of the eastern mountains, who survived and overcame, gaining honor, responsibility, and a heck of a lot of followers in the process. Brom, the egocentric wizard who valued his spellbooks over his life, and his friends over his spellbooks. Nighthorse, the half-elf-turned-verbeeg ranger, who leapt onto the head of a dragon and plunged his sword through its brain. There are many others; some memorable, some not, but they all created wonderful memories, and it all started in a tavern.

Recently, I've been given the chance to go back, in a sense, and regain the wonder. After four years, I've gathered a new group together. Some of them have never played, others have been playing for far longer than I have. We met for the first time several days ago, and the adventure began. Nothing fancy, an "exploratory" adventure, if you will, to find out each player's individual peccadillos and quirks. A simple quest for a disappearing miller, lost in the mysterious forest. Cliched? Perhaps. Exciting? To those involved, there's no better way to spend an evening.

The recent rerelease of Greyhawk gives us a unique chance to bring that sense of wonder and excitement to a whole new generation of gamers. Greyhawk has a long and rich history, yet is easily understood and interpreted by the neophyte gamer. The noble lands of the Southwest, the chivalric kingdom of Furyondy, the dark lord Iuz, the bustling city of Greyhawk itself -- these are all features common to fantasy fiction and familiar to most role-players. In addition, the new gamer needs only one slim volume -- the *Player's Guide* -- to enter the shared imagination of Greyhawk; DMs need add only *The Adventure Begins*. No boxed sets, or assorted handbooks -- just the *Player's Guide* and *The Adventure Begins*.

The readers of the Oerth Journal can play a crucial part in this by introducing new players to Greyhawk. While inducting new players into your group is certainly one way to

do it, there are others. Run a Greyhawk module at your local gaming store, club, or "spot", or announce a mini-campaign and take a group through GDQ, TOEE, or the S-series. They're classics for a reason, after all, and is there a better way to introduce people to AD&D in general, and Greyhawk in general?

Shifting gears now, I'm very pleased to bring you the ninth issue of the Oerth Journal. This issue features part two of Jeff McKillop's two-part article on the Viscounty of Verbobonc, complete with a full color map by the Journal's own assistant editor, Phil Rhodes. Incabulous and Hextor make up our two entries in the "Of Oerth and Altar" department, by Russell S. Timm and Will McPherson respectively. Tom Harison begins an investigation of religions in Dyvers with the temple of Bralm, and Jim Temple unearths a lost tome detailing the mysteries of the Fading Lands. Finally, Morgan Rodwell brings us a low-level Greyhawk adventure perfect for inducting (or kidnapping) someone new into your campaign.

Stone endures,

*Nathan Irving*

A Correction from Russell S. Timm, author of *Wastri: the Hopping Prophet*, from issue 8:

The author would like it to be known that upon reflection, he omitted Bralm as an enemy of *Wastri* and his faith, or the other way around as it were. The case of Bralm may simply be two bizarre philosophies bashing heads against each other, agitated by the natural relationship of insects and amphibians. It is known that *Wastri* actively encourages persecution of servants who worship Bralm.

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## Verbobonc: The Viscounty

### Part Two of Two

By Jeff McKillop

(mckillop@unm.edu)

### Map by Phil Rhodes

## Verbobonc, Viscounty & Free Town of

**Ruler:** His Noble Lordship, Viscount Langard

**Capital:** Verbobonc (pop. 12,500)

**Population:** 35,000

**Demi-Humans:** Gnomes (24,000), Sylvan Elves (2,500),

**Halflings** (1,500)

**Humanoids:** Some

**Important Persons:** Clanlord Urthgan the Eldest of Tulvar; Sheriff of Littleburrow;

**Resources:** Copper, Gems (I-IV)

**National Alignment:** Any Good or Neutral

**Coinage:** Zeeti (cp), Tapi (sp), Tear (ep).

The city of Verbobonc is as much a product of its surroundings as they are of the city. This is particularly true in the Kron Hills to the south and the Gnarley Forest to the east. Although life in the outlying towns and villages of the Viscounty creeps along at a much slower pace than within the city, they are quite vibrant and distinct communities. Opportunities for adventure abound in the Viscounty, but players should beware: evil often lurks in the most tranquil of places.

### THE KRON HILLS

The Kron Hills stretch from the Lortmils to the Gnarley Forest, and form the frontiers of Dyvers, Celene, Verbobonc, and the Archclericy of Veluna. They are the remnants of mountains, their peaks now worn and rounded with age. The grassy upper slopes are very fertile and provide grazing for the many flocks of sheep raised by the Kron Hills gnomes. The forested lower slopes shelter numerous valleys and glen where crops of all types are grown.

The Kron Hills are also mined for many metals and gems. Considerable deposits of silver and natural electrum are found throughout, while iron and tin are found in abundance where the hills meet the Lortmils. Along the Shortspur are found great deposits of gemstones, namely malachite, chrysoprase, chrysoberyl, a dark green jade with unique turquoise swirls, and brilliant black opals and emeralds.

With an estimated population of 20,000 gnomes, the Kron Hills are home to the greatest concentration of those sturdy folk in the Flanaess. Large portions of the Hills are officially under the control of Verbobonc, Celene, Veluna, and Dyvers. However, the Kron Hills gnomes are accorded much freedom to govern themselves, the hills are considered more of a protectorate by the surrounding states than anything else. The gnome communities are very organized, and they

tend to keep themselves as isolated as possible from humans. They feel a strong sense of brotherhood for their relatives who have moved to Verbobonc and other urban areas in the region, but resist any attempts to export city ways to their villages. The trade from the gnome mines is all conducted within the Greenway Valley, with gnome merchants buying commodities for resale in Verbobonc and beyond. The mines are all owned by the gnome nobility, and their locations are closely guarded, even from other gnomes. Only the most foolish have ever sought out the hidden locations of the mines, as the gnomes do not treat intruders gently.

There are a few dwarven strongholds in the Kron Hills where they meet the Lortmils. Although the dwarfolk remain aloof from the humans in the regions, they are quite friendly to the gnomes whose help was crucial in driving the humanoids out of the Lortmils during the Hateful Wars. These solitary halls serve as a link between the wealthy and isolationist dwarven kingdoms in the heartlands of the Lortmils and the outside world, aided by the gnomes.

The halflings of the Kron Hills are nearly all concentrated in the village of Littleburrow. They are a very isolated bunch, separated from the gnomes and outside the borders of any other state. They tend flocks of sheep in the surrounding hills, fish for the great pike of the Clearwater, and cultivate grain in the river valley.

The valley is also the home of a tribe of centaurs. The halflings share their crops with the centaurs, who in turn have pledged to protect their little community. They are very fond of each other, and centaurs will often be seen racing through the lightly wooded valleys with halfling riders clinging to their backs.

The only elves within the Kron Hills, except for those in Ostverk, live in the stretch of hills running through the Gnarley Forest. They happily roam the forested crests and avoid all contact with other races. The elves of Celene have attempted to extend greater control over this region, but have met resistance. It is said that great veins of ore are to be found in the Kron Hills here, but exploratory parties have been constantly thwarted in their attempts to penetrate the highlands by bands of elven bowmen and their druidic allies.

The Hills are also home to many humanoids, mostly small groups of goblins. These are kept in check by the gnomes, but patrols often find the remains of missing caravans in some of the more out-of-the-way spots. The real problems are the verbeeg and hill giants who live in the southern hills along the Shortspur. They often raid into the Greenway Valley, and retreat before the gnomes can retaliate. Punitive expeditions by the gnomes after particularly bloody or destructive raids are not unknown.

### Specific Locations in the Kron Hills

1. The Village of Hommlet: This hamlet-sized village is located some 25 leagues southeast of Verbobonc, on the fringe of the Viscounty. It lies at a crossroads, and almost all

traffic through the hills passes through here. The High Road proper leads north to Verbobonc and south to Celene. The Forest High Road runs east through the Gnarley to Dyvers. The Greenway, also called the Veluna High Road, follows Nigb's Run west into the Greenway Valley, and from there continues on to Veluna. Other, smaller trails lead southeast to the Wild Coast. See T1-4 for more specific details.

2. Nulb: Situated on the western edge of the Gnarley Forest, Nulb is just outside the borders of the Viscounty of Verbobonc. Free from organized justice, it has become a haven for outlaws, bandits, and other unsavory characters. Unfortunately, it also lies on the Forest High Road which connects the Viscounty with Dyvers. Though at one time the Forest High Road was a main route from Celene and Verbobonc to Dyvers, it has fallen into disuse since the rise of the Temple of Elemental Evil some years ago. Most travelers now prefer to take the longer and safer route along the Low Road, or travel by boat down the Volverdyva. See T1-4 for more specific details.

3. Etterboek: This small town of about 300 people is nestled in a small valley along the banks of Nigb's Run. It gets its name from the great number of ettercaps which plague the hills between here and Nulb, and are a constant menace to travellers on the High Road. The lands of the town belong to a minor noble, Winstin Jugalis. He almost never leaves his villa on the Nigb, except when summoned by the Viscount himself, and leaves the everyday affairs of the town to his daughter, Paloma. She is well-loved by the townsfolk for her kindness and genuine concern for their welfare, and she can often be found visiting the sick or injured.

4. Ostverk: This small village lies just within the territory of the Fey of Celene. Its population is quite small, comprising only 25 gnome families. It is governed by an elven mayor, Waldgraf Talarien Carewlein, and has a permanent garrison of 50 elven warriors. The elves live in a small fortress built upon an imposing knoll overlooking the village, and it is their task to prevent unauthorized entry into the Kingdom of Celene. They are very proud of their position, seeing themselves as the protectors of the state, and take their duty quite seriously. An inn has been set aside for uninvited travelers wishing to enter Celene, and they must wait there until permission to continue has arrived from Enstad. Most, however, give up the enterprise long before permission is given; a quick decision by elven standards takes far longer than the patience of an average human, gnome or even dwarf will allow.

5. Littleburrow: This village, located where the Veluna High Road crosses the Clearwater, is the home of about 150 halflings of Stoutish blood. They dwell in small burrows, hence the village name, which typically have only one door, a shuttered window, and a chimney. They are very carefree, working only as much as they need to, and rarely interact with the other communities of the Kron Hills. This is as much due to laziness and disinterest as for any other reason. They prefer

to let the world come to them via the High Road, than to travel it themselves.

There is one inn in Littleburrow, The Galloping Pike, on the east bank of the Clearwater beside the Greenway Ford. Prices are quite low, and the quality and entertainment grand. Since travelers are the village's main source of news, the halflings attempt to make their stay as enjoyable as possible.

There is no official mayor of Littleburrow, but each year the inhabitants elect a Sheriff. His job is to judge legal matters, of which there are few. He is also the liaison with the gnomes of the Greenway Valley. As such he is constantly shuttling back and forth between the two communities, sometimes even traveling to Verbobonc itself. This allows some of the more adventurous halflings a chance to 'see the world' without too much danger.

The halflings are very friendly with a tribe of centaurs which lives to the southeast. The grain they raise is traded to the centaurs for their hornwood bows and a variety of fruits, particularly karafruit, which the hoofed folk gather in sheltered glades.

6. Kron: This small fortress guards the passage into Greenway Valley. It is remarkable in that it is dug completely into a small outcropping of rock, rising along the Greenway, as the gnomes refer to the High Road where it passes through their lands. The gnomes sculpted the rock into an impressive fortress, commanding a narrow defile between two steep hills. The Greenway passes through the fortress of Kron, and can be completely blocked by the gnomes if necessary. A garrison of 100 gnomes is always stationed here, and reinforcements can be quickly brought up from the Greenway Valley.

7. Greenway Valley: Although small gnome villages are scattered throughout the Kron Hills, it is in the lightly wooded Greenway Valley that the majority of gnomes make their home. This pastoral valley has grown to become one of the largest gnome settlements in the Flanaess, mostly due to the brisk trade carried on with the merchants of Verbobonc. Currently, the valley is home to about 10,000 gnomes. The valley is divided into twelve townships, each administered by one of the gnome families seated on the Assembly of the Kron Hills. The central township is the seat of the gnome Clanlord, Urthgan the Eldest of Tulvar. His family has ruled the gnomes of the Kron Hills for over 500 years, and is well-respected by nobles and commoners alike.

The houses in the valley are very reminiscent of the buildings of Verbobonc, a mix of old and new, gnome and Gothic styles. This should not be surprising as Greenway Valley was the birthplace of the famous gnome architect Snirthiglin, who drafted the plans for Verbobonc years ago. Many also live in "rents" (gnome for cellar), preferring the smell of the earth to the open air homes of their brethren. Along the Greenway, numerous inns, merchant houses, markets, and taverns are located, catering to traders and travelers alike. Smallish warrens also abound, for those who prefer a more traditional living space. Each warren houses an extended family of 20-30 gnomes

Each township has a large trading house along the Greenway where goods from the mines are received, stockpiled, and sold to traders. By gnome law, no product of the mines may be sold by the nobles at any other place. All commerce thus centers around these houses. An agent of the Assembly, the Satveegr, oversees each factory. He is responsible for the collection of taxes, the auditing of the mine records, and for mediating disputes which arise between the trading houses and traders. These posts are especially sought after as there is ample opportunity for monetary gain associated with them.

Marshals appointed by the Clanlord travel throughout the valley on a regular circuit. Their duty is to keep the peace in the various townships. Most rulings may be appealed to the various members of the Assembly; however, in matters regarding intertownship crimes and disputes, the Marshals answer only to the Clanlord. These Marshals are among the most respected individuals in Greenway Valley, recognized for their integrity, honesty, and wisdom.

Each township has an organized militia, and the total force of Greenway Valley numbers close to 2,500 gnome soldiers when fully mustered. They may be raised by either Clanlord Urthgan or by the Viscount of Verbobonc (with the clanlord's approval) The gnomes volunteered to aid the dwarves of the Lortmils during the Hateful Wars, and the last time the militia was raised was at the request of the Viscount who desired their help against the hordes of Zuggtmoy. Since the sacking of the Temple of Elemental Evil some quarter century ago, life has largely returned to normal in the valley, and happiness and prosperity have returned to the gnomes of the Kron Hills.

8. Osnabrolt: This small village of gnomes was originally built into one large mound. The gnomes skillfully dug their warrens into the sides of the hill, creating an underground village, linked by dozens of interconnecting passages. Windows and doors are cleverly built into the hillsides so as to be screened from sight by sod, bushes, and trees. A few gnomes have built small houses, which dot the hill with little, sod-covered mounds-unnoticeable to all but the keenest-eyed elves and gnomes. See WGA4 for more specific details.

9. Dorob Kilthduum: At the headwaters of the Clearwater River lies the ruined stronghold of the Kilthduum clan of mountain dwarves. During the Hateful Wars, a fleeing horde of orcs deceived the stronghold defenders into believing them to be a returning dwarvish patrol. Gaining control of the main gate, the orcs swept through the halls and slaughtered its inhabitants, mostly females and children, in a mad frenzy. When the Kilthduum warriors returned to the hold after the Hateful Wars, they found it firmly in the grasp of the orc invaders. Repeated attacks proved fruitless, and in a final act of vengeance the Kilthduum High Priestess of Berronar, Gilvgola, called a curse down upon the stronghold. She climbed the cliffs above the entrance and cast herself from them as a sacrifice to Berronar. The goddess heard her plea, and the entire cliff face broke away, burying Gilvgola

and the entrance under thousands of tons of rubble. The warriors left their once-great stronghold and scattered to various parts of the Flanaess.

The stronghold entrance is still blocked by the fallen cliffs, and the rubble is haunted by the ghost of Gilvgola and the guards who allowed the orcs into the fortress. They exist as haunts, and their remaining task is to reclaim their ancestral home. To this end, they will possess the body of any who approach and attempt to enter the stronghold by means of secret entrances. Since the stronghold is now home to about a thousand orcs, they have so far failed in their attempts to recapture it from the humanoids.

