

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

CAMPAIGN SUPPLEMENT

FORGOTTEN REALMS®

SHINING SOUTH™



Thomas M. Reid

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FORGOTTEN REALMS®

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INTRODUCTION

In other parts of Faerûn, travelers speak of the wonders they have seen in the Shining South. Tales and songs tell of lands scorched by heat, people ruled by drow, traders who could negotiate the name away from an Amnian, and wizards who use magic for tasks mundane to miraculous. The Shining South is a vast place with perhaps the broadest variety of cultures anywhere. Halflings call part of the region home, while in another area half-drow rule and deem others outsiders. The most prominent dwarven abode sits squarely in the South, within the Great Rift, a carved canyon that has belonged to the dwarves for untold centuries. The Shining South is a place of ancient magic kept alive and practiced with casualness that would make the barbarians of the Silver Marches howl in consternation.

Folk from many other parts of the world came to settle the South, so people here can trace their cultures back to powers that rose and fell in distant times, including Netheril and Imaskar. Peoples such as the distant Nars and Illuskans managed to find their way to the shores of the Faerûn's southern coast. All these and more have given rise to tribesmen on the plains of the Shaar, traders in Durpar, and reclusive wizards of Halruaa.

At its most basic definition, the Shining South is an area encompassing the lands between the Chultan Peninsula and the blasted deserts of the ancient Imaskari region, and from the Great Sea all the way to the fringes of Chondalwood and the ancient nations of Unther and Mulhorand. Over 1.1 million square miles could be considered part of the South, divided between six principal locales—Dambrath, the Great Rift, Halruaa, Luiren, the Shaar, and the Shining Lands (Durpar, Estagund, Var the Golden, and Veldorn). Amid these major regions, dozens of independent cities and strongholds sit among a web of trade routes.

The lands of the South each have their own unique character. Dambrath is a nation with two histories, one of human barbarians and another of half-drow conquerors. It is known for aggression and horse breeding. To the west sits mighty Halruaa, a nation where everything is done with magical assistance, and items of power are created and put to use unlike anywhere else in the whole of Faerûn. The wizards try to keep their eldritch practices a secret, but hints of their capabilities have slipped beyond their borders nonetheless. North of Halruaa sits the western end of great grasslands known as the Shaar, which runs all the way east to the Giant's Belt Mountains, the very edge of the world by some folks' reckoning. Fierce nomadic tribes of humans, wemics, loxos, thri-kreen, and others wander the plains, chasing the herds and fighting for territory, water, and sacred lands. Right in the middle of the Shaar is the Great Rift, homeland of the gold dwarves. Halflings, too, have their own nation in the South. The hin, as they prefer to be called, live quietly in Luiren, enjoying the serenity of its pastures and woodlands. Finally, just to the east of the halfling home sits the Shining Lands, a place of commerce and faith. The people of this place revere trade and wealth above all else, but couple that reverence with honesty and open minds.

what you need to play

This sourcebook assumes that you own the three core rulebooks of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. In addition, material in this book frequently refers to the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* and *Player's Guide to Faerûn*.

We also recommend *Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn* and *Races of Faerûn*. A number of the creatures mentioned in this sourcebook (primarily in the random encounter tables) can be found in those resources.

RACES AND REGIONS



Like many other corners of Faerûn, the diversity of the Shining South is enormous, with representatives of every major race present. Some ways of life might be unique to a particular group in this region, but humans, elves, dwarves, gnomes, and halflings are much the same here as elsewhere. In addition to these races, a few species, such as the wemic, are unique to the Shining South, including two that are fully detailed in this book: the loxo and the thri-kreen.

Characters who hail from the Shining South can choose from several new regions described later in this chapter. The chapter concludes with a selection of new feats and regional feats.

Of the major races in the South, humans are the most prevalent. A number of different human ethnicities populated the southern coast of the continent in the early days, most of them roaming the land first as barbaric nomads and only later settling down and taking up the practices of farming, craftsmanship, and trade. Among those, the Arkaiuns, the Durpari, the Halruaans, and the Shaarans are the most dominant.

Besides humans, gold dwarves and halflings are numerous here due to the presence of their native homelands. The gold dwarves call the Great Rift home and have spread from there to the various mountain ranges throughout the South, especially since Moradin's Thunder Blessing. They mine for precious metals and gems in both the Curna and Toadsquat ranges, among others. The halflings hail from the land of Luiren, where humans are few and far between. Halflings have also migrated into other regions, particularly the Hills of the Dead Kings and various urban centers along the coast of the Golden Water.

Elves and half-elves are a rarity in most parts of the South, for few forests here once served as their traditional homes. Minor communities of wild elves populate the Forest of Amtar, while a similar, if more vicious, lot of the green elves inhabit the Misty Vale. Enclaves of elves and half-elves can be found in several human cities, but they are small and have no real presence. The marked exceptions to this paucity are the drow beneath the Gnomlwatch Mountains and the half-drow Crinti who rule the land of Dambrath on their behalf. The natural order has been

turned upside down in that nation, for half-drow reign supreme, while humans kneel at their feet.

Gnomes and planetouched are uncommon in the Shining South. A sizable gathering of gnomes serve as master gemcutters in the city of Ormpé in Durpar, while another group defends the western end of the Rathgaunt Hills in the Shaar. Other small, isolated clans live deep in the hills, but the only gnomes usually spotted in the open are those who hail from other lands. A few planetouched linger in and around the Shining Lands, a reminder of the days when demons ruled some of the cities along the Golden Water, in the Land of Monsters known as Veldorn. Their offspring still call the more cosmopolitan urban centers home, and few do more than look twice at the outsiders in their midst, so long as those outsiders have coin to spend like everyone else.

A few half-orcs and other humanoids serve as hired swords or bodyguards for less particular folk. They are more welcome in Dambrath than anywhere else in the South, because the Crinti employ unsavory soldiers of all sorts. The lizardfolk of Rethild are said to offer mercenary service from their swamp home, and a variety of humanoids roam the open plains of the Shaar.

Human, Arkaiun

Regions: Dambrath, The Golden Water, Halruaa, The Shaar.

Racial Feats: Knife Fighter, Resist Poison, Saddleback

Arkaiuns are a relatively new ethnicity among humans, a blend of other cultures that have been forced to flee or submit to others for most of their existence. Today, they are scattered throughout the southern coast of Faerûn, though Dambrath is their traditional home. Arkaiuns are generally short and stocky, with dusky skin and dark brown to black hair.

History

The Arkaiuns who came to the grass-covered plains of the region now known as Dambrath originally hailed from Shandaular, the capital of the kingdom of Ashanath far to the north. Shandaular was actually two separate parts of the same city, each built around one of the termini of a two-way *portal* connecting the Council Hills region and the western shore of Lake Ashane. When the nentyarch of Tharos attempted to destroy Shandaular during his conquest of Ashanath in -946.DR, the citizens fled through their *portal* to the southern half of the city, leaving behind their king, Arkaius the Archmage, to close the *portal* and destroy it. The Nar people took the name of the fallen king, calling themselves the Arkaiuns, and continued to live in the shadow of the quiet *portal* arch for several more centuries. Though their identity remained intact, the glory of the people of Shandaular waned to a shadow of its former self. Eventually, the Arkaiuns were little more than numerous tribes of nomads who considered their former city a meeting place.

In the century leading up to Dale Reckoning, a second ethnicity of humans arrived through the same *portal* terminus, albeit from a different region of Faerûn. These were a lost tribe of Illuskans, having vanished from their homeland of Rauthym during that nation's expansive years. The Illuskans settled among the Nar-Arkaiuns and interbred, and eventually, the two groups became one. The mixed Arkaiuns continued to dwell in the Council Hills region for a couple more centuries, forming the kingdom of Eltabranar during that time.

After an ill-advised invasion of Unther and Mulhorand ended disastrously, the Arkaiuns fled south and west, eventually settling along the coast of the Bay of Dancing Dolphins. There, they began to farm the land and founded trading centers, remaining a presence in the region for a number of centuries.

Early in the ninth century DR, the Arkaiuns accidentally broke through into the Underdark and encountered the drow for the first time. Foolishly, their king ordered an army to march down into the depths of the mountains and conquer the drow city. It was a disaster of record proportions—the tables were

turned within half a century, and the Arkaiuns were the ones facing subjugation. The final straw came in the form of betrayal at the hands of a group of priestesses of Loviatar. Dambrath belonged to the drow, and the Arkaiuns became their servant race.

outlook

Few Arkaiuns identify themselves on a nationalistic level any longer. They have long been an oppressed people, held under the thumb of half-drow and drow in what was once their homeland of Dambrath. Those who migrated to other regions before the coming of the Crinti have stayed there, and others have managed to slip away at opportune moments.

ARKAIUN CHARACTERS

Arkaiuns do well as fighters, rogues, and rangers, since the role they play in Dambrathan society is one of manual labor and struggle. In urban areas, they are house guards, sailors, and thieves, while they function as warriors and ranch hands in the countryside. Some outlaws might be barbarians, still trying to preserve a nomadic lifestyle and ready to flee the Crinti at a moment's notice. Few Arkaiuns become spellcasters of any sort, particularly in Dambrath itself, where practice of magic is forbidden to Arkaiuns, and religion is enforced.

Prestige Classes: Arkaiuns are inclined toward physical prestige classes, such as the assassin, duelist, Great Sea corsair, horizon walker, and guild thief, rather than those of a spiritual or arcane nature.

Arkaiun society

Crinti rule overshadows Arkaiun society. Arkaiuns who still live in Dambrath are considered second-class citizens, suitable only for menial physical labor, unspecialized commerce work,



Illustrations by Mike Dubisch

and service in the military. Outside that nation, Arkaiuns simply blend in with the habits of those around them.

Some Arkaiuns live in the wilds beyond the immediate control of the Crinti and still uphold their traditional ways, insisting on observing the nomadic lifestyle and ceremonies they maintained before the coming of the drow. In these cases, Arkaiuns are a savage people, as is evidenced in their occasional veneration of Malar as the master of the hunt.

Language and Literacy

Arkaiuns who live in Dambrath speak Common and Dambrathan. This latter tongue is a combination of Old Illusk and ancient Nar, neither of which are spoken today. It employs the Dethek alphabet. Ordinary second languages include Illuskan, Halruaan, Shaaran, and Undercommon. Only 30% of the Arkaiuns living in Dambrath are literate.

Arkaiun magic and Lore

Arkaiuns are unused to using magic, since their Crinti rulers do not allow them to learn spellcasting. Of the magic with which they are familiar, armor and weapons bearing minor powers are most common.

SPELLS AND SPELLCASTING

The Arkaiuns who have taken up the mantle of spellcaster have almost universally adapted to another culture to learn those ways. Among Arkaiuns whose culture is still intact (primarily barbarian peoples living on the fringes of Crinti society,

often as utter outlaws), a few adepts, bards, druids, and rangers have managed to develop some magical prowess. These individuals are rare, however.

Spellcasting Tradition: Since spellcasting among Crinti-ruled Arkaiuns is forbidden, the people have no discernible spellcasting tradition.

Unique Spells: None.

ARKAIUN MAGIC ITEMS

Since few Arkaiuns are afforded the opportunity to engage in spellcasting, they have neither the knowledge nor the means to manufacture magic items.