10. Castle Hagthar: This rather decrepit keep marks the southern boundary of the Archclericy of Veluna. It commands the heights of a massive rock escarpment overlooking the Veluna High Road where it crosses the border. Although it was obviously a once proud citadel, it has fallen into disrepair since the wars with Keoland. Taken by Keoish invaders in 350 CY, it was bypassed by the Veluna/Furyondian armies during the Small War, and was not reconquered until 356 CY, after a two-month siege.

Due to its relative unimportance compared to Veluna's other frontiers, reconstruction did not resume until the 400's. The work was completed in 427 CY, and although the new fortifications were formidable, they were far less daunting than the earlier defenses. This proved to be quite unfortunate, for in 507 CY, fleeing hobgoblin tribes driven from the Lortmils during the Hateful Wars sacked the castle. They held Hagthar for 9 months while Veluna's calls for dwarven assistance went unanswered. This event caused much resentment among Veluna's southern nobles and continues to plague relations between them and the Lortmil dwarves to this day.

The castle was rebuilt again with money borrowed from Viscount Wilfrick, but little true effort was put into the undertaking. The current castle is only a shadow of its former self, and its current lord, Farkaesh the Grim, is about as poor a soul as his castle. He inherited Hagthar from his father along with sizable lands in the Iron Wood, lands he quickly lost gambling, along with the money borrowed from Lord Wilfrick. Castle Hagthar and the lands in a twelve-mile radius are all that remain of the previous fief, and even this may soon be claimed by the Viscount in payment for Farkaesh's debts. Farkaesh is now nearing 80 and has lost any interest in life. He spends his remaining days staring dejectedly from his lonely battlements, surrounded by a score of retainers interested only in being named his heir. They dote over their miserable master and one must wonder if it is the place itself which draws such people to it.

## THE GNARLEY FOREST

The Gnarley is a wild forest, although much of it is claimed by various states. It is an ancient woodland, and its trees grow to immense size. The canopy blocks most of the light so that there is little brush throughout the forest, and it seems to lie in perpetual twilight. Where the Kron Hills enters the Gnarley, the cover is less dense with many secluded

glades and valleys. The forest is dominated by oak and ipp trees, with intermittent groves of dekla and yarpick trees. Thick ferns are found along the Jewel and Serault rivers. Flowering plants are rare, except in the less wooded highlands where bluebells and crocuses abound, but the beautiful ivoryblossom (a white-petalled, orchidlike plant) can be found throughout the rest of the forest. The Gnarley teems with small mammals and birds. Giant spiders are found in the northern spur of the forest, while bears and wolves prowl the rest. The most dangerous threats in the forest are owlbears, giant beetles, and marauding humanoids.

The fringes of the wood are patrolled by Verbobonc in the northwest, Dyvers and Greyhawk in the north and east, and Celene in the south, while the deep interior is home to many communities of free-spirited woodsmen and olvenkind. In the deepest and oldest parts of the forest, treants and faerie folk repel all trespassers. See the entry in the FtA Campaign Book for more information.

## Specific Locations in the Gnarley Forest

1. Lair of Chaustichlorinus: This huge mound of earth and vegetation is the home of an average sized, adult green dragon. Chaustichlorinus has only recently arrived (by dragon standards, at least) in this region. She was forced to flee from her lair in the Welkwood by olven adventurers from Celene. Nearly slain in the battle, Chaustichlorinus fled, carrying the body of the noble olven leader Freindilin Weirkein. She has spent the last few decades slumbering, restoring her strength, but has lately begun to make short flights to explore her new territory. Her treasure is rather small, consisting of only a few coins and gems, a longsword +2, and a shield +1, but the items belonged to Freindilin and the shield is inscribed with his family coat of arms. If this is returned to Celene, the bearers can be assured of the friendship of his relatives. (Note: The lair in the adventure "Verbeeg of the Gnarley Forest", Card #21 from *The City of Greyhawk* boxed set may be used in this scenario. If the party has previously defeated the verbeeg, assume Chaustichlorinus found the now-abandoned lair. If they have not played that adventure, then assume she either ate the verbeeg, the two monsters live in the same area, but have not yet encountered each other, or the verbeeg are now servants of the dragon.)

2. Sobanwych: This large village lies along the Forest High Road just as it emerges from the eastern edge of the Gnarley Forest. During the days before the Temple of Elemental Evil, Sobanwych was a thriving community which supported the trade from Celene, Verbobonc, the Kron Hills, and beyond. It had grown to a small town of about 800 inhabitants, many of whom have since relocated to either Caltaren or Dyvers. It is little more than a ghost town now, home to roughly 40 families who are clinging to the hope that trade will return. They are at once a downtrodden and hopeful lot and would be beholden to any who attempt to revive the Forest High Road trade. They fish the Serault River and its tributaries and farm the fertile land at the forest's edge. The villagers pay homage to Wenta, Goddess of the Autumn,

West Wind, and Harvest, and there is a large temple dedicated to her in the town square. Most of the town has been abandoned, but many buildings are still in good shape.

3. The Imeryds Run: The Imeryds Run is navigable by small riverboats up to the village of Nulb. Much traffic used to flow along this river, although it now is used mostly by river pirates. For most of its length it winds through the northern stretch of the Gnarley Forest until it empties just below a large island in the Ververdyva, between Oakham and Stalmaer. The land around its mouth is quite marshy, and the eastern, or Woodrun, channel of the Ververdyva is plagued by constantly shifting sandbars. While most river traffic on the Ververdyva makes its way along the western, or Gold, channel, many pirates use the Woodrun and the Imeryds Run to raid river traffic.

The Low Road crosses the Imeryds Run about 7 leagues north of Oakham. A ferry there allows travellers to cross the river and remain dry. The ferryman, Chub, is in the pay of the largest group of river pirates based in Nulb.

4. Carter's Meadow: This village of about 150 woodsmen lies along the Low Road about midway between the Ververdyva's bend. It is mostly settled by stout woodsmen who make a living supporting the many traders who use this route between Verbobonc and Dyvers. Large, spring-fed farms abound in the vicinity, supporting a surplus of fruits and vegetables. These are supplemented by various forms of game hunted in the surrounding forest. This activity, however, is carefully regulated by a score of Gnarley Rangers who patrol the region and call the village home. In fact, it is this group which often leads the hunts, carefully balancing them against the well-being of the forest.

The folk of Carter's Meadow are a very independent lot. Their village marks the border between Verbobonc, Dyvers, and Furyondy, and while they owe allegiance to none, they are prone to follow the will of Verbobonc. This is mainly due to the influence of Brewgen Quickstride, Lord of Oakham. The section of forest north of the Low Road is nominally claimed by the Lord of the Gold County in Furyondy and is patrolled by the Greenjerkin Rangers based in Stalmaer. They keep the area free from humanoid incursions, and keep even more careful watch on the activity of the Dyvers militia operating close by. The area south of the village is roughly divided by Verbobonc and Dyvers along the Imeryds Run; however, this is only a line on a map, as neither city extends its control more than a dozen or so miles from the forest's edge except along the Low Road.

## THE IRON WOOD

This small forest marks the boundary between the Viscounty and the Archclericy of Veluna. It is a very dense forest, known primarily for its abundant deklo trees which grow to heights of over 100 feet. There are also quite a few tracts of poplar and hickory trees.

The Iron Wood is largely free of dangerous animals, with the exception of the great wild boar called venati in the local Velondi dialect. The hunting of these beasts is a favorite

pastime of Veluna's southern nobles, who sponsor an official hunt, the Venatio, the last day of Planting each year. The slain boar provides the main course at the a feast celebrating Beory's day.

The southern fringe of the forest is logged by the people of Woodstock who craft wooden musical instruments which are famous throughout the Flanaess. They also produce an excellent wine called Deklin which is aged in vats made from hollowed-out deklo trunks. It is a very strong vintage, and it is prized from Bissel to Greyhawk.

The small section of forest which lies north of the Ververdyva River is the private reserve of Bennal Tyneman, Duke of the Reach, and it is constantly patrolled by a picked company of the famous Bootmen.

### Specific Locations in the Iron Wood

1. Tyneman's Chateau: This beautiful country villa was built to the exact specifications of the well-known hedonist Duke Tyneman. No expense was spared, and even the very landscape was altered to accommodate his design. A large lake, roughly circular and about a mile in diameter, was constructed in a large, low-lying meadow. A canal was cut from the Ververdyva in order to fill it, and it was stocked with an assortment of game fish, particularly trout. The chateau stands on a small hill overlooking the lake, called Heron Lake after the imported birds which grace its shores. It is an elegantly built chateau, surrounded by great lawns and gardens. A staff of over 200 people work constantly to maintain the grounds, and there is a bunkhouse for the company of Bootmen which guards the Chateau and the surrounding forest. The Duke likes to retire here and relax, forgetting the troubles of ruling his Duchy.

2. Morrin's Meadow: This small meadow is the home of a rather eccentric hermit named Morrin. At an early period in his life, he was a wayfaring adventurer until he was introduced to the ways of Olidammara. He quickly became a fanatical follower of the Laughing Rogue, whom he claims visits him occasionally. He has gone a bit mad, having lived alone as a hermit for decades, surrounded only by his animal friends. He now thinks he is the chosen one of Olidammara, and he awaits the time when Olidammara will send him forth to spread His message throughout the Flanaess. While he disapproves of the hunts conducted by Veluna's southern nobles, he realizes that there is little he can do to stop them. Instead, he spends most of his time devising non-lethal traps and tricks to interfere with the hunts, amusing himself to no end. He also frequents Woodstock, where he enjoys the musical revels so common there.

## TOWNSHIPS

### Mol

This small town of about 700 people straddles a dirty red tributary of the Nigb. Upstream mining by the local lord has caused significant erosion in the hills surrounding the Mol Run. The high iron content of the earth gives the stream its

muddy red color, but while it seems dirty, it in fact teems with large, ochre-colored catfish.

The township is the fief of Karadan Thurstix, a descendent of one of the original Aerdy nobles who was granted title to the land in 155 CY by Overking Leodek, son of Manshen. The Thurstix family has ruled the local region for over four centuries, even though they have been no friend to the gnomes. The animosity between them stems from incursions into the Kron Hills and the seizing of rich electrum mines from the local gnomes. Although they were already productive mines, the Thurstix nobles greedily expanded them in a fruitless attempt to extract greater quantities of electrum. Not only were they unsuccessful, but they caused many cave-ins and deaths, and destroyed quite a few of the original mines as well. The gnomes have never forgotten or forgiven this offense.

The township is relatively peaceful, although on the poor side. The people live off the land, and are only moderately taxed by their lords who seem to have learned from their past mistakes. The current lord is quite unhappy with the economic state of the township, especially regarding the constant refusal of the Kron Hills gnomes to do business in Mol. This is exacerbated by the failure of the rich southern mines, which were the township's only true source of wealth. Since most travel passes along the High Road through Etterboek, Mol has gradually experienced a decline in prosperity and population. The current lord is anxious to settle this problem, especially the dispute with the gnomes; however, he is too proud to apologize for his family's actions and refuses to return the now worthless southern mines to the gnomes who demand both.

The town shows the telltale signs of near poverty, and outsiders are warmly welcomed as their money is so crucial to local businesses. The road passes through the center of town, and bridges the stream by the Talking Catfish Inn. The service and quality are excellent, and the innkeeper, Ioudi, is very informed and talkative about affairs in the township.

### Oakham

The town of Oakham is second only to Verbobonc in population, and is home to about 4000 individuals. Its importance stems from three aspects: 1) its location along the Low Road, the main land trade route between Verbobonc and Dyvers; 2) its fine quality oak industry from which the town takes its name; and 3) its excellent port along the Ververdyva.

Not only has the town prospered greatly from the trade routes which pass through it, but its oak woodworks are famous from the City of Greyhawk to Chendl. The finest craftsmen, human and olven, dwell within the city and apprenticeships to them are highly sought by even veteran woodworkers. The seal of the Oakham Woodworkers Guild is enough to triple the price of a piece of furniture or other item. The guild is also unique in that it has its own branch of agents who patrol other towns and cities for fraudulent use of their name or seal. When such evidence is produced, the local magistrates have always been very cooperative in dealing with the perpetrators.



Although the town is constantly engaged in harvesting trees to support the craftsmen, they have maintained friendship with the inhabitants of the Gnarley Forest through a variety of means. Foremost of these is their annual treeplanting festival, the Planting, which takes place on the 4th of Planting during Luna's full moon. Nearly half of the township takes part in the planting of trees in deforested areas which are then blessed by druids of Obad-Hai, olven priests, and the high priestess of Beory who travels from Verbobonc for the event. Not only do the trees seem to grow more quickly than usual, they are always of nearly perfect health and beauty. Furthermore, the local lord, Mayor Brewgen Quickstride, is an ex-Gnarleyman, and he maintains goodwill with that group and has assured them of the benevolent intentions of the local industry. Finally, the pure elegance of the works turned out by the Oakham Woodworkers ensures their acceptance by the residents of the Gnarley Forest, especially the olvenfolk.

During the month of Wealsun the finest works of each guildmember are displayed in the Guildhall. Every citizen and visitor is free to cast his or her vote for the best piece, and the winner is announced on the summer solstice. The piece is sent to Verbobonc, where it is blessed by the High Priestess of Beory, and then delivered, with much fanfare, to the court of Celene as a gift from the Viscounty.

## Penwick

The town of Penwick is situated in the fertile lands of the southeastern plains. Many small creeks and natural springs provide ample water for the region's homesteads. The township is divided into a patchwork of farms, each owned by a vassal of the Mayor of Penwick. Many rows of trees cross the countryside, delineating the boundaries of each farm. There are no villages in the township, and the only urban center is the small town of Penwick itself. Situated away from both the High and the Low Roads, the town sees very little commercial trade or business. What excess foodstuffs exist are sold by the Mayor to the Viscount of Verbobonc to support the city's high demand.

Mayor Connor of Penwick is best described as a tired man. Now 60 years old, he has held his office for almost thirty years. He rarely makes an appearance in Verbobonc and prefers to leave political matters to his eldest son, Gaelsich.

Penwick was overrun by forces from the Temple of Elemental Evil during that conflict a score of years ago, and most of its citizens were slain by the ruthless humanoid hordes. After the Temple's defeat, Connor offered free land to all those who would become his vassals. Many of the militia and mercenaries decided to follow him, and they now make up the bulk of the township's citizenry. It is from their lowly origins that the township gained its nickname of the "low country." Although the township is economically quite poor, it is perhaps the strongest militarily as nearly all of its freemen are veteran soldiers, or their children.

The town has never fully recovered from the Elemental Wars. The mayor would like to erect fortifications along the Imeryds Run and the foothills of the Etters. However, money is scarce and the going is slow. Furthermore, river pirates,

ettercaps, and roving bands of humanoids make these ventures dangerous indeed. To aggravate matters more, a green dragon has recently moved into the area, and begun preying on livestock. Connor would greatly appreciate the help of any band of adventurers which could help him deal with these threats.

## Korbin

This secluded township occupies a large valley between the Kron Hills and the Iron Wood. It is predominantly an area of rolling plains and low hills, crossed by numerous streams which feed into the swift Clearwater River. The lands of the township are a combination of small freeholds and large vineyard estates. These estates all belong to prominent families, mostly relatives of the mayor. They support the township's primary industry and are the source of one of the greatest treasures in the Flanaess, a distinct brandy named after the township.

Korbin brandy is distinct in its method of production, taste, and look. Various types of brandies are combined in a number of ways to create the unique blends known as Korbin. Each of the estates has its own particular blends which vary in the number and ages of the brandies used. In fact, some estates claim to have vats of pure brandy dating back to the Republic. Korbin bottles are as important to the product as the brandy contained within them. Their diverse and remarkable colors and shapes are the creation of various gnome clans which live in the surrounding hills. Finally, each brand of Korbin has its own unique label embossed on the bottle. The cheapest brand, Golden Naga, sells for approximately 40 gp/bottle, while the two most expensive brands, Aerdy Royal and Olven Delight, sell for approximately 500 gp apiece. Needless to say, Korbin is a drink of the wealthy.