Common Magic Items: None.

Arkaiun deities

In Dambrath itself, Arkaiuns are forcibly devoted to Loviatar and sometimes Lolth. Left to their own devices, most honor Tempus, though a few more savage folk (particularly the barbarians that roam the fringes of Dambrath, fighting to remain free of Crinti influence) venerate Malar for his hunting portfolio. In other lands, the Arkaiuns have adapted to the beliefs of the locals, so they honor a wide variety of deities.

Relations with other Races

Obviously, most Dambrathan Arkaiuns view the half-drow and the drow who rule their land with stifled loathing. This abhorrence carries over to most other elves and half-elves (chiefly because the half-drow have reinforced such notions). Arkaiuns get along well enough with dwarves and gnomes, but their relationship with



halflings is strained due to several invasion attempts on Luiren (both before the arrival of the drow and at the behest of that race). Arkaiuns coexist surprisingly well with half-orcs, since a large number of them live in Dambrath, serving in martial capacities alongside humans.

More than a few Arkaiuns have migrated (or fled) to nearby human nations, so they have been accepted openly in the region around the Golden Water and integrated well with the Durpari people there. On the other side, Halruaans view Arkaiuns with suspicion due to a bad history between the two countries.

Arkaiun equipment

Arkaiuns have access to every type of equipment available in the *Player's Handbook*, due to the extensive trade that takes place all along the southern coast of Faerûn, Dambrath included.

ARMS AND ARMOR

Arkaiuns employ many weapons but prefer ranged weapons when in the open grasslands. Favored arms include crossbows, slings, and javelins for ranged combat, and short swords, daggers, and rapiers for melee. The heat of the South means breastplates, leather, and studded leather are the most common armors, along with bucklers or small shields.

Common Items: Breastplate, leather armor, buckler, javelin, short sword, light crossbow.

ANIMALS AND PETS

Arkaiuns have always been superior riders, and the horses that run on the fields of Dambrath are major assets to that nation. The humans bred and rode the animals long before the coming of the drow and half-drow, and they continue to do so today. As a result, almost every Arkaiun learns to ride a horse by the time he is five years old.

Human, Durpari

Regions: Dambrath, The Golden Water, Halruaa, Mulhorand, The Shaar, Unther.

Racial Feats: Arcane Schooling, Cosmopolitan, Silver Palm

Durpari have clustered around the Golden Water, the great bay of their homelands in the far southeastern section of Faerûn, for many centuries. Through hard work and dedication to a few simple yet profound ideals, the Durpari have turned themselves into a culture of astute traders and kind, welcoming people. Their predilection for commerce has allowed them to spread all along the southern coast of the continent and northward into other lands.

History

The Durpari tribes originated as subjugated barbarians to the great Imaskari Empire of millennia ago. When that nation fell into ruin, the Durpari quickly lost what civilizing influences they had acquired. Reverting to the lifestyle of simple nomads, the ancient Durpari roamed the coastline along the Golden Water. For over

two thousand years, the Mulan of Mulhorand preyed on southern tribes, wiping out entire clans in ferocious wars all across the plains that now comprise the eastern Shaar and lands southward.

Eventually, the Durpari tribesfolk began to settle down, establishing trading communities where they would be sheltered, fresh water was available, and boats could be pulled ashore. Though the tribes still squabbled, they were learning how to defend themselves against the depredations of the Mulan to the north and the Ulgarth to the east.

The trade centers grew, and the tribes began farming in earnest, finding the land good for growing grains and other produce for which tribes farther along the coast were eager to deal. Over time, the Durpari became so skilled at trading they knew no rivals. Ships from all over the sea found their way into the waters of the bay to do business with the folk.

Somewhere along the way, the Durpari found religion. A simple merchant began preaching of the Adama, both a belief system and a code of conduct. To the Durpari, the Adama is the one true force guiding their lives, and all deities in Faerûn are considered a part of it.

outlook

The Durpari people are warm and friendly, almost to a fault, but this graciousness doesn't hamper their sharp trading skills. They are hard workers as well, driven by their love of commerce and the belief that all things are possible with dedication and goodwill. This open-minded outlook makes the Durpari natural explorers, undeterred by the odd and extraordinary.

The Adama teaches that only through honest business practices and mutual respect can one find peace and happiness. The Durpari people get their strong senses of truth, fairness, and racial tolerance from the conviction that everything and everyone is a manifestation of the Adama. These principles have, in turn, garnered the Durpari a reputation for evenhandedness and made them more welcome in other lands.

DURPARI CHARACTERS

Durpari characters are diverse, for they find many types of skills and abilities useful. They make good sorcerers and wizards—especially abjurers, diviners, and illusionists, who are functional in protecting goods, determining the value of magic items, and enhancing business negotiations. People of the Golden Water region also have a strong divine inspiration, and many join the clergy or serve as paladins on behalf of the Adama. Some become bards to better entertain guests or sustain their travels, monks due to their proximity to eastern lands, or fighters and rangers if they spend a great deal of time on the Veldorn frontier. Few Durpari are thieves, because their society teaches so vehemently against such crimes, and almost no barbarians reside among the people now, despite their history.

Prestige Classes: Durpari find the most value in information gathering and the protection of their livelihoods. They gravitate toward the eldritch knight, Great Sea corsair, hand of the Adama, hierophant, loremaster, Maquar crusader, and mystic theurge prestige classes.

Durpari society

For most Durpari, the business of their culture is business itself, and their communities reflect this. A chaka, or merchant house, is the most recognized social unit among the people. Everyone is judged by how well they do for themselves, rather than who their ancestors were. Life in the settlements is filled with the noise of the marketplace, where everyone works to turn the highest profits while maintaining personal integrity.

Durpari value freedom. Their laws put much trust in the virtues taught by the Adama, allowing the people to pursue their goals unfettered by many commercial regulations. Despite this lax bureaucracy, the Durpari are not easy on criminals. They do, however, believe in redemption.

Durpari society is open to all, regardless of culture or heritage, with the obvious exception of wicked organizations and the followers of evil or destructive deities. Many races and cultures live and work alongside Durpari without fear of bigotry or oppression. Unless someone shows he cannot live without hurting others, his only judges are the consumers, who vote with their coin.

Language and literacy

The people of the Golden Water region of Faerûn speak Durpari, derived from elements of Draconic, Mulhorandi, and Rauric. It employs the Thorass alphabet, which was brought east during the earliest days of trading. Almost every Durpari has some level of literacy, since their businesses often depend on them being able to read and write.

Durpari magic and lore

Magic is a useful tool in Durpari dealings, and the people are at ease around both arcane and divine spells and items. Many Durpari employ sorcerers and wizards as part of their operations. Of course, the prevalence of faith in the Adama means the clergy of that devotion are a strong presence among the Durpari.

SPELLS AND SPELLCASTING

Durpari who study arcane spellcasting prefer divination and illusion magic when dealing with potential business partners, while spellcasters of any focus are useful on the caravan trail.

Spellcasting Tradition: To facilitate potential customers, Durpari merchants might employ illusions to create a comfortable atmosphere for foreign clients. They also favor divination, which aids in predicting everything from the future price of goods to the best shipping routes to avoid storms and hazards.

Unique Spells: Few spells are associated with Durpari wizards because of the mercantile focus of their culture. They have managed to obtain their magic the way they acquire other goods—through shrewd bargaining in distant lands.

DURPARI MAGIC ITEMS

Durpari folk prefer magic items that reveal information, protect caravans, and make life a little more comfortable at home.

Durpari deities

The Durpari people have a highly developed belief system that is part code of conduct and part pantheon. Known as the Adama, which means “the One,” this system preaches both broadmindedness and proper behavior in all that the Durpari do. Everything in the world and beyond is a part of the Adama. Because of its all-encompassing nature, the Adama incorporates all the deities of Faerûn, and thus all are accepted (to one degree or another) in Durpari society.

Strictly speaking, the deities most revered are Zionil (Gond), Curna (Oghma), Lucha (Selûne), Torm, and Waukeen. These five deities best exemplify the spirit and core values of the faith, which teaches all to work hard, deal fairly, and prevent no other from doing the same. Worship of the Adama is more a matter of everyday behavior than ceremony and ritual. By treating others justly, one honors the Adama. For all practical purposes, the code has the same tenets as the faiths venerating the five Faerûnian deities mentioned above.

Relations with other races

The Durpari comprise one of the most accepting cultures in Faerûn. They have learned that to excel at trade, they must be willing to deal with all types of people.

Durpari equipment

The Durpari, being master traders, have access to every conceivable item from any land. As a result, the contents of the *Player's Handbook* equipment lists are considered commonly available in Durpari lands.

ARMS AND ARMOR

The Durpari culture has adopted a blend of Mulhorandi and Utter Eastern arms and armor preferences. Kukris, falchions, and scimitars are most prevalent as melee weapons, while crossbows and shortbows are favored for ranged attacks. The hot climate of the Durpari homelands means that the people prefer light armor for protection. The majority of combatants wear leather, studded leather, or breastplates, along with light shields.

Common Items: All weapons and armor are available in Durpari nations.

ANIMALS AND PETS

The Durpari are not fond of any one type of creature over any others, though a wide variety of species can be found in the public areas, shops, and homes of the wealthy. Such fauna come from many regions, brought back by merchants interested in selling unusual specimens to those who delight in showing off unique pets. Animals that fare particularly well in Durpar's hot climate include lizards, snakes, and other reptiles, as well as colorful birds and exotic creatures from nearby jungles and rivers.

human, halruaan

Regions: Dambrath, The Golden Water, Halruaa, Lapaliiya, Nimbral, Samarach, The Shaar.

Racial Feats: Arcane Schooling, Magical Training, Spellwise

history

Halruaans are the descendants of two cultural groups. Their original ethnicity comes from the Lapal (forebears of the Tashalans), a people who fled to this region after escaping their yuan-ti masters in the jungles near the Lapal Sea. More than three millennia ago, these escaped slaves settled a sheltered valley region that sat along the southern coast of Faerûn, surrounded on three sides by high mountains and the Great Sea on the fourth. They established an uncomplicated life of farming, animal herding, and fishing. The Lapal had few cities and many monster problems, but their existence was secluded and undisturbed for over a thousand years.

When the empire of Netheril was shattered by the folly of Karsus and the magic of the phaerimm, a number of wizards, along with their families, servants, and extended clans, fled the northland, led by the archmage Raumark. They traveled southward by way of skyships, looking for a place where they could both hide from the phaerimm and settle into a life of magic once more. Eventually, they came upon a broad valley set between three mountain ranges that even their skyships had difficulty traversing. There they found the simple Lapal people, still farming and fishing.

Within three generations, the two groups had merged into one culture. The Netherese taught the ways of magic, and the Lapal offered the secrets of using the land's resources. In the centuries since then, the Halruaans have enjoyed a good life while preparing for invasion from elsewhere, always expecting either the phaerimm or other jealous nations to come and try to take their magic away.