The township's income is further supplemented by the silver mines of Wyvern's Roost. Although traditionally part of Korbin, they are also claimed by Woodstock, a claim supported by earlier rulers of Verbobonc. However, Viscount Wilfrick, whose succession was supported by the mayor of Korbin, reversed that judgment, and awarded the mines to Korbin. The current mayor of Korbin, Thomas, is in the prime of his life, a capable administrator, and a clever politician. He is very aware of the lord of Woodstock's desire to reclaim the mines of Wyvern's Roost and has hired dwarven mercenaries in case of trouble.

## Woodstock

The township of Woodstock sits astride the North Low Road from Verbobonc, which continues into the Iron Wood and beyond into Veluna. It lies along the western border of the Viscounty and extends into the Iron Wood approximately a dozen miles. The hilly southern boundary of the township has long been contested with Korbin. To the north lies the Velderdyva, and many small hamlets dot its banks. Rich crops grow in abundance throughout the township, and the silver mines of Wyvern's Roost used to produce a modest amount of silver. However, the true wealth of the township lies in its position adjacent to the Iron Wood.

The walled town of Woodstock's main industries are both directly related to the Iron Wood. Woodstock is primarily known for its fine-crafted musical instruments. Although some are actually made by the halflings and centaurs of Littleburrow, most come from local artisans, many of whom learned their woodcarving skills in Oakham. Stringed instruments, particularly lyres, lutes and fiddles, are the most common, although flutes and drums are also sold in large numbers. The conservatories of Lydia and Olidammara boast the membership of many of the greatest bards in the Flanaess, and are the site of an annual festival during Wealsun. Poets, bards, and troubadours compete for prizes and entertain the elite of the Central Flanaess. Wealthy nobles and merchants from as far away as Greyhawk flock to attend, as do many of the land's wisest thieves, whose task is made that much easier by the massive quantity of Deklin drunk during the festival. Deklin-the production of which is Woodstock's other industry-is a very strong wine, fermented in kegs of aged hollow trunks of Deklo trees. Deklin is also exported in large quantities and has traditionally been of high demand in Bissel.

The current lord, Duntings, has only recently inherited the township from his regent uncle. His father was killed at Emridy Meadows when Duntings was only 6, and his uncle Alfrick ruled as regent until last year, when he was killed during the festival by an unknown thief. Rumors abound that Duntings had him killed because Alfrick was not going to step down, but they have not been proven. He is a very high-spirited and rash man who spent many years away adventuring, returning only a few weeks before Alfrick's death, but he has made clear his intentions to regain the silver mines of Wyvern's Roost-lost to Korbin many years ago-one way or another.

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Finally, a special thanks is called for, to all those on Greytalk who offered their criticisms, advice, and support. This is for you.

Of Oerth and Aitar

# INCABULOUS: LORD OF EVILS

By Russell S. Timm

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## Incabulos

(Black-Rider, Lord of Pestilence, Master of the Bitter Cup, Lord of Evils)

### Greater Power of The Grey Waste

**Portfolio:** Evil, Plagues, Sickness, Famine, Drought, Disasters, Nightmares**Aliases:** Sevelkhar the Waster (Bakluni)**Domain Name:** The Grey Waste/Gholgorahk, The Socket of Woe**Superior:** None**Allies:** Nerull**Foes:** Geshtai, Pelor, Phyton, Rao, Sotillion, St. Cuthbert, Zodal**Symbol:** Eye of Possession**Wor. Align:** LE, NE, CE

Incabulos (in-CAB-u-loss) is the power of evil sendings, feared by good and evil folk alike. The black-cloaked rider of the nightmares delights in woe and wickedness, and enjoys being feared as much as being revered. Incabulos has few worshipers in the Flanaess, but many seek to propitiate him with offerings. This is especially true in lands ravaged by famine, where disease has spread from unburied bodies on battlefields, and where fear grips the common people. Despicable folk of all sorts venerate Incabulos, respecting his power and malignancy. Religious depictions of Incabulos only begin to approach the true hideousness of his horrible visage, deformed body, and skeletal hands.

Incabulos despises Rao and Pelor, and maintains a loose alliance with Nerull for the purposes of opposing these two Greater Powers. The other deities he considers foes are of little consequence to him. It should be noted that Incabulos is known to the Bakluni as Sevelkhar the Waster, Master of Famine and Drought, the Poisoner of Wells. In the Bakluni culture, Sevelkhar is the eternal opponent of Geshtai, and both are viewed as subservient to Istus, Our Lady of Fate. This is contrary to the common belief of the Flanaess, where Incabulos is one of the few Greater Powers, an equal of Istus, and vastly more powerful than Geshtai, a Lesser Power.

### Incabulos' Avatar

(Priest 35, Thief 20, Necromancer 35)

Incabulos appears as a horrible looking man of indeterminate age, with skin tinged a sickly blue. He has a twisted, nightmarish visage, deformed body, and skeletal appendages. His pupilless eyes of dull yellow cast a harrowing gaze upon all he views, and the smell of death and decay linger in the air wherever he goes. Clad in filthy,

ragged robes of dead black lined with cloth of sickly orange and trimmed in nauseating moss green, he roams the Astral, Ethereal, and Prime Material Plane, the last during darkness only. He rides a huge nightmare of maximum hit points when it pleases him to do so, and he is accompanied by six of the strongest night hags likewise mounted.

Incabulos may cast spells from all schools and all spheres. He detests the presence of bright light, and will not use any spells which create light as their primary effect (e.g. *continual light*) and is loath to use spells which create intense light as a side effect (e.g. *fireball* and *lightning bolt*).

AC -9; MV 15 Fl 45 HP 393 THAC0 10 #AT 2

DMG: 1d6+6 or 2d4+6

MR: 95% SZ M (7 feet)

STR:18 DEX:25 CON:21 INT:20 WIS:20 CHA:-3 (24 on the Grey Waste)

Spells P: 14/14/12/11/10/10/9 W: 9/9/9/9/9/9/8/8

Saves: PPDM 2, RSW 3, PP 5, BW 7, Sp 4

**Special Att/Def:** Although Incabulos rarely enters melee combat (perhaps considering it trivial and a waste of time), it is not due to any lack of ability. He delights in causing fear and misery, and amuses himself with those foolish enough to challenge him. He often toys with mortals, imparting a lesson in wisdom that is often the last one such lesser beings ever learn.

Incabulos has the abilities of a specialist necromancer, including one additional spell per spell level, a -1 penalties to opponents saving throws versus his necromantic spells, a +2 to saves versus necromantic magic, a special *speak with dead*-like spell ability that may be invoked at will, and a +2 to saves versus undead attacks. He has none of the weaknesses of the common necromancer, however, and may cast spells from any school or sphere.

Incabulos may only be affected by +4 or greater weapons, and he regenerates 2 hp per round. Incabulos has several other specialized attack forms in addition to his considerable spell capabilities. Once per day he may cast an improved *sleep* (W1) spell that affects twice as many HD/levels of creatures as the wizard spell, and may also affect up to 8HD/8th level creatures. Once per day he may also cast permanent *sleep* spell upon any creature he touches (a successful save vs. spells negates, mind affecting bonuses apply). Only an exorcism, *limited wish*, *wish* or similar magic will awaken the creature so affected.

If forced into melee, Incabulos is more than capable of making his opponent regret such action, being a master of the quarterstaff and bastard sword. His favorite weapon is his *staff of wounding and withering*, said to be made of a petrified piece of the infinite tree Yggdrasil and covered with the screaming faces of tortured souls. Combining the powers of a *staff of withering* and a reversed *staff of curing*, this staff has no fewer than 60 charges, and only Incabulos may recharge it. This weapon is extremely powerful, affecting any creature be it animal, plant, or extraplanar in nature. It is not known if another being may wield it, for there is no recorded instance of anyone or anything doing so.

Incabulos may also brandish a great bastard sword in battle if necessary or advantageous. Known as Evil Edge, this odd looking blade of enchanted flint from Hades is equivalent to a bastard *sword of wounding +4*; any creature struck by it must save vs. poison at -4 or die within 1 round from an insidious and horrible wasting disease.

Should Incabulos deign his opponents not worth the effort, or in the extremely rare cases he is being overwhelmed, he may gate in 2-8 night hags or 5-20 hordlings once per day (but not both, or any combination of the two). These creatures serve willingly.

## Other Manifestations

Manifestations of Incabulos are much more commonly seen than his avatar, especially since Incabulos will not send his avatar to a Prime Material Plane world during daylight hours. This is not to say that his manifestations are that common, though Incabulos will not hesitate to remind his priests of the price of failure, afflicting them with horrible nightmares, or rarely, a disease of some sort. (An interesting side note to this is that any priest of Incabulos who has renounced their worship of him has died within one year of a horrible wasting disease. Such priests are said by others of the faith to have "Evil Edge hanging o'er them"). Incabulos will also manifest as a bronze Eye of Possession, through which he may speak or cast spells.

Incabulos is served hags of all kinds, particularly night hags, and hordlings. He may dispatch other creatures as his ambassadors, including incarnates of covetousness, envy, gluttony, lust, and sloth; maruts; dust and salt mephits; nightmares; tanar'ri (bulezua, succubi); vargouille; yeth hounds; vaporighu; wastrels; bats (common, large, and huge); cloaklers; feyrs; ghouls; formorian giants; grimlocks; lycantroues of all species; mummies; gibbering mouthers; magebanes; marrashi; parasites (all); ghost (ker); great ghuls; ghul-kin; dream-spawn (all); dreamweavers; dream stalkers; and boowray. He sometimes show his disfavor with defaced coins or scarred gems, upon which the victim can make out the symbol of Incabulos in the scratches. The Black-Rider sometimes endows these with the ability to *cause disease* if they are given away as currency.

## The Church

**Clergy:** Clerics (30%), Mystics (5%), Shamans (5%), Specialty Priests (60%)

**Alignment:** LE, NE, CE

**Turn Undead:** C: No, My: No, Sha: No, SP: No

**Cmdnd Undead:** C: Yes, My: No, Sha: Yes, SP: Yes

All clergy of Incabulos receive the religion (common) proficiency for free.

Those who worship this power are intensely secretive; many clergy members are paranoid to the point of insanity. Fear and threats are used to maintain secrecy and the obedience of junior priests. Priests of Incabulos revel in suffering, slow torture, and inflicting disease and misfortune (the grander the scale, the better). Many priests also become

afflicted with lycanthrope on purpose, considering it advantageous to their position in the church.

Worship of Incabulos is certainly not common, though one might be surprised at the number of people who plea and propitiate him to avoid the attention of the Master of Disasters. Temples dedicated to Incabulos, be they in enlightened or forsaken lands, are always subterranean affairs, and usually in desolate areas. It is the opinion of most members of the faith that "out of sight is out of mind", as even other evil priesthoods (notably Nerull's, who occupy a similar niche in the food chain, so to speak) revile their existence.

Clergy members are known as Incabulites, both within the faith and to outsiders. Clergy are as likely to work alone as they are to work in a group, and a group of clergy in a given area are collectively known as a coven. Another similarity between Incabulites and hags is the ability of higher level clergy members to create *eyes of possession*; these items are similar in power to *hag eyes*, and given to agents of the priesthood. Such items are not bestowed casually, and great care is taken to ensure that the bearer cannot reveal the source of such an item, through means both magical and mundane.

Members of all sexes and races are welcome to join the faith. Humans dominate the clergy, and comprise almost all of the specialty priests (who are known as Pathogens) and mystics who venerate the Lord of Evil Sendings. Most clerics are also human, though there is the occasional half-orc, half-ogre, orc, or hobgoblin. Specialty priests are addressed as Ambassador by peers and by the title "Your Malignancy" by juniors. Clerics are addressed as Emissary by peers and by the title "Your Virulence" by juniors. Within a coven, senior members address initiates as Larvae, with higher ranking clergy members usually awarding themselves the titles (in ascending rank); Acolyte, Deacon, Vicar, and finally Bishop. Heads of covens are referred to as Patriarchs or Matriarchs, regardless of level. Such titles may be expanded with self-important add-ons, and therefore one might hear a high ranking cleric referred to as "His Most Dreaded Virulence, Patriarch of Pestilence and Famine, Bishop So-And-So.." Many of these titles are not official bestowals by the faith as a whole, and recognition of status by other clergy members can lead to deadly internecine strife.

**Dogma:** Clergy of this power are taught to spread as much evil as possible in the world, and be vigilant in opposing those who seek to do good. Priests are also instructed to prey upon the weaknesses of body and mind of other beings, and utilize these weaknesses to their advantage. Clergy of Incabulos derive great satisfaction in formenting fear and hate, and making others commit evils for them. Members of the faith are told to always seek to "put a dark shroud", as it were, over the true cause of great natural disasters, to ensure that Incabulos receives his due tribute.

**Day-to-Day Activities:** Most priests spend much of their time increasing their personal power, influence, and material wealth coupled to acts of evil in the name of Incabulos. Such acts include kidnapping, slave-running, arms-

dealing, and undead-brokering. Priests of this power also love manipulating people for their own use, using threats as well as magically interfering with the integrity of people who might be of use to them. Many priests also devote much time to researching diseases; what causes them, how they can make them more effective, and how they can best be delivered to large populations. To this end, such priests often work with insects and animals, such as pigeons, bats, and of course, rats. More inventive priests may work with exotic vectors such as slimes, oozes, and even non-sentient undead. Clergy of this power are always plotting schemes to cause misery among the masses, and are quick to capitalize on any natural disasters of the region, spreading rumors and encouraging placation to the Lord of Evils.

**Holy Days/Important Ceremonies:** Services to honor Incabulos have weird humming and droning chants in the background. Multiple evils are celebrated by the faithful, while flickering black candles dimly light the altar areas, sending a continuous thick and wretched smelling smoke into the air. All vessels used in these ceremonies are of old bronze, bloodstone, or carnelian. There are no set times for daily or weekly worship, as Incabulos encourages his worshipers to commit acts of evil with as high of a frequency as possible. Many devotees keep their faith secret, and such secrecy is encouraged by high level clergy members. Therefore, holy days and ceremonies celebrated by the faith as a whole are few and far between.

Like many other evil faiths in the Flanaess, Incabulites celebrate the Festival of the Blood Moon, which occurs on the 11th of Coldeven. Incabulites usually make a point of spreading their particular brand of evil, while worshiping in long ceremonies involving sacrifice and the like. An interesting addendum to this is that Incabulites also take particular pleasure in engendering the hate felt by other faiths during this time; it is generally held by members of the faith that one may receive the blessing of Incabulos by taking the life of worshipers of another faith who actively oppose what Incabulos stands for, be they good or evil.

The Feast of Famine also occurs during the winter months in some isolated regions of the Flanaess. Clergy members go without food on this day, and certain ascetics may fast for a week. During this time, when surplus food is low, even the poorest farmer is wise to set aside an offering of food to please Incabulos. If not, clergy members in the area may receive a vision, commanding them to visit those villages not paying proper respect; such visits often entail burning granaries and killing livestock, along with painting the symbol of Incabulos on some buildings, a sober reminder to the greedy and foolish.

Another important holy week in the faith of Incabulos only occurs once every decade, and is known the Eye Convene. Here all the higher level priests of Incabulos meet in several areas throughout the Flanaess to contemplate in the presence of a manifestation (or rarely an avatar) of Incabulos. The purpose of this is to coordinate region-wide plots and schemes, to result in a disaster of some type on a grand scale, be it a plague, famine, or drought.