At one point late in the second century DR, a small faction of Leira worshipers broke from the wizards of Halruaa and relocated to the island of Nimbral. Though they are Halruaan by blood, they are a distinct culture separated from their kin by many miles of ocean.

outlook

Halruaans are a happy people who treat one another with exaggerated niceties, though they are suspicious of outsiders and always suspect strangers of trying to appropriate their magical secrets. They enjoy the fruits of their labors well, for the quality of life in a land filled with wizards is high. Even the basest of commoners might be able to perform a few simple spells. Likewise, with magic so common in the culture, most people have managed to acquire at least one or two magic items.

Few Halruaans develop wanderlust. Of those that do venture beyond the mountains that shelter their home, most are simply on a quest for new and unusual spell components or devices they have never seen before. Ironically, Halruaans are loath to give

up their own magical mysteries, but they don't think twice about acquiring the arcane lore of others.

HALRUAAN CHARACTERS

Although it is not strictly true that more Halruaan wizards roam Faerûn than those from any other land—the Red Wizards might beg to differ—it is accepted that the majority of Halruaans who leave home are blessed with arcane power. Most are wizards, although a few are bards. Halruaan sorcerers are probably more common outside the country than within, as the rest of Halruaan society distrusts sorcerous magic and considers sorcerers dangerous, tainted individuals. Few Halruaans are barbarians, druids, monks, paladins, or rogues. Some take up the mantle of divine devotion, almost exclusively to one of the two deities of magic, Mystra or Azuth. Savras and Velsharoon have small followings subservient to the church of Azuth. Other faiths are overtly discouraged or expunged, but rumors persist of a cult of Shar (and her Shadow Weave).

Prestige Classes: Because of their focus on wizardry, any of the prestige classes that seem to be a natural extension of arcane magic are favored by Halruaans. Arcane devotees, archmages, eldritch knights, Halruaan elders, Halruaan magehounds, loremasters, and mystic theurges are all attractive choices. If any Halruaan wizards have secretly turned to the Shadow Weave, a few might have become shadow adepts.

halruaan society

Halruaans make a point of elevating those accomplished in the arcane arts. It's a fact of their society that masterful wizardry is the ultimate goal in life. That is not to say that they scorn or abuse those who cannot wield magic. On the contrary, the lowly cook who must light a fire with flint and steel serves an important function—even the high evoker needs a full belly to practice his magic. Still, the haves and the have-nots are clearly delineated in Halruaa, though no discriminatory laws against magic-bereft individuals exist in the nation.

Appearance is everything among Halruaans, the flashier the better. Folk measure one another by their dress, responsibilities, and transportation, impressed all the more if magic is a part of all three. Halruaans prefer to dress in bright colors, lavishly adorn themselves with trinkets and magical effects, and ride in luxurious vehicles. Conveyances are often magic items, such as a skyship or flying carpet.

In the countryside, flamboyant ways are not so important, but the use and display of magic still is. Rural folk value the practical application of magic more than magic for its own sake. A spell or item that can harvest the crop or herd the sheep more efficiently is esteemed more than flashy wizardry.

The Halruaan government is also set up around the influence of magic. The netyarch, or wizard-king, of Halruaa is generally accepted to be the single most powerful magic-wielding individual in the entire nation, culled from an elite group of wizards called the Council of Elders. It is the wizard-king, with advice and assistance from the elders, who determines the policies of the land. A netyarch certainly recognizes the value of evaluating decisions

from every angle, but everyone understands that decrees handed down favor those with the gift of the Art.

Language and Literacy

Halruaans almost universally speak Halruaan, which is simply a modern dialect of ancient Netherese. They employ the Draconic alphabet in their writings. Of course, no self-respecting Halruaan wizard limits herself to a single language. Many go out of their way to master half a dozen or so tongues, many of them ancient and/or dead, to aid in magical research. The lowliest wizards learn at least one or two other languages, if for no other reason than to better facilitate trade with nearby nations.

A land of wizards is also a land of literacy. Those who cannot invoke arcane energy still learn to read and write at an early age. The Halruaans have two reasons for this basic education. The first is to uncover those Halruaan children who have a spark of magic in them, which is accomplished through a series of tests. Part of the preparation for these tests is learning to read and write. Additionally, a developed intellect is prized in Halruaa, as the nation's public school system, which all youngsters attend, shows. Literacy is quintessential to this point of personal pride.

Halruaan Magic and Lore

Halruaa is magic, and magic is Halruaa. As descendants of the Netherese, who were perhaps the greatest wizards in the history of Faerûn, Halruaans have the strongest magical tradition of any alive—perhaps more deeply rooted than that of Thay. Every kind of magic imaginable has been researched, perfected, and built on by Halruaan wizards. Divine magic is not as highly regarded in Halruaan society, but clerics of Faerûn's deities of magic are common enough.

SPELLS AND SPELLCASTING

While countless wizards of every school have dominated the landscape of Halruaa throughout its past, the diviner is now the slight favorite. "Knowledge is power, thus great knowledge is great power," is a common saying in Halruaan social circles. Divination is the key to hidden information.

Spellcasting Tradition: In Halruaa, wizardry of every sort is accepted, and the more the better. Other forms of arcane magic are considered less important or unsafe. Divine spells tend to focus on divination and protection, to both learn about and guard arcane secrets and magic items.

Unique Spells: Far too many useful and wondrous spells come from Halruaa to mention here. The vast majority of new spells in this book account for but a fraction of the magic distributed from Halruaa throughout the centuries.

HALRUAAN MAGIC ITEMS

As with spells, magic items are so widely created and used throughout all facets of Halruaan culture that it would be impossible to effectively list them here. The majority of new items described in Chapter 4 of this book, as well as countless items from other sources, originated in Halruaa.

Halruaan Deities

Early in Halruaan history, the people likely followed a broader pantheon derived from their previous cultures—the Lapal the divinities of the jungle and yuan-ti, and the Netherese their own deities. These eventually gave way to the current divine beings worshiped in the land of wizards.