**Major Centers of Worship:** The priesthood of Incabulos is scattered throughout the Flanaess, with no major recognized hierarchy. Major centers of worship only remain so for as long as their exists opportunity to sway the hearts and minds of common folk in places of despair.

**Affiliated Orders:** There are no knightly or military orders dedicated to Incabulos. There does exist, however, a group known as the Bronze Cabal, who work with and communicate with clergy and representatives of Incabulos. Consisting of some sages, as well as some mages who have interests in areas of necromancy and disease, members work more towards the knowledge of disease and the causes behind catastrophes such as famine and drought. The use of such knowledge, however, is up to the one possessing it. In addition, many hags work with agents of Incabulos in spreading mayhem, and the odd werecreature may also work with a priest or priests of Incabulos.

**Priestly Vestments:** All clergy wear vestments of dull black embroidered with the Eye of Possession in verdigrised bronze, repeated in dull orange on the robes of higher level clergy. Name level specialty priests have orange trimming, whereas name level clerics have green trimming. All priests possess special robes known as soulshrouds awarded by a superior. Once a priest has been given one, he or she will keep it until death (and possibly beyond!), unless lost or destroyed. Many priests often wear ritual masks with horrid visages as well.

**Adventuring Garb:** Incabulites, being practical and cautious to the point of paranoia, are masters of disguise and try to blend in with the culture of the area they live in. To this extent they wear simple clothing, never trying to draw attention to themselves if possible. Some priests do have a penchant for acquiring jewelry and art objects which are made of bronze or feature carnelian or bloodstone. Priests of Incabulos don't possess the greatest hygiene and are generally a dirty and unkempt lot.

Although Incabulites are not inclined to be drawn into open combat, they are careful to wear armor and take any other protective measures necessary.

## Specialty Priests (Pathogens)

**Requirements:** Constitution 13, Wisdom 11

**Prime Req:** Wisdom

**Alignment:** NE

**Weapons:** Staff, Bastard Sword, Dagger, Sap, Garrote

**Armor:** Any non-metal armor

**Major Spheres:** All, Animal, Astral, Guardian, Healing,

**Necromantic,** Summoning, Thought, Weather

**Minor Sphere:** Charm, Divination, Protection

**Magical Items:** As Priest

**Req. Profs:** None

**Bonus Profs:** None

Area of Effect: 1 creature

Saving Throw: Neg.

- Pathogens may be of any race, though most are human
- Beginning at 1st-level, all Pathogens are immune to natural diseases, including those caused by creatures such as green slime. Magical diseases still afflict these priests as normal, though these priests receive a +4 to any save they have to make against disease. In addition, any disease cast by a Pathogen may not automatically be healed by the use of a *cure disease* spell. Rather, an opposed check similar to that described under *dispel magic* must be performed. If the attempt to cure the disease is not successful, that particular healer may not attempt to cure the disease until he or she attains a new level. (Of course, that may be too late for the victim.) At 4th-level, Pathogens may cast *cloak of fear* (P4) upon themselves once per day.
- At 5th-level, Pathogens may cast *hypnotism* (W1) 1x/day.
- At 7th-level, Pathogens may cast *contagion* (W4) 1x/day
- At 8th-level, Pathogens may cast *wierding sleeptouch* 1x/day.
- At 10th-level, any disease inflicted by a Pathogen becomes even more potent; if an attempt to magically cure the disease is made, and the caster fails, then he or she not only may not attempt again until gaining a level, but he or she also contracts the disease, and may not cure himself or herself of that affliction! (This can be absolutely lethal to small isolated communities with only one low level cleric or priest.)
- At 13th-level, Pathogens may cast *mummy rot* (W5) 1x/day.
- At 18th-level, Pathogens may cast *uncontrolled weather* (W9) 1x/week.
- At 20th-level, any disease inflicted by a Pathogen may not be cured by any means short of a *limited wish*, *wish* or a *heal* spell cast by a priest of at least 20th-level.

By means of a simple gesture and a word or two, this spell enables the priest to touch the intended victim with devastating effect. If the victim fails a save vs. spells at -3, he or she immediately goes unconscious, and enters a deep sleep. This sleep is permanent until magically dispelled, and creatures do age normally, and may even waste away while under this spell's effect. Such passing is far from peaceful though, as the victim undergoes horrible nightmares and visions of the worst sort; this is readily observable to others as the victim rolls around, perspires, and even talks in their sleep. This spell also ignores armor, and therefore only magical protections and Dexterity bonuses to Armor Class apply.

## Incabulite Spells

It should be noted that, in addition to the following spells, Incabulos also grants transmute *cloud of pestilence* (P4, F&A pg.154), *plague* (P4, FtA card #6), *water to dust* (P6), *earthquake* (P7), and *tsunami* (P7, PO:S&M) to all of his clergy, regardless of sphere restrictions.

## Wierding Sleeptouch

(Enchantment/Charm)

Sphere: Thought

Level: 5

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: Permanent

Casting Time: 1

## Gateway to Adventure

# A Slight Distraction

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## Introduction

This adventure is written for a group of characters of 2nd through 5th level, preferably of good to neutral alignment, and well balanced across the classes. It can be easily customized for higher or lower level characters. This adventure is especially good at introducing a new player or character to a campaign, as the player can be creating and developing his character while the rest of the group attempts to rescue the new character from the kidnappers.

The adventure was written to take place in the city of Redspan, in the Duchy of Tenh, during Harvester 585 CY, but could easily be placed in just about any city in the northern Flanaess. The city should be fairly good sized, with a mediocre watch at best, and all the guilds one would expect in such a city, including a source of mercenaries and an assassins guild.

## Background

Contrary to the events portrayed in WGR5, Iuz the Evil, Redspan has not yet been overtaken by the forces of the Old One in this author's campaign. The city is occupied by the Stonefists who have overrun Tenh, and the Tenha who have succumbed to Fist rule. The western side of the city is haunted by the ghosts of those Tenha generals who committed suicide when the Fists overcame them, and a few followers of Iuz have taken up residence there also. It is not yet the wretched place described in WGR5.

The PCs have been resting in the Duchy of Tenh for some weeks, training in new skills and to new levels of capability. While in Redspan, they have taken up residence at the Witch's Legs, a small inn and tavern on the east side of town.

The PCs have taken up with the Fists and few remaining Tenhas who now occupy this walled city.

## The Witch's Legs

The Witch's Legs is a pleasant tavern, run for the last 16 years by a pleasant Tenha in his fifties, Grynem Beret. In his many years running this hostel on the edge of the Bandit Lands, Grynem has learned to deal with pretty much anyone. He is not a "good" man per sé, but one who likes order and making money. His attitude can be summed up in "If it doesn't hurt my business, it's all right by me". By no means does this give people free rein in his inn. He knows that reputation is very important in his business, and those patrons who offend others easily drive away customers and profit.

The inn has three floors, the top two of which contain rooms for rent. The ground floor consists of the Common Room, a private dining room, the kitchen, and Grynem's rooms. The south wall of the inn is an old stone wall, and the

remainder of the inn is wooden frame with a plank and thatch roof.

Unfortunately for Grynem, he cannot see far enough to perceive the dangers around him. He knows that attractive serving girls draw patrons loose with their purse, and has hired four girls in their teens to work in the common room.

- Tasha Hundare is a slim blonde girl of seventeen, who stand 5'8" tall and is quite obviously descended from barbarian stock. Quick to smack the hand of a patron who is getting too "friendly", she will be pleasant to a polite patron, and can be a source of innumerable rumours to a good tipper.
- Grete Inach is a busty brunette girl of bronze complexion who is a vivacious and flirting type, and is nineteen years of age. One never really knows what Grete is getting at or what her intentions are, but she does enjoy the company of rugged and handsome young men.
- Rial Cziarn is an somewhat attractive girl of seventeen, coppery skin tones and dark hair, but she is not as eye-catching as her co-workers. However, her quick wit and sense of humour make her a favorite of many regulars, who flirt and joke all night.
- Leis Jaakan is a pretty and out of place girl. Sixteen and standing a slight 5'2" tall, one cannot miss her in the common room. Red haired and pale of face, she is a quiet girl who gives the patrons shy smiles and is extremely polite. The other girls like her, and feel protective of this youngest member of their "crew".

Leis is the source of Grynem's impending problems. She has become involved with a young man from the west side of town: Faisal ibn Som Nyskos. Faisal is a young priest of Iuz, and the nephew of Said ibn Fal Nyskos, a notorious mage/priest of Iuz know in the region around Stoink and Riftcrag, and rumored to be a ranking member of the Boneshadow. He has been using Leis to learn about potentially meddlesome or disruptive visitors to Redspan.

Grynem's other staff consist of:

- Maersk the cook, who bosses even Grynem around. At first one would think they are married, but they are not.
  - Nasran the undercook, a small man who does much of the messy work in the kitchen, and has a running dialogue of insults going at all times with Maersk. Nasran is very observant, but is difficult to talk to because of Maersk's almost constant demands.
  - Acera the chambermaid, a woman of about 30 who cleans the rooms of the inn. She is pleasant, but withdrawn, having lost all her family in the Wars. She is quiet and difficult to talk to, and keeps her head down when altercations erupt.
- There are some regular patrons of the tavern who may be of some use to the PCs.
- Garrand Stormfist, a warrior of good spirits and fairly good ethics. He likes his drink, and carousing is more important than war ever could be. He is protective of

"his" girls here at the Witch's Legs, and often accompanied by a small group of his men.

- Gil Ferth; once a travelling bard, he now lives in Redspan and tells stories. He is about fifty-five and has known Gryn for over 25 years.
- Hendrik One-Handed is a retired mercenary, and resident of this town. He spent much of his career raiding the Great Kingdom from Ratic with the barbarians. He gets along with the Fists, and had no reason to flee when they came. He does not like Iuz at all however.
- Varrus of the Poor March, a half-orc with a sense of humour and a glib tongue, this warrior is also a priest of the Laughing Rogue. Those who know him are wiser than to play cards or dice with him present.
- Dara Sindara, a mysterious and exotic woman from the far west. She is a priestess of Istus, though none here know it. They think her a merchant who has taken a liking to this town. In truth, she is watching this place carefully, as omens have indicated that Redspan's fate and that of the Flanaess itself are linked.

## The Plan

Faisal ibn Som Nyskos has been questioning Leis about the patrons of the Witch's Legs, and has identified the PCs as people that should be "removed" from the scene before they get in the way of his scheming. He has hired some thugs from the mercenaries' guild, specifically people who are not locals or Fists, to do his dirty work. The thugs' objective is to kidnap one or more PCs and take them to an abandoned shop where Faisal's minions will take the PCs to be sold into slavery in Rookroost.

Alternatively, Faisal ibn Som Nyskos is totally unaware of the PCs, and his intended victim(s) is someone else totally different -- the previous occupant of the PCs' room, who left Redspan under the cover of night, and without paying his bill. Gryn decides to make the best of a bad situation, and offers it to the PCs. If the party has been staying at the inn for some time, he may offer it to them at a slight discount, particularly if the party is bunked two or three to a room (he'll still make a small profit off of it).

The thugs decide to break into the inn via the second-floor windows and kidnap the PCs. Unfortunately, they are not particularly bright and case the joint ahead of time by becoming regulars in the tavern. Also, they do not properly determine which rooms the PCs occupy, and break into one room occupied by the PCs (two characters per room) and a neighboring room occupied by a third individual. This third individual is a good way of introducing a new player or character to the campaign.

## The Kidnapping

The thugs climb up the outside of the inn with ropes hung from the roof, and the help of a *silence* spell from a ring given to them by Faisal. The ring is a special *ring of spell storing* that can only contain a single spell at a time, but can be used by anyone.

The thugs will try to attack the PCs silently if possible, and try to beat them into unconsciousness without killing them (due to their ineptitude, only one-half of the damage sustained will be temporary, instead of the three-quarters normal to subdual attacks). Afterwards, they will try to steal the PCs' equipment, unless they are discovered (which they likely will be, having cast the *silence* spell on the window, not on one of them...).

They will drop the PCs out the window, where they will be "caught" by the thug leader, Mule. They will sustain 2d4 points of damage from this "catch".

**Thugs (5):** Hu/m/F0; AC 8 (leather); MV 12; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (clubs); SA nil; SD nil; AL NE; XP 35

**Mule:** Hu/m/F1; AC 7 (leather, dex); MV 12; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (mace); SA nil; SD nil; AL CE; XP 65

The thugs will take the PCs to the abandoned shop as instructed. The thugs' directions are to leave the PCs here, bound and gagged. If one or more of the thugs has been captured, the victims will be moved within a few hours to a new location. The thugs have been paid partly in advance, with the promise of more funds to be delivered.

## The Investigation

The remaining PCs will need to find some leads as to the location of their cohorts. They have two days until Faisal takes their friends upriver to Rookroost.

Obviously, Leis is the best place to start, but they don't know that. It will be necessary to question many persons and be careful whom they offend. Obviously, matters will be somewhat easier if one or more of the thugs is identified or captured.

The thugs will get worried if the PCs are too close to finding them, and the mercenaries guild may get nervous if it is found that they are also working as would be assassins/kidnappers and infringing on that guild's business.

The assassins guild may get suspicious of any investigation and take exception. They would not be so sloppy, but because their image is at stake they may attempt to stop the PCs.

The following information may be gathered:

- Gryn Beret recognizes any description of the thugs, but doesn't know their names or any other personal information. He has seen them speaking to a Bakluni man on several different occasions. The man was much better dressed than they were, and spoke with some authority (Gryn either doesn't remember or couldn't hear what was said).
- Tasha Hundare noticed the thugs on several occasions, but only knows that they weren't Fists. She is on good terms with many of the Stonefisters.
- Grete Inach served the men most of the time, but they always seemed furtive and vaguely guilty, and she spent



as little time as possible near them. She noticed they were very interested in the other patrons, and occasionally one or another would wander up to the second or third floor for no obvious reason.

- Rial Cziarn knows the most about the thugs. Other regulars had commented on them, calling them "bandit rabble" and "sell-thugs". They sometimes met with a Bakluni man called Faisal, who had numerous contacts "out west" (meaning anywhere west of the Zumker River).
- Leis Jaakan has seen the thugs, and knows they sometimes worked for Faisal ibn Som Nyskos. She insists Faisal isn't engaged in anything criminal, and that he stays on the west side of town to give in solitude for meditation and contemplation. She knows Faisal has a powerful uncle somewhere near the Phostwood.
- Maersk doesn't remember or know anything about the thugs. Faisal she recalls only because he once requested some unusual spices on a dish, spices she didn't have.
- Nasran knows the thugs by reputation, and that they've recently taken a job for a Bakluni named Faisal. He heaps insults and abuse upon anyone who asks.
- Acera has seen a few of the thugs upstairs, studying doors and concentrating very hard, as if trying to remember something (they were trying to remember where the windows were on the outside of the building). She has seen Leis with Faisal, but didn't think it was any of her business, and won't bring it up unless prompted.
- Garrand Stormfist didn't notice the thugs or Faisal, but suggests contacting the mercenaries guild, within which he has numerous contacts.
- Gil Ferth noticed the thugs and Faisal, and knows some information about the Bakluni: that he is a priest; that his uncle is Said ibn Fal Nyskos, an infamous wizard; and that Faisal has numerous contacts in the Bandit Kingdoms. He knows a few people in the mercenaries guild, and can even arrange for a meeting with the assassins guild if the party knows how to ask.
- Hendrik One-Handed knows the thugs, and can give the PCs their names. He also knows they were doing a lot of work for a Bakluni, who operated out of the western side of the city. Hendrik must be bribed to reveal any information. He will arrange a meeting for them with the mercenaries guild if enough money is offered.
- Varrus of the Poor March played a few card games with the thugs (they lost badly, and in poor spirits). He avoided Faisal, but saw Leis walking with him on several occasions.
- Dara Sindara noticed the thugs, but dismissed them as minor pawns of a greater master. She can correctly identify Faisal as a priest of Iuz.
- The mercenaries guild is largely unhelpful, unless very well-paid. If the PCs seem disinclined to ask many questions, the guild may steer them towards the thugs, in

the hope that the party will "take care of" the thugs and thus hide any activities that might draw the attention of the assassins guild. If the PCs are rude, pushy, and don't pay well, the thugs will be forewarned, and may come seeking the party, to get rid of them.

- The assassins guild is very interested in meeting and sharing information about anything the PCs have uncovered. They will freely reveal Faisal's hiding place, the abandoned shop where the kidnapping victims are kept, and the thugs' lair. They will let the PCs work unopposed, but under constant surveillance. If the PCs successfully confront the thugs, and/or rescue the victims, the assassins will move in and attempt to kill any surviving thugs, party members, and kidnapping victims as a warning to anyone else thinking of infringing on their territory. Faisal will escape successfully, unless the DM rules otherwise.

## Conclusion

There are many outcomes to this scenario, some of which are positive, and some negative.

- The PCs find their friends before Faisal takes them to Rookroost, and everyone goes on their merry way. The DM should try to have Faisal escape, as he has the potential to become a good nemesis NPC for the party.
- The PCs fail to find their friends in time, and must follow Faisal to Rookroost.
- The PCs raise the ire of one or more guilds, and find themselves hunted down and disposed of.
- The PCs fail to find their friends and fail to find the trail, leaving their friends to be sold into slavery. This is not a preferred option, but if the players are running multiple characters can make for an interesting future adventure (search and rescue from the slave mines or something similar).

The statistics for Faisal and his minions (mostly men-at-arms and low level fighters) may be fashioned by individual DMs to the difficulty level of their campaign. He also has a small group of undead creatures at his command, mostly zombies and ghouls.

**Faisal ibn Som Nyskos:** Hu/m/Pr4 (Iuz); AC 5 (chain, dex); MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 (*dagger*+2); S11 D6 C16 I10 W17 Ch8; SA spells; SD spells; AL CE; SP Chaos, Charm, Combat, Divination\*, Healing (rev), Necromantic (rev), Summoning, Sun (rev); PW may cast *change self* (W1) once per day at will, and has +2 bonus to saving throws versus spells cast by good-aligned casters.

Of Oerth and Astar

## Hextor: The Herald of Hell

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### Hextor

(Champion of Evil, Herald of Hell, Scourge of Battle)

#### Intermediate Power of Acheron, LE

**Portfolio:** War, Discord, Conflict, Fitness, Massacres, Tyranny

**Aliases:** None

**Domain Name:** Avalas/The Scourge

**Superior:** None

**Allies:** Erythnul

**Foes:** Heironeous, Lords of the Nine (Archdukes of Hell), Pholtus, Zilchus

**Symbol:** Six red arrows, fanning outward or held in a gauntlet

**Wor. Align:** LE, LN, NE

Hextor (HEKS-tohr) is the six-armed Oeridian god of war and discord, and the patron of evil warriors. He is commonly worshiped in the lands of the Great Kingdom. Hextor differs from his bloodthirsty ally, Erythnul, in his organized approach to warfare and bloodshed. Additionally, his worshipers tend to be members of the evil eastern armies instead of bandits and raiders motivated by bloodlust. Numerous assassins and mercenaries also worship Hextor, as do many evil nobles and tyrants.

The Herald of Hell is said to be fearless in battle, even when outmatched. He is combative and powerful, often moving those around him to strife and conflict with his mere presence. He has an interesting relationship with Erythnul, another god of combative tendencies and great power. The two would seem to be opposites, as one promotes the violence and bloodlust of battle, and the other is a strategic planner and conqueror. Long ago they forged an agreement, saying that neither would move against the other, and if the other fell into times of need, they would be aided by the other. Trust is foreign to these two powers, and both expect the treaty to be broken without warning. At present both are exceptionally powerful, their strength boosted by the chaos and bloodshed of the Flanaess-wide Greyhawk Wars.

Hextor is disliked by the Churches of Pholtus and Zilchus, both of whom were greatly reduced in power in the Great Kingdom. The worship of Pholtus was banned completely from the lands of Aerdy (as described in Ivid the Undying) by Overking Ivid V, and the church of Hextor no longer faces any religious opposition within those lands. Zilchus's priests have also been limited within the Aerdy lands, though not to the extent of the followers of Pholtus. Their temporal power remains strong, however, through their influence on the mercantile house of Darnen.

It is said that Hextor is also despised by the Lords of the Nine, the Archdukes of Hell. Tales say that he was once (and some say still is) one of their devilish number, but was banished for his metamorphosis into a true god. He fled to Acheron, where he marshals his armies across his iron realm, The Scourge. Other tales tell of the Archdukes aid in Hextor's ascension. His priests neither deny nor confirm these tales, but they do say that their god was not banished from the Hells, but departed on his own accord. It is known that Hextor occasionally travels to the Hells, and even visits the plane of Mechanus, or Nirvana, on occasion.

Of all the Champion of Evil's foes, none are more hated by Hextor than Heironeous, his good-aligned sibling. When they were offered a choice of paths to follow by the other gods, Heironeous followed the path of Law and Goodness. Hextor, who had always hated his brother, chose the path of Evil, just to spite Heironeous.

The two appeared evenly matched, but Heironeous was continually victorious over his brother. Tales say that the Archdukes, anxious to increase their power, came to Heironeous and offered him their infernal power. Hextor accepted and was granted his six arms and other, less obvious, powers. With these limbs he was nearly invincible in combat, able to stand against Heironeous and any other god. The Archdukes were too clever, though, for with this newfound power, Hextor was quick to break his ties to the Hells, thus depriving the Archdukes of the powerful tool they had desired.

Hextor is malicious and spiteful, going to great lengths to harm or slight anyone who has offended him. He is also recognized as one of the foremost generals among the gods, with strategic and tactical skills unmatched save for Heironeous. Hextor's arrogance is great indeed, but he is not so proud that he thinks himself invulnerable to sedition. He sees threats where they do not exist, and will end such "threats" quickly and violently.

On the Outer Planes, Hextor resides on an enormous iron block which forever drifts through the void of Acheron. A great iron-clad fortress serves as his capital, and endless armies of his faithful wage war against each other and anyone else that comes within their reach. In a twisted mockery of Valhalla, any who die in these battles are raised again to fight anew - only as skeletons and zombies. The subjects of Hextor's realm live, and die, for battle.

#### Hextor's Avatar (Fighter 32, Thief 24)

Hextor loves to travel the Prime Material Plane in avatar form, creating conflict, war, and discord, aiding the forces of law and evil, and opposing good. He especially seeks to overthrow and destroy the temples and servants of his brother and chief enemy, Heironeous.

Hextor may appear as a man of comely appearance if he so wishes, hiding four of his arms in illusion. He is light of skin and dark of hair, and his eyes are as black as onyx. In this form Hextor is charming, well spoken, and intellectually well-rounded, able to make conversation on any topic and appearing knowledgeable on any subject. His true form is much more horrific: gray-skinned and lank-haired, with

gruesome eyes rimmed with red bulging from a hideous visage. He carries many weapons and wears armor decorated with skulls. In this form he shows all six arms, and fights with all of the deadly power available to him.

AC -5 (-8); MV 24; Hp 200; THAC0 -10; #AT 2,4 or 6; Dmg 1d4+8/ 1d4+8 (bucklers)/ 1d8+10 (fork+2)/ 1d8+11 (scimitar +3)/1d6+11 (flail+2)/ 2d4+11 (Morningstar +3) (All weapons: str +6, spec.+2)  
MR 90%; SZ M (6'6")  
Str 18/00, Dex 19, Con 20, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 18 or 1  
Spells: W: None P: None  
Saves: PPD 3; RSW 5; PP 4; BW 3; Sp 6

### Special Attacks/Defenses

In combat Hextor has many weapons at his disposal. He uses two great bows for missile combat, each of which fires +3 shafts barbed with iron, and inflict 10-15 points of damage on a hit. In melee he uses two spiked bucklers and four other weapons. If he so wills, the bucklers may be used as weapons, but otherwise Hextor has four attacks every round. Typically he wields the following weapons: two bucklers, military fork +2, scimitar +3, footman's flail +2, and a morningstar +3. He wears +3 armor, bringing his AC to -8. Hextor wears his holy symbol around his neck, which can act as a *symbol* of Hate and Discord once per day. Hextor also carries the *Trumpet of Acheron*, which can be sounded once every six days. When used, it summons 6d10 skeletons to serve the avatar's will. Once every six years, it can be blown to summon an undead horde of 60-600 skeletons and 30-300 zombies.

Hextor can only be harmed by +3 or better magical weapons. He is proficient in all melee and missile weapons, and is specialized in the use of the buckler, military fork, scimitar, footman's flail, and morningstar.

### Other Manifestations

Although Hextor rarely manifests himself outside of his avatars, he is known to send his trumpets of war to faithful priests who are truly in need of his aid. These trumpets play ghostly, haunting melodies. The trumpets cannot be harmed, and their music will animate all those slain by the priest within 30 feet as maximum hit point juju zombies. The zombies will serve the priest for 1 hour, after which they collapse into dust. A priest will never be so aided twice in their lifetime.

Other manifestations of Hextor include grisly omens of warning; stones bleeding; strange, haunting melodies played by some vile, ghostly trumpet; the sounds of battle; skulls appearing in the air.

Hextor is served by various types of devils; undead (especially those slain in battle), including skeletons, zombies, and lawful evil intelligent undead; spiders; nightmares; hellhounds; myrloch (soul spiders); reaves; shadowdrakes; sword spirits; tso; hellcats; bonespears; bladelings; and kytons. Furthermore, Hextor still commands the service of some baatezu, although these are generally reviled and hated by those fiends who serve the Dark Eight or Lords of the Nine.

## The Church

**Clergy:** Cleric (10%), Crusader (35%), Specialty Priests (55%)

**Alignment:** LN, LE, NE

**Turn Undead:** C: No, CR: No, SP: No

**Cmd Undead:** C: No, CR: No, SP: -4

All priests of Hextor are required to have the blind-fighting non-weapon proficiency, which they may learn without penalties from group crossovers. They also receive, free of charge, the religion (Oeridian) and religion (Common) non-weapon proficiencies. At the DM's option, they may also be familiar with the Flan, Suel or Baklunish religions. Although it is neither required or given as a bonus proficiency, many Hextorians have the music proficiency, and are familiar with the playing of various wind instruments, horns, and drums. The clergy of Hextor includes humans (75%), half-orcs (20%), and evil humanoids (5%).

The clergy of Hextor is powerful but vile. They are spread across the Flanaess, and cause war and discord wherever and whenever they can. In the Great Kingdom they are the strongest religious (and some say military) force, and have tremendous influence and power. The priests will sometimes rise up in great numbers, leading armies of humanoids and humans into enormous conflicts that result in massive deaths. A few of these forces have even included large numbers of the undead, whom Hextor shows some preference for.

Clerics and crusaders are common within the highly structured church hierarchy. The clerics, called the Battleguard, are the defenders of the faith. They have the responsibility of the church's welfare on their shoulders, and make convenient scapegoats for the specialty priests, the Hounds of Hell, whenever something should go wrong. Over the last few years the Battleguard's numbers have greatly declined (they now make up only about 10% of the clergy). Lately, the Hounds of Hell have begun to give the clerics more privileges and positions of power, in hopes of restoring the defensive branch of the church.

The crusaders, called the Scourges of Hextor, are the church's most militarily powerful branch. They are the officers and leaders of the church armies, and are thus in a position of great power. They are correspondingly fairly numerous, making up about 35% of the Hextorian priest population. For years the Hounds of Hell have been trying to limit the power of the Scourges, to little or no effect.

The specialty priests of Hextor are called the Hounds of Hell. They are the most numerous and visible part of the clergy of Hextor, making up more than half of all of the priesthood, and more than 90% of the top echelon of leadership. Hounds of Hell are masters of strategy and tactic, both in and out of battle. In addition to great skill at arms, they are accomplished at psychological warfare and sabotage. Thoroughly and irredeemably evil, the Hounds of Hell are responsible for much misery throughout the Flanaess.

Within the Church itself there is a great schism between two factions. This internal strife began during the Greyhawk wars, when Patriarch Krennden of Medegia supported the

Censor of that land in rebellion against the Overking of the Aerdy. After Medegia was razed by the forces of Ivid V, Krennden fled to the northeast. Now he has earned the following of many of the priests of Hextor who dwell outside of Naelax lands in the remnants of the Great Kingdom. Many powerful animuses (evil unliving creations of the priests of Hextor) have sworn allegiance to Krennden, making him a powerful force. Krennden hopes to take Rauxes and make himself the new Patriarch General of the faith, replacing Patriarch General Pyrannden of Rauxes. Pyrannden believes that only the Herzog of North Province, Grenell, has the power to unify Aerdy under the church of Hextor. Grenell has developed his own church hierarchy within North Province, however, and does not desire an alliance with Pyrannden until all the Aerdy lands are restored to some form of order.

Outside of the remnants of the Great Kingdom, where his priests and followers are so numerous that any insult or slander to the church could incur their wrath, the clergy of Hextor is widely despised. Even the briefest sight of one of the Hounds of Hell riding through a village is cause for alarm, and prayers for safety are quickly offered to powers of protection. The Hounds have earned this reputation from the battles that seem to follow them wherever they go.

At 9th-level a priest of Hextor is permitted to construct a temple or shrine to the Champion of Evil if he has acquired sufficient funds. A temple or shrine must always be built on the site of some great massacre or battle. It is not unheard of for a particularly devout priest to arrange for a massacre at some ideal building spot, and then follow with the construction of the temple. Typical shrines to Hextor are round towers, some forty or more feet high and twenty or thirty feet in diameter. There is never more than one entrance, and multiple arrow slits can be found around the structure's walls. The true shrine is located at the top of the tower, and contains a statue of Hextor in his hellish form. Next to the statue is the sacrificial altar and a long horn hanging from the ceiling by chains. In ceremonies to Hextor the horn is blown after a sacrifice, signalling to the god that a sacrifice has been made. A shrine often serves as barracks to a small military or mercenary force (between 10 and 20 individuals) dedicated to Hextor.

Temples are much larger structures, based around a central worship hall. The main hall is a rectangular structure that is approximately 100' long by 40' wide. On the sides of the building are six shrines (see above), all connected to the main structure. Naturally the cost of creating one of these temples is far greater than a simple shrine. Correspondingly, the number of followers attracted by such a temple is much greater.

For the purposes of attracting followers, a shrine will bring in about 3d6 first level fighters 50% of the time, while 25% of the time it will attract 2d6 first level fighters and one first level specialty priest of Hextor. 15% of the time it will attract 1d8 first level fighters, one fifth level fighter, and one first level specialty priest of Hextor, and 10% of the time it will attract 1d6 first level fighters, one fifth level fighter, and one fifth level specialty priest of Hextor. A temple gains the same kinds of followers, only about 1d4+2 times as many as a

shrine does. Note that creation of multiple temples or shrines does not attract additional followers above 9th level.

Novices of Hextor are known as the Weaponless. Full priests are known as the Children of Discord. In ascending order of rank, the titles used by the priests of Hextor are Buckler, Fork, Scimitar, Flail, Morningstar, and Patriarch. The leader of the church is called the Patriarch General. Certain independent and high-level specialty priests, charged with spreading discord, are known as the Arms of Hextor. There are never more than six of these priests at one time.

**Dogma:** War and conflict are the food and drink of a true life. Everything as a challenge in which the worthy must prove how fit they are and how capable and dominant they can be. Only those truly blessed by Hextor can be completely successful in life, but even they must prove their worthiness through combat. Once one has won their place through combat, they must keep it by ruling with an iron fist.