The vast majority of Halruaans venerate Mystra, the deity of magic. They see service to her as beneficial to their way of life, and prayers asking for protection of the Weave are a daily ritual. In fact, it is likely that the Netherese who became the Halruaans recognized the change in the divinity of magic shortly after the destruction of Mystryl. Perhaps they felt in some way obligated to curry the new deity's favor in the hopes that nothing so disastrous would befall them (such as pursuit by the phaerimm). That Mystra heard and answered those ancient supplications secured the utter loyalty of mainstream Halruaa to this day.

Eventually, some Halruaans began to migrate toward the worship of Savras and Azuth, recognizing a tighter focus to their own interests in their tenets. While both churches were initially scorned, shunned, and relegated to the fringes of society, each saw in the other a long-term rival. Eventually, worship of the All-Seeing Eye all but vanished, and the Church of Azuth became widely accepted. Today one in six Halruaans worship Azuth.

Sects dedicated to Savras and Velsharoon also exist in Halruaa, controlled by the church of Azuth, much as these lesser deities owe fealty to the Lord of Spells. Those who follow the All Seeing have gained prominence of late, due to the popularity of divination and the reemergence of the church of Savras across Faerûn, albeit subservient to the church of Azuth. Savras's sect maintains impartiality, serving all who can barter for foresight. Researchers into death and undeath are allowed to plumb the mysteries Velsharoon offers, but such studies are strictly monitored and regulated by the clergy of The High One.

Another group of wizards, illusionists loyal to Leira, chose to leave the shores of Halruaa, rather than take up the same fight into which the followers of Azuth had been forced. These servants of the Mother of Illusionists journeyed to the distant island of Nimbral, where they remain today. Since the Time of Troubles, the inhabitants of Nimbral have not openly acknowledged the death of Leira, although most privately suspect or admit she is truly gone. Ironically, the traditionalists receive their spells from Cyric, who is anything but. The churches of Akadi, Azuth, Mystra, Savras, and Shar have all gained adherents as "Visages in the Mist," but none has yet been embraced as Leira reborn.

Though it is spoken of only in whispers, and evidence of it is rarely seen, a cult of Shar is gaining ground in Halruaa. Wizards of every level of power, from rural peasant magicians to powerful elders, have secretly turned to the Shadow Weave.

relations with other Races

Halruaans are a private lot, not prone to mingling with others. This keeps with their suspicious natures and belief that non-Halruaans are interested only in illicitly acquiring Halruaan magic. The wizards understand that they cannot exist in total isolation—interaction with other cultures is required for trade.

So, merchants can visit coastal cities. Durpari tradesmen enjoy highest favor, because they are adept at acquiring unusual material components and delivering them to Halruaa's shores.

Enough elves and half-elves have established a solid reputation among the elite of Halruaa—several of them serve on the Council of Elders—that Halruaans have grown more indifferent to them than in the past. Dwarves are welcomed, provided they make themselves useful through their crafts. Halflings are only barely tolerated within the borders of Halruaa, for the wary citizenry see every halfling as a potential spy or thief. Halruaans know widely of gnomes only due to the intrusions of a nasty group of gnome werebeasts in the north. The occasional gnome that comes to assist dwarves in their work is grudgingly accepted.

Halruaans openly dislike half-drow, and the hostile nature of the Crinti to the east is an easy testament to why. On the other side of the country, yuan-ti occasionally become a nuisance. In both cases, the wizards have been able to handle the threat.

halruaan equipment

Halruaans are wealthy, as a rule, and they can afford to import whatever clothing is in fashion at the moment. They prefer cool, loose-fitting outfits because of the hot climate. Many Halruaan wizards stubbornly cling to traditional robes, finding magical means of adequate cooling.

ARMS AND ARMOR

Because of the cultural blend from the formative days when the Lapal and Netherese came together, and because of their ability to craft just about anything magical, the Halruaan combatant has access to a wide variety of styles. Still, lighter armor is usually preferred to heavier gear unless some magic is available to keep the wearer from overheating.

Common Items: All arms and equipment are available in Halruaan cities.

ANIMALS AND PETS

Halruaans are fond of unusual creatures, and they take great pains to show off their lifestyle and wealth through the display of remarkable pets. In particular, Halruaan behirs and beguilers are popular, but any number of strange animals from every conceivable land might be acquired by the extremely wealthy.

human, shaaryan

Regions: Dambrath, The Golden Water, Halruaa, Lapaliya, Mulhorand, The Shaar, Unther.

Racial Feats: Fleet of Foot, Horse Nomad, Survivor

history

The history of the nomadic tribes of the Shaar region is old and unwavering. Clans of people have wandered the plains for as long as history recalls, and the lifestyle of these nomads has changed little in that time. Though other cultures have periodically attempted to assimilate the Shaarans, the tribesfolk have resisted

such efforts. The truth is, these people survive the only way they can, and they would rather die than be transplanted.

The single biggest incursion into the Shaar came from the Shoon, but that did not last either. In the fifth century DR, Shaarans rebelled against their Shoon masters. Despite bloody reprisals, the Imperium was forced to withdraw from the region, and the nomads quietly returned to their previous way of life.

outlook

Shaarans have a simple view on life that places little value on the long term. The most critical decisions are those revolving around survival, and to do that, the tribes must follow the herds. Everything else is secondary, and this intrinsic understanding of the laws of the plains is what helps the typical Shaaran get by.

For the most part, Shaarans are fiercely loyal, relentlessly vengeful, and respect anyone who has the ability to survive the harsh rigors of the grasslands. The nomads revere horses, the herds, other native animals of the plains, and a worthy adversary. He also values the foreigner who comes to trade. A Shaaryan tribesman doesn't look down on such strangers, but he and his comrades know that an outsider can never truly understand what it means to be Shaaran.