While skill in combat is very important to the priests, the ability to cause conflict is just as important, if not more so. Ideally, these priests are master manipulators and cruel liars, capable of creating discord between even the most passive groups, while at the same time being masters of the blade. Hextor's servants despise and hate cowards and pacifists alike, seeing them as unfit to live.

**Day-to-day activities:** On a daily basis all worshipers of Hextor partake in strenuous exercise and combat practice. They also sing short hymns to Hextor before combat, and will follow various ceremonies with the blowing of wind instruments (usually horns and trumpets). Often the lower-ranking priests are required to perform menial tasks given to them by their superiors. Disobeying a superior is rare (and usually fatal) unless the superior is challenged and slain. Favors are rarely granted by these priests, and on those rare occasions there is always a price attached to them.

Priests of the faith are expected to tithe 5% of their annual income to the church. Tithes and taxes are levied by the priests upon the peasants of the Great Kingdom to help support the immense Church armies maintained by the Hextorian clergy.

**Important Ceremonies:** Holy days are for the weak, say the Hextorians, and thus they make no use of them (they do celebrate the anniversaries of particularly horrific battles and massacres). However, their religion is rich with ceremonies. At least once every month (on any day), a priest must make a sacrifice in a shrine or temple. If made in the form of objects, at least 500 gp worth of valuables must be sacrificed. If in the form of living creatures, one prisoner of war (or any other combat) must be sacrificed on the altar. Following any sacrifice, the priest must play a melody on a wind instrument of some kind (generally trumpets, horns, or flutes). Iron gongs are struck, chants called out, and unspeakable rituals occur in honor of the Herald of Hell.

When great victories are won by the clergy and its armies, all prisoners taken are marched to the closest temple. There, one by one, they are decapitated and their heads

thrown into great pyramids outside of the building. Such pyramids of gore are often burnt by the priests in great bonfires.

**Major Centers of Worship:** The Hextorians are at their strongest in the Great Kingdom, where Hextor is honored and held high amongst the ranks of gods. His temples appear openly in that land and his priests flaunt their power. The temples and shrines of the Scourge of Battle are hard to find in other areas of the Flanaess, but they are present, as are his infernal priests.

There are numerous temples of Hextor that are notable for their size and importance. On the grounds of Palace of Rauxes is one of the greatest temples to Hextor, where Patriarch-General Pyrannden dwells. It is heavily guarded by priests, common warriors, and an elite guard. There are also four guardian statues here made entirely from coagulated blood, each as strong as a flesh golem. The temple also houses the Church's most prized artifact: The Unholy Bloodshield of Hextor.

Another temple of note is the Cathedral of Carnage, located on Massacre Hill in Medegia. It is said that the priests of Hextor took a thousand refugees from the crushed city of Pontylver, and slew them all atop the hill. The Patriarch Ishzar, who had ordered the mass execution, animated the bodies into headless zombies, and had them build the cathedral. It is currently inhabited by the depraved priests responsible for its creation. Reminiscent of a great keep, it matches the grand fortresses of Rauxes in size. Atop every battlement are tall pikes on which the heads of the Cathedral's undead builders are impaled. The heads are prevented from completely decaying by Ishzar's magic. It is said that the headless zombies are now the Cathedral's undead guardians, and that they are still a thousand strong. Ishzar is not presently allied with any of the internal factions of the Hextorian Church; he is biding his time and waiting for one side to take the initiative and make its move.

**Affiliated Orders:** Naturally, the Church armies of Hextor are vast and powerful. Most of the warriors in the employ of the Hextorian Church are armed and equipped with weapons that can be wielded by the specialty priests themselves. Numerous armies, mercenary bands, and adventuring groups of evil nature are also in league with this clergy; the Hextorians are more than generous in their funding of such organizations, and in exchange wield a great deal of military influence, spread throughout the Flanaess.

In addition, certain Patriarchs of Hextor are also known to be powerful masters of the undead. These include Patriarch Ishzar and Patriarch Moralto (of North Province), both of whom command large forces of undead. Certain animuses are also loyal to the church, and give the priesthood their full support. Patriarch Grenell, the Herzog of North Province, also has a large following.

**Priestly Vestments:** Hextor's priests wear black robes adorned with white skulls or grey visages embroidered upon them. Only the higher-level priests (8th level and up) have

arrows of hate and discord in red, lower level priests are only permitted grey ones.

**Adventuring Garb:** When in action, Hextorians prefer to wear chain mail adorned with metal skulls and images of their god.

## Specialty Priest (Hound of Hell)

**Requirements:** Strength 15 or Dexterity 15, Wisdom 10

**Prime Req:** Strength or Dexterity, Wisdom

**Alignment:** LE

**Weapons:** Any bow, flail, fork, morning star, scimitar, staff-sling

**Armor:** Chain, Scale, Plate

**Major Spheres:** All, Combat, Elemental (Fire), Healing, Law, Necromantic, War

**Minor Spheres:** Creation, Summoning

**Magical Items:** As clerics and thieves

**Req. Profs:** Blind-fighting

**Bonus Profs:** None

- Half-orcs may become specialty priests of Hextor. They may not multi-class.
- Hextorians are able to spend proficiency slots to become specialized in weapons, just like a member of the fighter character class.
- Priests of Hextor are trained in the arts of thieving and stealth (especially in assassination), and upon gaining sixth level in priestly ability they gain one level of thief ability as well. Thereafter, every two levels of advancement as a priest indicate a single level of advancement in thief skills. The maximum level of thief ability without dual-classing is 6th level, which is attained at 16th. These thieflly abilities do not require that the priest earn any extra experience points.
- At 3rd level a Hound of Hell gains +1 to his strength score (maximum of 19).
- At 5th level the Hound of Hell may cast a *ray of enfeeblement* once per day.
- At 8th level the priest of Hextor may cast a *fear* spell once per day.
- At 9th level the Hound of Hell gains the power to inflict double damage in combat once per day, for 1 round per level of the priest.
- At 12th level the Hound of Hell may cast a *symbol of pain* once per week.
- At 14th level the priest may cast a *symbol of discord* once per day.

## Hextorian Spells

In addition to the specialty spells below, certain high level priests of Hextor are able to create the undead being known as the animus. The process cannot be completed without the aid of outer-planar fiends, and involves powerful,

undefined magics along the lines of quest magic. Details on individual animus can be found within the *Ivid the Undying* online sourcebook, available at TSR's website.

Hextorians also have access to the spells *blood mantle*, *blood rage* (*Powers & Pantheons*, pg. 21), *analyze opponent* (*Powers & Pantheons*, pg. 46), and *holy flail* (*Faiths & Avatars*, pg. 160).

## Hextor's Fitness

(Alteration)

Sphere : All, Combat  
Range : Touch  
Components: V,S  
Casting Time : 1  
Duration : 1 turn / level  
Area of Effect : 1 subject  
Saving Throw : None

When this spell is employed, the caster (or other subject) grows in height, weight, and strength, while at the same time gaining a temporary boost in Strength and Constitution scores. Note that general appearance does not otherwise change, so the individual is recognizable. For every 2 levels possessed by the caster of *Hextor's fitness*, the subject can, at the caster's option, gain 1 inch of height, 10 pounds of weight, and for every 6 levels one point each of Strength and Constitution - this effective gain does not add to hit points gained from an enhanced Constitution. Higher strength scores grant the recipient bonuses to attack and damage rolls, but enhanced strength and constitution scores cannot exceed 18.

## Blood Groove

(Alteration, Enchantment/Charm)

Sphere: Combat, Necromancy  
Range: Touch  
Casting Time: 6  
Components: V,S  
Area of Effect: One edged weapon  
Duration: 2 rounds/level  
Saving Throw: Special

By casting the *blood groove* spell, a Hextorian priest may enchant an edged weapon (sword, dagger, axe, etc.) so that its surface becomes jagged and lined with blood grooves (hence the name of the spell). The enchanted weapon becomes far more formidable in combat, and whenever it hits, the victim must make a save vs. spell at -2 or suffer from bleeding wounds. Bleeding wounds produced by *blood groove* will bleed for 1d6 rounds, and on each round cause an extra 1d4 points of damage to the wounded person per wound.

*Blood groove* cannot be used on weapons that are already magical, and it cannot be used on weapons that are not edged (includes maces and flails).

## Arrows of War

(Invocation/Evocation)

Sphere: Combat  
Range: 0  
Casting Time: 3  
Components: V,S  
Area of Effect: 1d6 arrows  
Duration: 6 rounds  
Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell the Hound of Hell may create 1d6 magical red arrows. These arrows are filled with a powerful magic, and must be fired as normal arrows before the spell's duration ends and the arrows vanish. These powerful missiles will inflict (assuming that all of them strike their marks) a total of 6d6 points of damage. This damage is rolled before any of the arrows are fired, and the damage rolled is divided evenly among the number of arrows created. Thus if the damage rolled was 28, and the number of arrows created was 4, each arrow would inflict 7 points of damage on a hit. Strength and specialization bonuses apply to this damage, but no spells may be cast on the *arrows of war* to enhance them further. The caster need not be the one to fire the missiles, but no good aligned being may touch them without destroying them (and suffering damage as if struck).

## Evil Arm of Hextor

(Enchantment/Charm)

Sphere : Charm  
Range : 1 mile/level  
Components: V,S,M  
Casting Time : 1 turn  
Duration : Special  
Area of Effect : 20 creatures/level  
Saving Throw : Neg.

While the Hextorians are all very fond of battle, sometimes there are armies just too big to defeat with available forces. For such armies the priests of Hextor use his *evil arm*, which robs the priests' enemies of all hope and desire to continue moving against the forces of Hextor.

The spell is cast initially around a brazier specially prepared by the priest. In the brazier are 1,000 gp worth of special incense, which are burned during the casting. The smoke produced in the braziers grows and thickens, forming into a great arm of black cloud, which ends in a sinister hand. This arm-like black cloud climbs through the sky, heading slowly towards the target military force, which may consist of up to 20 creatures per level.. When the shadow of the arm's hand falls upon the target force, all individuals within the force must make saving throws versus spells.

Everyone who fails their saving throw is affected by the spell, and must immediately halt movement for the day. These individuals will refuse to march into battle, and argue and bicker with one another. Every day after the first day of being affected, another saving throw versus spells is made by all of the individuals still under the influence of the spell; three

consecutive failed saving throws in three days indicates that outright battle has taken place among the discordant troops.

## Hands of Hextor

(Alteration)

Sphere : Combat

Range : 0

Components: V,S

Casting Time : 6

Duration : 1-4 rounds/level

Area of Effect : Caster

Saving Throw : None

By use of this spell the caster causes the immediate growth of two new pairs of arms, allowing him or her the opportunity to launch a great many attacks on an opponent. The arms will grow instantaneously, and the caster's clothing will reshape itself to allow the arms the same adornment (non-magical in nature, of course) that the priest's real arms have. These four new arms can be used as the priest wills, and may wield weapons without penalty, subject to normal proficiency requirements. They may also be used to carry bucklers, which is often a strategy used by priests casting this spell.

Each arm has 15 hit points that are separate from the caster's, and can be destroyed by a dispel magic spell for each arm. The arms are otherwise 100% magic resistant.

## Wave of Carnage

(Alteration, Invocation/Evocation)

Sphere : Combat, War

Range : 100 yards

Components: V,S,M

Casting Time : 1 round

Duration : Instantaneous

Area of Effect : 40' radius

Saving Throw : Neg.

The deadliest spell available to the Hounds of Hell is the *wave of carnage*, which has the power to destroy large numbers of 0-level, 1st-level, or 1 hit die creatures. All creatures within the radius of the spell with 1 hit die/level or lower must make saving throws versus death magic or be slain, covered with bleeding wounds from head to toe. Note that this spell does not discriminate from one low-level creature from another; a Hextorian can slay his own allies by using it. The spell is named the *wave of carnage* because the creatures are affected in the order that they are closest to the caster; creatures closer to the caster are affected first, giving the effect of appearing similar to a "wave" of slain creatures.

The material component of this spell is a small figurine of Hextor studded with 10,000 gp worth of gems, along with a small scourge and the priest's holy symbol.

## The Good Oerth The Fading Lands

By Jim Temple  
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*You can't believe how excited I am to be able to share this with you! I've managed to find part of some kind of ancient text. I can't tell what the complete work used to be, but this section looks like it was deliberately saved. It was written by a priest of Boccob, as you'll see for yourself as you read, but no specific author's name is given, and no dates are indicated beyond historical references. I'm still searching for more, but this is what I've found so far.*

*Now, the floor goes to this patron of the Uncaring One...*

### The Fading Lands

#### Chapter XII

Like the Ethereal Plane which holds them, the demiplanes known commonly as the 'Fading Lands' coexist in space, and often in time, with our own Oerth. Like all demiplanes, these are miniature worlds with finite borders. Each has its own set of physical laws, exactly as a full-fledged plane. The researcher is advised to review the general information on demiplanes at this time, which was given in Chapter VII of this work.

Unlike other demiplanes, the Fading Lands resist all but the most ambitious efforts to explore them. Each appears to have a very specific and individual method of access. It has also been documented that this entry point can change with time, and not necessarily in a gradual or predictable way. Tactics generally accepted in the Church for entrance to other demiplanes, such as the *plane shift* spell, rarely produce a visible effect when seeking access to a Fading Land.

Like most demiplanes, the Fading Lands each have their own set of natural laws and magical effects. However, these pocket planes differ by having consistent, logical patterns that control these phenomena. The patterns can be extremely complex or abstract, and a few of the Lands have even frustrated Boccob's Best. But, as logic would dictate, they must have a pattern of some sort, as the complex entry processes do not appear to be of natural or random origin.

Most appropriately named, the Fading Lands appear to be slowly disappearing from the Flanaess. Theories abound on the reason(s) for this, but these are best understood when combined with the theories on the origins of these marvelous miniature worlds. For now, the student must know that there are Lands recorded which have not been accessed for decades, or even centuries, and that our current contact points are constantly becoming more insubstantial. Some of these demiplanes can only be accessed once for every three or four attempts.

One fact recently noticed is the location of the Lands in relation to the Flanaess as a whole. All known Fading Lands lie within a belt-like region, stretching from the Crystalmist range east to the shores of the Solnor, but never farther south

than the Yeomanry, and never north of the Dim Forest.

Theories regarding this recent realization are far too numerous at this point to be covered in this work, but the implications are as varied as the ideas that follow. The geographic region covered has been nicknamed the Belt of the Lands, and for simplicity's sake it will be referred to as such in this work.

### Theories on Origins

The creative force behind the Lands is unknown, or has at least become lost to us. Several attempts at communion with our Lord have proven unsuccessful, which is unsettling. Either the discovery of this knowledge is a test of dedication before a larger picture is revealed, or the truth has been hidden from us for good reason. This has divided our best theorists, which has at times become an obstacle for further research.

Despite this hindrance, several theories exist, including a few discovered in ancient texts. These are listed chronologically, as some later theories are derivative. These are given as a list, to allow the student to research in Boccob's Balance. The opinions of the author are unimportant, but could surely be discussed at a later date with any students who have conducted further research.

One last note should be made. The following are theories regarding the origins of the Fading Lands, and primarily use evidence regarding what is known of their original states and natures. The fact that the Lands are passing out of existence is sufficient evidence to most that the forces originally responsible for their creation are no longer exerting influence to maintain them. It is largely accepted that the current uses and functions of the Lands are not necessarily that which was originally intended.

**Flan Theory** - Based strictly upon a reference made in passing, the implications of this theory are vast. Found in an ancient Flannae text that speaks of the beautiful cities and the great works of their people, the passage refers to the "Places Beyond" which were created by the greatest of their court wizards and priests.

Although this may at first appear to be reading volumes into these words, the theory holds many logical arguments, which cannot be rebutted. The first is that, although largely held to be simple, nomadic folk, there is some evidence to indicate that the ancient Flan people were highly advanced, perhaps even more so than the Suloise or Baklunish Empires at their height.