SHAARYAN CHARACTERS

Shaarans make excellent barbarians, rangers, fighters, and druids because of the harsh environment in which they live. Understanding the land and being able to coexist with it is of primary importance, and these classes are most practiced at such. A few Shaarans become rogues, particularly those who prefer to raid settlements, caravans, and other tribes. Those with spiritual tendencies might follow the faith of a nature or hunting deity instead of becoming a druid. A Shaaran with latent arcane ability becomes an adept, bard, or sorcerer, but formal study is an alien concept to the culture. Few wizards come from Shaaryan stock, while monks and paladins are likewise rare.

Prestige Classes: A Shaaran typically becomes a Shaaryan hunter. Among those who choose to leave the grasslands, more than a few choose the path of the horizon walker.

shaaryan society

Shaaryan culture is built around the concept of the extended family, or clan. Several clans form a tribe, and the tribe lives, moves, and hunts together across a portion of the Shaar. At different times, various tribes might ally or go to war with one another (over water rights, hunting territory, or historic bad blood), but they spend most of their time hunting and ignoring others. The nomads hunt antelope, bison, boar, and elephant, all of which provide them sustenance, food, shelter, and tools.

A tribe pools its shrewdest, most trustworthy adults into a council of wise persons known as elders, and it is from this pool that the tribe selects a chieftain, by secret vote. The chieftain decides when it is time to relocate to keep up with a herd, when to switch to a new herd to avoid over-hunting one, what to do with criminals, and so forth. Everyone else is expected to obey

the chieftain and the elders. Those who cannot abide by these directives are exiled, for the tribe has no time or energy to reform miscreants.

Tribes don't give a second thought to raiding one another and don't, if the raiding party has fewer than twenty warriors, consider such attacks to be warfare. The stealing of food, horses, equipment, and even women and children is an accepted part of life on the plains. Raids with larger forces are considered outright acts of war, and such conflicts continue until the two tribes meet to discuss peace terms. Warring tribes are barred from the semiannual intertribal gatherings at the Council Hills.

Language and Literacy

Shaarans speak Shaaran, a language that has no connection with any other language family in Faerûn. The language has adapted some words from other cultures over the centuries, particularly with the coming of traders to the region. Few Shaarans can read or write because the culture relies on an oral history. Those who have learned to scribe the Shaaran language employ the Dethek alphabet, learned from the gold dwarves in the Great Rift.

shaaryan magic and lore

Shaaryan spellcasters are not numerous, although every tribe can count on the services of one or two arcane, and perhaps twice that many divine, spellcasters. Usually the chieftain or a loyal elder is an adept or cleric with the ability to portend events. The tribe almost always includes several rangers who serve as scouts, as well as a druid to deal with the elements and the herds.

SPELLS AND SPELLCASTING

Divination magic allows a tribe to determine when is the best time to move camp, when inclement weather might threaten, and so forth. Abjuration spells are useful for protection from attacks, the elements, and monsters. Illusion spells enhance storytelling and the presentation of oral history. Among divine spellcasters, spells that focus on nature, healing, and the elements are most useful to the nomadic culture, and druids and rangers are particularly valuable to the survival of a tribe.

SHAARYAN MAGIC ITEMS

Few Shaarans become skilled enough at crafting magic items to provide them for others. More often, they acquire such objects through trade. Shaaryan nomads are fond of items that aid their warriors in combat, including weapons, armor, and potions that heal or increase battle prowess.

shaaryan deities

The folk of the Shaar follow deities of nature and of the hunt. A whole tribe might worship a particular deity, but more often various tribe members venerate a number of differing deities.

Many tribes follow Tempus. In the Shaar, all are warriors, for foes are not limited to enemy tribes, but include the harshness of the land and the creatures it hides. Before raids and during war, Tempus is often propitiated.

Other nomads, who revel in the hunt more than the glory of war, devote themselves to Malar, the Beastlord. These Shaarans usually focus on that deity's hunting aspect, eschewing the bloodier portions of Malar's portfolio. Those working for survival can't afford to be needlessly bloodthirsty.

A few Shaarans seek solace in the embrace of Akadi, finding comfort in her tenets and how they relate to life in the grasslands and the movement of the tribes.

Relations with other Races

Shaarans have grown used to numerous other species moving through or settling in their traditional lands, and they do not favor one over others. The plains are a great crossroads for so many different species and cultures that it doesn't matter what race a merchant is, or where he came from, as long as he has something to offer. To a Shaaran, a person's ability to survive in the grasslands and be a useful member of the tribe is of far greater interest than where he might have been born.

Some tribes get along far better with the loxos and thri-kreen that inhabit the Shaar, depending on how close the nomads' hunting grounds come to those two species' territories. Shaarans interact with other indigenous races as much as the other culture allows. They have little contact, for example, with the wild elves of the Misty Vale, but regular dealings with the gold dwarves in the Great Rift.

Shaarans detest gnolls, but have equal distaste for the yuan-ti that have begun to appear near Lake Lhespen or the Lake of Salt. In both cases, Shaaryan nomads attack on sight and let the bodies fall where they may. Fortunately, the dragons that hunt the Shaar for food do not come often or in great numbers, for most tribes can do little about them.

shaaryan equipment

The Shaaryan people derive almost every piece of equipment they use from the land around them and the animals they hunt. In addition to food, the herds they follow provide them with weapons, clothing, and tools. Of course, the nomads trade for a few additional items, but such possessions are rare and wondrous by Shaaryan norms.

ARMS AND ARMOR

Shaaryan warriors prefer functional weapons that suit the nomadic lifestyle and can be constructed or repaired in the grasslands without the need for a blacksmith. Knives, spears, nets, and bows are typical arms, and are often made of stone or bone. Light armor, such as padded or leather, is most prevalent.