Using this premise as a foundation, the belief is supported by stating that all known Fading Lands, past and present, are located in areas of ancient Flan occupation. This is based upon the location of Flan tribes encountered when the Oeridian and Suloise peoples migrated eastward. It should be noted that, while the precise range of the ancient Flannae is not known, it is certain that it extended beyond the Belt of the Lands. Supporters of this theory hold that the Belt is located in the Flannae heartlands, which included the area which is now the Bright Desert, and that they were partial to the warmer climate offered by the southern Flanaess. These



theorists generally believe that the ancient Flan Empire extended its range as it grew, and that the Tenhas and the Rovers of the Barrens were extended fronts (or possibly renegade elements), much the role Ferrond once played for the Kingdom of Aerdy.

This theory also uses the nature of the known Lands as evidence to support this, much as the Elemental Theory (see below) uses that common thread. For example, the dark sky of the Blood Obelisk is said to represent Nerull, the woodlands of the Court of Rings is believed to be significant to Obad-Hai, the peaceful reason found in the Lake of Insight is theoretically supported by Rao, etc.

Of all the theories presented, this holds the least evidence to either support or disprove it. With the little knowledge available regarding the ancient Flannae, much remains unanswered. As these people were integrated into other cultures, it is nearly certain that some of their traditional gods were forgotten, leaving holes in regards to the supposed common thread, which may well have existed. Also, the original range covered by this people is unknown, indicating that more of their ruins, and Fading Lands, may yet be found.

**Elemental Theory** - Discovered in an ancient, largely illegible Baklunish text, the origins of this theory are unknown. However, since its discovery this line of thought has been greatly expanded.

The known Fading Lands involve many peculiar mutations of our basic elements, and this theory is based upon the belief that this is a universal common thread, and is the key to their origins. Largely expounding on druidic forces at work, the theory involves a complex relationship and order between the goddess Beory and all other elementally minded gods, such as Procan, Ulaa, Pyremius, and Wenta. Specifically worthy of note is the fact that the ancient theory transcended the cultural boundaries generally associated with gods, and all appropriate powers of all major pantheons were represented as equals.

The theory of the creation of the demiplanes involves priesthoods of each of the Powers working in concert with high-level elementalists wizards to great effect. It states that in ancient times, these groups were guided by their gods to perform the powerful incantations necessary to create the Lands. The magic used here has long been lost to us, as even the ancient text containing this theory referred to it as pre-history. It should also be noted that some believe that these rites were somehow connected with the state that now exists between these elemental deities. Some hold that works in concert such as this were once common, and that the modern state of worship and belief of these deities is a perversion directly brought about by the continual use of these rites.

Additional evidence supporting this theory is said to be found on the Plains of Imix. The Baklunish text that spawned this school of thought stated that large stone blocks were found on the Plain. Each block was said to hold powerful runes that represented each Elemental Plane, including all of the para-elemental and quasi-elemental planes. These blocks have not been located in more modern times, but it should

also be noted that the Plains of Imix are held by most explorers to be the most dangerous of the Lands.

It should be obvious to the reader that this could be easily combined with the Flan Theory. This is often done, and is much more commonly encountered than a strict following of the previous theory.

**Other-Planar Theory** - With a wide array of variants, this theory holds that creatures from other planes of existence originally created the Fading Lands. Which planes, which creatures, and what their ultimate goals were are largely subject to debate, but the general idea behind this school of thought holds that these beings were seeking to extend their influence to Oerth.

The premise behind this is that when Oerth was still young, and her gods were occupied with creation, division of concerns, and other celestial worries, some force sought to secure a link to the ripe young world, whether for good or ill. Gates and other direct links are believed to be more easily detected, and the creation of these demiplanes is thought to have served as a ruse to avoid this. Also, the unusual methods of entering a Fading Land are suspected to have aided this deception.

The belief is that Oerth's Powers discovered the plot, but only after several links had successfully been created. The desires of the beings were directed elsewhere by the deities, and since that time the gods of Oerth have utilized the demiplanes for their own various purposes, and with varied frequency. Lacking the influence of their creators, those Fading Lands not used with some regularity lose their link to this world.

The main argument for this theory is held in the very nature of the Fading Lands. No other theory touches on why demiplanes exist, rather than a link to other planes, secret places, etc., to achieve the same effect. The unusual methods of entering a Land are also covered in this, and no other, theory.

Supporting evidence exists in many of the magical weapons and armor recovered from the Crypts of Iron Souls. Planar experts have studied many of the unknown items and have verified that they are worn by powerful creatures native to planes they have visited, but that they are rare even there. No other record exists of these items ever reaching Oerth. Also, many of the skeletons encountered surrounding the Blood Obelisk are actually remains of these creatures, rather than the expected humans. Trusted contacts on this plane have been uncharacteristically silent regarding this subject.

**Natural Phenomena Theory** - Impossible to prove or disprove, this theory is not commonly followed, although it is not completely without supporters within the Order. It holds that these are simply variant demiplanes that came into being naturally, in the manner of such places. Supporters of this theory state that Oerth's gods are able to detect the links as they are being formed, and sometimes move in and alter the Lands to suit their own purposes.

This is the only belief that contains a chance for new Fading Lands. Naturally occurring demiplanes are sporadic,

and often spring up in unlikely places. Whether this theory is optimism or realism remains to be seen.

**Boccob/Dorgha Theory** - Not as commonly acknowledged in the Church as would be expected by outsiders, this theory holds that the Lands are not simply demiplanes. Instead, they are held to be demiplanes located within an alternate dimension, which explains why spells such as *plane shift* are so unsuccessful in gaining entrance. A dimensional portal links the demiplane to our world, while the demiplane is assumed to be found within an Ethereal Plane (or its equivalent) on the other dimension.

The origins are held to be a mutual effort between our Patron and the Suloise god Dorgha Torgu. For reasons we can only guess at, the two gods are believed by some to have joined forces to create these miniature worlds. The theory states that the Lands began to fade with Dorgha's fall at the end of the Suel Imperium, for without his influence, the dimension-spanning nature of these places could not be maintained. Boccob is, of course, Master of the Planes, but these theorists believe that Dorgha Torgu's mastery of dimensional forces was key in this endeavor.

Unlike most other Origin Theories, nearly all supporters of this idea believe that this was an experiment by Our Liege, not a place to be used as a testing ground or other purpose. As with all theories, a few even disagree on this point, but this is the most unified school of thought to be found on the Fading Lands.

The strong magical nature of the Lands should make it apparent to the student why some would believe Boccob to be involved, but the strange beings encountered therein could easily be attributed to any unknown plane, dimension, or other world. This theory, like the Flan Theory, has few clues to prove or disprove its validity; save only the temple to Dorgha said to be found on the Cloudpeaks.

One final point made by those who hold to this theory is that the very nature of many of the Fading Lands follows a dimensional, not planar, pattern. These theorists point to the many extra-dimensional effects within the Maze of Skin, and cite the strange temporal effects of the Lake of Insight and the Mines of Dumathoin as evidence of a link to the Fifth Dimension, which is Time. This covers a completely heretical school of thought, as the Church has clearly stated that Time is centralized in a plane and not a separate dimension, although errors are always possible.

It should be obvious that other theories exist, but those referenced above are those which hold the most weight within the Order. Should the subject ever surface on a late study evening, less widely accepted views are certain to appear.

Common to all theories, save only the Natural Phenomena, are the questions associated with the purpose of the Fading Lands. Those Origin Theories that generally incorporate a purpose aside, the advocates of all others are generally split between:

- A testing point of some sort
- Prisons for powerful creatures

- Secret or sacred places, designed to hide away things important to the creator(s) of the Land(s)
- Experiments of some kind

While none of these theories can be proven at this time, as the student reads on, she/he will surely begin to formulate her/his own views. Research and experimentation is, of course, encouraged.

## Known Fading Lands

As stated above, there are undoubtedly Fading Lands of which we are unaware. Thus, the following list is assumed to be incomplete, but contains a brief outline of all those on record. Keep in mind that all of them, no matter how fair in seeming, may contain great dangers not outlined here.

**Blood Obelisk of Aerdy** - Possibly the best-documented of all Lands, this demiplane has also been shrouded in the mystery which has covered much of the Great Kingdom for some time now, and much remains unknown. It is rumored to be visited and utilized by the Overking, and the nature of this Land only strengthens this belief.

Reached through the Gull Cliffs, this Land is a dark plain, covered by a blanket of perpetual darkness. The ground is rocky and dust-covered terrain, with blood-red bands running through the rocks which is said to pulse to a sickening heartbeat-like rhythm. Preying upon those venturing here are trolls with metal skins, as well as metallic golems, juggernauts, and other constructs.

At the center of the plain lies a huge stone obelisk, fifty feet tall, covered in runes and sigils of Hextor. Atop the obelisk is a single, red, glaring eye, capable of casting fire-based spells at attackers. Surrounding the monolith is an area, perhaps thirty feet in diameter, completely covered by iron oxide covered bones and rock dust. If the artifact is attacked, the bones are said to form into six-armed skeletons to defend the structure, and devils will be gated in to assist.

It is said that very little will harm the obelisk, and much protective magic will not function properly for explorers. Healing magic is said to have minimal effects, and magic generally useful against evil creatures (such as *protection from evil*, *negative plane protection*, *dispel evil*, etc.) will not work in this demiplane.

**The Floating Isles** - No longer accessible, the entry to this demiplane was located deep within the Gnatmarsh. Little is on record of it, as it was the earliest of the known Lands to disappear.

The Land reached was said to be composed entirely of mountain summits and open, cloud filled skies. The mountain peaks were barren, with only mosses, lichen, and some scrub brush to be found. However, this plant life was reportedly intelligent, and extremely wise. Furthermore, if explorers proved themselves to be trustworthy, the plants would share the secrets of the Land in exchange for tales from the outside world. It is also said that the sentient vegetation could shield those who cultivated their favor from aerial attacks, but this report is extremely vague, and possibly misleading.

Records state that great cloud islands, which could be safely trod upon, served as home to every sort of flying creature imaginable, with multitudes of extra-dimensional spaces, permanent dimensional-doorways, and other anomalies of travel and space. Most spectacular of all was apparently an enormous temple to Dorgha Torgu, found upon a cloud so small that only the luckiest of souls stumbled across it.

Very little additional information is available on this demiplane. Not only has it vanished from our Plane, but careless scholars often confused the Land with the Sinking Isle mentioned in the lore of the Sea Barons. Since that phenomenon is more commonly known, references to either location were often incorrect, information being combined and jumbled in ways most distasteful to the Church. Researchers should take care to check their references!

The few tales of riches that have returned from the realm tell of bridges of mist that allowed access to great castles, lairs, and even vapor-walled catacombs. Within were devices controlling the elements (specifically air and water), and weather, as well as the obvious aids to flight which resourceful explorers would outfit themselves with. A few tales seem to hint at caches of items that appear to all deal with extra-dimensional space and/or travel.

**Crypts of Iron Souls** - Oerth's connection to this subterranean realm lies beneath the Glorioles. All tunnels, caves, and passages within this Fading Land are filled to mid-calf height with a semi-liquid substance that seems to consist of ash and bones. The entire area seems to have once been some sort of underground city, with the badly eroded remains of rooms, windows, and even a few doors of stone found throughout. The lack of any organic material, such as wood, leather, and other building material one would expect, serves as a haunting indicator of the age of the place.

Undead of many unusual types prowl this realm, often wearing armor, insignia, sashes, and other indicators of ancient battles in which they perished. Highly unusual weapons and armor have been found here, determined to originate on another plane of existence.

A highly unusual feature of this Land, and highly dangerous considering the natives encountered, are the effects rendered by sound. Here, waves of sound take on a solid form, making battle noises highly dangerous. Very loud and piercing sounds, such as screams, can melt iron and steel, and none who have returned have dared to make use of items such as a *horn of blasting* or a *staff of thunder and lightning*. Many believe that it is this power of sound that has eroded the structures to this extent, as no water or wind has been encountered, although this condition may have changed.

**Faerie Court of Rings** - This is said to be a magical sylvan domain, filled with faerie creatures of all sorts. Members of the Seelie Court are said to hunt here, as well as provide guidance and strength to the faerie creatures of Oerik. This is held to be most influential for those within the Welkwood, from which the Land may be reached. The Cat

Lord is said to serve a similar purpose for his charges from here.

The magic of this demiplane is said to be intense, with plants and water consumed curing all manner of afflictions, including diseases, insanity, and the negation of toxins. However, natives of the Land are said to take great offense to any poaching of these treasures, and are very reluctant to offer them. Perhaps extended visits here would bring some trust, but this is a truly heavy price to pay, for 1 year spent in this realm results in 10 years passing on the Prime.

Due to the similarities in their nature, many within the Order theorize that this Land is one in the same with the demiplane reached via the Moonarch of Sehanine. The details of the Moonarch may be found below, but one point which indicates a possible connection concerns a separate Welkwood location, Canryell's Well. While olven sages are said to be able to circumvent this effect, most folk who drink of the waters within the Well have a chance of contracting a Fading condition. The victim begins to see a faerie realm, which is initially a ghost-like world coexisting with ours in the eyes of the Fading person. As the symptoms grow worse, the affected being will see this faerie realm as more substantial as time goes on, with the world of Oerik becoming less tangible. No tales ever include elves in the occupants of the faerie realm, and it is generally considered to be a means of entering the Faerie Court of Rings. However, the fact that some elves have ways of avoiding the Fading raises some interesting questions. Most legends that speak of the Court of Rings cite it as carefully guarded by the faeries, and specify that the sylvan folk do not even speak to the elves of such things. If this is so, why would elves know the secret of avoiding an accidental trip into the Land? The Court is always said to be sustained by the goddess Titania's magic, which leaves us to ask why unintentional entrance to the Land is possible at all.

While theories regarding this have strong arguments on both sides, some in the Church have theorized that a combination of the two views may be the answer. They state that the Faerie Queen sustains the Land, and that it primarily fits with all legends and tales involving this place. The positive relationship generally held to exist between the Seelie Court and the Seldarine is said to have resulted in an arrangement for an alternate use of the realm by the gods of the elves. The Seldarine use the demiplane strictly for testing their people, and do not allow olven folk entrance unless this is occurring. Faerie creatures are given free access, and the Seelie Court is the dominant force here. While some believe this is not correct, and is simply a forced hypothesis in an attempt to link two unrelated locations, this theory is growing more popular within certain circles.

**Lake of Insight** - Certainly one of the more benevolent of the Fading Lands, this demiplane is simply a large lake, surrounded by a narrow shore and insurmountable cliffs. The shore of the Lake is featureless, and no dwellings or structures of any kind are to be found. Non-threatening aquatic beings, such as water nagas, nixies, kindly nereids (of the rarer, helpful nature), mist dragons, and nymphs are found on the

Lake. Some of these creatures will make their home on one of the numerous small islands found on the water.

The waters of the Lake are of a highly magical nature, and bathing in it brings a strange effect. A soothing feeling of calm will come over the effected creature, draining away any rage, frustration, despair, arrogance, pain, or other emotion that may blind the being. Clear thought, and an unbiased view of any situation pondered will result. This effect will last until the creature is dry, but will not continue once the demiplane has been left behind. The water cannot be transported back to Oerik; indeed, all attempts have produced only empty, dry vessels.

Possibly the most useful of the Fading Lands in these modern times, its location deep within the Jotens keeps it from being more frequently utilized. The most useful effect recorded on this demiplane is that divination magic is highly enhanced here under certain circumstances. It appears that, provided the purpose of the desired information is unselfish and peaceful, any form of divining performed will always prove successful. The information gained is also said to be of a more precise nature than has normally come to be expected, although it is still somewhat vague. It is uncertain what the effects would be of attempting to scry a creature magically warded against these spells.

Possibly due to its difficult location and lack of frequent use, the Lake seems destined to be the next Land to fade from our world. It is rarely found, and even professionally drawn maps have failed to improve upon this. It appears to be changing locations fairly rapidly, which history has shown to indicate its demise is close at hand.

One last fact should be mentioned on the Lake of Insight. While its time on Oerth may be limited, time spent there is apparently without limit. All recorded ventures have noted that literally no time had elapsed in the Flanaess, with some considerable journals kept of extended stays within the demiplane. Again, it is truly sad that such a useful tool may soon pass out of our hands.

**Maze of Skin** - Located deep within the Rushmoors, this Fading Land is arguably one of the strangest. As the name implies, the entire demiplane is one large maze. None have ever indicated ever finding an exit or other sign that there is a correct route to follow. Numerous puzzles, traps, tricks (most notably, tesseract of amazing complexity), and fell creatures hinder progress, and little to nothing has been gained to indicate the exploration was worthwhile.

The maze itself is of a unique nature. The walls are composed of a sickening, skinless fleshy substance, not unlike that produced by a stone to flesh spell (although attempts at reversing or dispelling this effect have proven unsuccessful). The entire maze is filled with a liquid, much like water in consistency, but easily breathable by air-breathers. The experience is said to be disturbing and slightly uncomfortable, but no pain or adverse effects have been noted.

Numerous harmless fish dwell within the maze, but these move so fast that they are only visible as blurs to the naked eye, and some feel that this is caused by another temporal effect. Whatever the reason, this speed is not

bestowed upon explorers, or upon the nearly invisible foes found within the Maze. Most often noted of these are transparent oozes, water weirds, and slithering trackers, all of which are said to use their transparent natures to cunning, deadly advantage.

The walls of the Land are said to fade in and out of existence at seemingly random intervals, making mapping impossible. Many parties have become hopelessly lost in the Maze, and returning to the Flanaess is generally considered a challenge more difficult than anything else encountered in the demiplane.

**Mines of Dumathoin** - A typical gnomish or dwarven mine in appearance, this realm holds few other similarities to known excavation sites. While cave lizards, blind cave fish, fungi, and other typical mine dwelling animals are found within, they are all unmoving and seem as rock to the observer.

The true dominant life forms within the cave system are the rocks, gems, pit props, and even gases, all of which are sentient. These beings will freely speak with explorers, and have been noted to sing and play games as well. They seem to share with us the basic needs for life, and have been observed breathing, eating, drinking, and sleeping.

These creatures seem to have a very complex society. They are constantly striving to increase the size of their realm through excavation. No hierarchy seems to exist, all of these creatures seem to work in concert, with differences of opinion handled in a way which would embarrass the most humble priest of Rao. Strangely enough, they seem to have no concept of their origins, no creation myths, and no need for this type of information. They simply feel that they have always existed, and that their society has always been much as it is now. Their history includes several war-like periods, but they all appear to have been a battle for their lives, never any internal conflicts or conquests. Those who follow the paths and ideals of good would learn much from these creatures, although the Order holds that the beings would grow much more if they increased the diversity in their views and opinions.

One record states that an explorer managed to return with one of the mining tools, which provided him with vast knowledge and considerable skill in matters dealing with subterranean exploration. The tool was simply noted as "hidden" within the Mines, but no other accounting indicates any other experience of this nature. Since the tools within the Mines are alive, it is unclear whether the tale involves a tool willing to travel to our world, a tool taken against its will, or a magic item created using the body of a deceased being. If the method used is a peaceful one, this may be a valuable asset for mining peoples across Oerik.

**Moonarch of Sehanine** - Only recently classified as an entrance to a Fading Land, the Moonarch holds a rich place within the legends of the elves of Celene. Never found twice in the same spot, the Arch only appears when the Handmaiden has reached her fullness, and then only sporadically. Generally encountered in the spur of the

Lortmils in northwest Celene, the Arch has eroded to become only a few feet thin at its peak. Despite this worn and aged appearance, strong magical effects of a druidic nature are noted in any spot the artifact has appeared. These can vary greatly, and can last for up to several years.

Only non-evil elves have been recorded as passing through the Moonarch, and the individual must have made something of her/his life. After passing through the Moonarch, the elf is said to be put through grueling tests, trials, puzzles, and other challenges. Legends hold that the Seldarine are testing their people, preparing the best of them for the Leaving. Indeed, it appears that nearly all elves returning have sought out that ancient rite soon after.

The demiplane reached is said to be a faerie realm, rich with sylvan creatures magical and mundane. Intensely magical and lush, the Land is said to hold impossibly vivid sounds and colors. Very little else is known of this Fading Land, as all time spent there is occupied by the tests of Corellon, and the other gods of the elves.

An individual who enters the Moonarch is gone from our world for years at a time, although a significantly shorter time is experienced by the elf. Perhaps this magnifies the broken heart and will which is said to often result from Corellon's final testing of his people.

The reader is referred to the entry above, which covered the Faerie Court of Rings, as this covers the controversial arguments that link that demiplane with the Moonarch of Sehanine.

**Plains of Imix** - Deep within the Adri Forest lies the Fading Land most hostile to woodland life. The Plains of Imix are a barren, burnt waste that is only broken by volcanoes, geysers, fire vents, and the like. The life found here is as one would expect, with elemental fire creatures predominant, but numerous steam, magma, smoke, ash, and heat-based beings are also encountered. The unusual aspect which all share is that many individuals appear friendly to outsiders, and have been recorded as offering aid, information, and even trade goods. This appears to vary as widely as human nature, for no single race has been noted as either friendly or not, with most having both good and evil traits exhibited among individuals.

The magical effects of this Land are very curious, especially considering the nature of the terrain. No physically damaging magic will function for outsiders, although the natives seem unaffected by this. This is especially strange when the other magical effects are revealed. It appears that all invocation and evocation magic which does not directly cause damage is triple is duration, area of effect, range, and other factors.

Very little of value has been found in this demiplane, as most valuables are either flammable or damaged by intense heat. Some speculate that pools of molten metal may be located, but how to retrieve the treasure would still present a huge problem.

It should be noted that the elves of the Adri are not very fond of anyone visiting this Fading Land. Apparently, there is some sort of a link between the Plains and the City of the

Summer Stars. The extent of this link, why it exists, and what effects it may have on either location are unknown.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I believe the study of these fantastic realms should become a high priority for the Order, as we have precious little time left to do so. I would even venture to say that perhaps some of our chronomantic colleagues would be of great assistance in our research concerning Lands now gone from Oerth. The exploration would need to be kept low-key, as it is certain that the priests of Lendor would not find this exploitation of the timestream to their liking. Perhaps the priesthood of Cyndor would find this proposal more amicable...

*My ideas for this work have been an adaptation of the ideas of Carl Sargent in the From the Ashes boxed set. It is my hope that further information will surface, and that I will be able to share many more of such findings with you I'd like to thank Nellisir & Grey1998 for their comments and ideas.*

*Thanks to Randy Richards for posting this on the Greytalk board, and of course a huge thanks to Mr. Gygax, for the write up on Dorgha, and for creating this wondrous world which we all live -- um -- I mean that we adventure in.*

Dyvers, City of Adventure

## Faiths of the Western Gate

### Part One of Two

By Tom Harrison  
(Blusponge@aol.com)

Like the other merchant capitals of the central Flanaess, Dyvers supports a eclectic body of faiths. As people from across the region come to trade in the city's marketplaces, new faiths are constantly introduced. Most of the common deities are represented here, as are a number of rarer Suel powers. The polytheistic habits of the citizenry are such nearly any deity, regardless of demeanor, can find a foothold in Dyvers. Even the foul Nerull has a small following within the city walls.

Commerce is the language of the city and is spoken fluently by all Dyversian faiths alike. The lower and middle classes pay reverence to the mercantile deities, and it comes as no surprise Zilchus and Procan are the patrons of the city. The aristocracy observe a wider collection of deities. In some circles, there is a great competition to be part of the "latest faith." These nobles are always eager for what new experiences their fortunes can bring them, and newly established temples often court them for this reason.

### REPRESENTED DEITIES IN DYVERS

The following lists the major faiths observed in Dyvers. The list is not exhaustive, and there are a number of small, independent factions and secret cults at work in the city. While life in Dyvers is not greatly religious, there are numerous manners and customs in place to observe numerous rituals from a variety of deities.

Deity	Following	Properties & Services
Allitur	Major	Temple, schools, courts
Boccob	Minor	None (worshipped by the local mage's guild)
Bralm	Major	Temple, schools
Erythnul	Minor	Temple, shanty-town
Istus	Major	Temple
Lydia	Minor	Shrine, gardens
Myhriss	Minor	Shrine, marriage ceremonies
Nerull	Minor	Temple, mortuary, funerals
Pelor	Major	Temple, hospices, orphanages
Pholtus	Minor	Temple, courts
Procan	Major	Temple, ship & journey oversight, guild connections
Rao	Minor	Temple
St. Cuthbert	Minor	Temple
Zilchus	Major	Temple, business oversight, guild connections
Zodal	Minor	Shrine, orphanage, hospice

## TEMPLE OF THE WASP

The fellowship of Bralm is well known and influential among the citizens of the Western Gate. The work ethic of the Dyversians is a perfect match for the dogma of the Suel goddess. The Temple of the Wasp has become a mainstay of religious life for many and services on holy days are always well attended. Most of Bralm's followers are from the lower classes, but nearly all pay some sort of reverence. They pay homage to the goddess, not for their own sake, but so those they depend on do not succumb to sloth.

The temple itself is somewhat of an oddity. One of the larger complexes in the city, it stands out in its composition. The temple is a semi-domed structure. The interior is divided into a series of honey-combed chambers radiating around a central altar room. The high ceiling lofts are open and covered by pale cloth canopies. Wasps and hornets often nest in these places. The walls are crafted of heavy clay and sandstone. Viewed from above, one might say the design borrows much from the temple's namesake insect.

The Temple of the Wasp is served by thirty four priests. Only a fourth of these are ever in the temple at any one time during the daily services. The rest busy themselves with errands and assignments throughout the city; collecting alms and assisting in various labors. There is a strict daily routine required of the priests, including attending morning services, work in the temple gardens, and attending functions throughout the city.

A strict heirarchy and system of manners are followed. Priests of Bralm always walk single file, and on special occassions long processions of these fallow garbed folk can be seen winding through the streets in prayer. Dress is minimalistic and bland, and hair is kept cropped just below the neck for men and women alike. Many services and rituals center around deprivation of niceties like sleep, speech, touching, and various forms of comfort. In this way, priests show their unswerving discipline in the light of hardship. While similar demands are placed on those worshippers who attend services, they are not nearly as extreme. Entering the Temple of the Wasp as a priest is not a popular career.

It is considered proper and respectful for a priest of Bralm to bless the first day of any construction efforts in Dyvers. The priest officiates over a brief ceremony before work begins, and is an active participant throughout the day, working amongst overseers and laymen alike. This practice is the same for any building, whether homesteads or keeps. Such blessings ensure the hasty completion of the task, and protect the workers against injuries and accidents. As such, many guilds try to keep good relations with the priests of Bralm.

The high priestess is a woman named Einsha (Pr14). She is an elderly woman with hardened skin and calloused hands. No one, not even her fellow priests are exactly sure of her age, but she is said to have taught some of the city elders their letters when they were young. Despite her age, she continues to work among the temple gardens and bee hives. She has also taught reading and writing to both rich and poor alike. A strict teacher, it is a mark of pride to have been taught by her, and many noble families have attempted to bring the Temple to favor their own children. This is a futile effort where the

high priestess is concerned. Einsha is known and respected throughout Dyvers. She is attended by a single acolyte. The old priestess has an uncanny endurance for one of her years, which she attributes to two drafts of cod oil that she takes daily, as she believes it cleanses and renews her physically

The temple is an oddity to many visitors, as worship of Bralm is in large part limited to southern portions of the United Kingdom of Ahlissa and small parts of the Urnst provinces. The temple regularly receives missionaries and pilgrims from these places, some coming so far to seek the blessings of High Priestess Einsha.

The Temple of the Wasp possesses a few minor relics of Bralm. Einsha herself carries the *Crook of St. Faustous*, a well known figure in the texts of Bralm. With this staff, the high priest can summon a swarm of giant wasps to defend the temple from invaders. This device is highly sought after by temples in the United Kingdom of Ahlissa, but Einsha is hesitant to part with it. Her attachment strikes many of her associates as odd, but they assume Einsha has her reasons.

The temple also possesses the *Bowl of Wondrous Invention*. A drink from this bowl fills the mind with fantastic ideas, concepts, and inventions. The bowl has been in the temple for so many years, its power has begun to influence those who live and work in the immediate area. These Dyversians, ordinary in most respects, are becoming obsessed with their own small inventions. These range from elaborate rope and pulley systems which cool their homes and open their door to small clockwork devices to carry messages back and forth. In every case, the drive to create has become overwhelming. Despite these wondrous creations, few people have been inclined to reveal them to more than a few close friends, and so their inventions have gone mostly unnoticed. The priests of the temple do not seem to be affected by this power, perhaps because of their close affinity with Bralm.

# THE FINAL WORD

## News and Announcements from the Council Of Greyhawk

### A New Logo!

Ron Carey is the winning designer of our new logo -- you may have noticed it on the front page? Our thanks go out to Ron and the other people who participated in our Design the Journal Logo Contest!

### Explore the Oerth!

Exploration and Discovery is the theme of our next issue, and we'd like to make it an extra special, extra-large one. Have you developed a new town, race, class, kit, monster, villain, country, or dungeon for Greyhawk? We'd like to see it! Send your article proposals in to "oerthjrnl@aol.com"!

### Artists Wanted!

We're looking for artists interested in contributing to the Oerth Journal. Work would be done on a commission basis, and while we can't pay money, artists would be fully credited and get their work displayed one of the oldest and most respected AD&D e-zines, with a world-wide audience. Send samples or questions to "oerthjrnl@aol.com"

### Write to us!

What do you think of the Oerth Journal? What would you like to see more of? Less of? Write the Journal and let us know!

### How to Get Stuff in Here!

The Council of Greyhawk accepts freelance submissions from anyone interested. If you have something you wish to submit, or would like to discuss an idea for an article, send e-mail to "Oerthjrnl@aol.com". All submissions are reviewed by a small editorial board and checked for clarity, grammar and consistency. We will work with all submissions, but reserve the right to reject a piece if it does not conform to the aforementioned standards.

The Oerth Journal is always interested in in-depth examinations of the nations, cities, and sites of the Flanaess and their history, as well as adventures, artifact and magical item descriptions, kits, a detailed write-up of Waldorf, and just about anything else related to Greyhawk. Regular departments include *Dyvers*, *City of Adventure*, which details guilds, individuals, locations, and organizations of the City of Sails, *With Boccob's Blessing*, an in-depth look at a magic item or artifact unique to the World of Greyhawk, *Gateway to Adventure*, with World of Greyhawk-based adventures, *The Good Oerth*, featuring detailed exploration of "off the map" areas of Oerik and beyond, *Denizens of the Flanaess*, detailing unique monster NPCs of the Flanaess, and *Of Oerth and Altar*, a regular feature examining the myriad deities of Greyhawk.

Writer's Guidelines are archived at the Oerth Journal section of the Council of Greyhawk website.

### What is the Council of Greyhawk?

The Council is a loosely organized group of Greyhawk enthusiasts who currently meet and operate via email and IRC. Regular meetings are open to all interested. Check our web page, the World of Greyhawk folder at KEYWORD: RPG on AOL or GREYtalk for meeting times and details.

Visit our Web site at:

<http://members.xoom.com/cogh/index.html>

Subscribe to the Council mailing list for information on the latest Council projects and events at:

<http://www.onelist.com/subscribe.cgi/CoGH>

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