ANIMALS AND PETS

The Shaaryan culture depends primarily on its horses for continued existence. Shaaryan horses are superior specimens that thrive on the grasses of the plains, but tend to sicken and die if removed from the Shaar. It is not uncommon to find a Shaaryan ranger or druid with a powerful predator of the plains, such as a lion or cheetah, as a companion. Smaller creatures, conditioned to the lifestyle of the nomads, are

sometimes kept as pets, but most often these are familiars to tribal spellcasters.

TABLE I-1:

RACIAL ABILITY SCORE ADJUSTMENTS

Race	Ability Adjustments	Favored Class
Loxo	+8 Str, +2 Dex, +2 Con, -2 Cha	Ranger
Thri-kreen	+2 Str, +4 Dex, -2 Int, +2 Wis, -4 Cha	Ranger

LOXO

Almost like humanoid elephants, the nomadic loxos share the plains of the Shaar with humans and others. Loxos are hunter-gatherers that prefer the seclusion that comes with miles of open terrain and little interaction with other species. They have roamed the plains for some two centuries, claiming to have arrived from another world via mysterious means. Only the loxos are certain where they came from, and they do not speak of it.

Personality: Loxos are peaceful creatures that want nothing so much as to be left alone. Though they are not aggressive, they defend their herds ferociously, able to fight in a terrible rage when necessary. They are fond of geometric patterns in their simple clothing, particularly with circle or diamond shapes, and enjoy creating rustic works of art to trade.

Physical Description: A loxo appears to be a bipedal elephant, albeit a bit smaller. Its skin is bluish-gray, wrinkled, and covered with rough, sparse hair. It has stocky limbs and fingers, flat feet, and large ears. Its most striking feature is the pair of trunks that grow from its face, framed by large tusks. Each trunk is about 2 feet long and has three fingerlike digits at the end. The typical loxo stands about 7 to 7-1/2 feet tall and weighs about 500 pounds.

Relations: Loxos prefer the company of their own kind, but do not go out of their way to discourage visitors unless they know hostilities are likely. They come into the cities to trade from time to time, particularly to offer pieces of their artwork for sale. Otherwise, left to their own devices, loxos avoid the other nomads of the Shaar.

Alignment: Isolationist by nature, loxos do not involve themselves in causes or in other species' problems. They are removed from the struggles between good and evil that surface in other parts of the world, favoring neither side. To the loxos, everything has its place, but extremes can be detrimental to the survival of the herd. Loxos tend to be true neutral.

Religion: Loxos venerate nature and strength, having a prevalent druidic tradition and a secondary priesthood. The worship of the druids appears to focus on an entity that must be an aspect of Hiatea, a deity of giants, but also one of nature, agriculture, hunting, and childbirth. Many loxo clerics worship their vision of Hiatea, while some favor an aspect of Iallanis (also a deity of giants) for his strength and healing ability.

Language: Loxos speak their own language. Many of them also learn Common and Shaaran to trade or negotiate effectively.

Male Names: Alagar, Debib, Gaugan, Jatik, Ranjeet, Rohap, Taral, Varien.

Female Names: Agrit, Bakal, Devrika, Jamune, Kasi, Lavika, Otala, Raniel, Shali, Tarali, Valsha.

Adventurers: As is often the case with youths, young loxos occasionally feel a need to travel beyond the traditional territory of their herd. Intrigued by humans and other races, some loxos take up with a group of adventurers for an experience of life beyond the Shaar.

Regions: Most loxos live in the Shaar, though a very few might hail from the Golden Water region.

Illustration by Chris Hawkes



Loxo Racial Traits

- +8 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution, -2 Charisma. Loxos are powerful physical specimens, but their lack of contact with outsiders limits their abilities of persuasion.
- Monstrous Humanoid: Loxos are not subject to spells or effects that affect only humanoids, such as charm person or dominate person.
- Large: As a large creature, a loxo has a -1 penalty to Armor Class, a -1 penalty on attack rolls, a -4 penalty on Hide checks, a +4 bonus on grapple checks, and his lifting and carrying limits are double those of Medium characters.
- Space/Reach: 10 feet/10 feet.
- Loxo base land speed is 30 feet.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Racial Hit Dice: A loxo begins with five levels of monstrous humanoid, which provide him with 5d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +5, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4.
- Racial Skills: A loxo's monstrous humanoid levels grant him skill points equal to $8 \times (2 + \text{Int modifier})$. Class skills include Climb, Listen, Spot, and Survival.
- Racial Feats: A loxo's monstrous humanoid levels grant him two feats.
- Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A loxo is automatically proficient with simple weapons and light armor.
- Natural Attacks: Loxos can attack with their trunks. A loxo can make single attack with one trunk (as a slam attack) that deals 1d6 points of damage, or with a full-attack action, he can make slams with both trunks. As part of a full-attack action with another weapon, a loxo can make one secondary attack using a single trunk at his highest base attack bonus -5.
- Natural Armor: +4 natural armor bonus.
- Berserk Rage (Ex): A loxo that sees a clan member killed or incapacitated enters a berserk rage. The loxo gains a +4 bonus to Strength, a +4 bonus to Constitution, and a +2 morale bonus on Will saves, but takes a -2 penalty to Armor Class. This rage lasts a number of rounds equal to $3 + \text{the loxo's (newly improved) Constitution modifier}$. After the rage ends, the loxo is fatigued (-2 penalty to Strength, -2 penalty to Constitution, can't charge or run) until the end of the encounter.
- Trample (Ex): As a standard action, a loxo can trample creatures of Medium size or smaller. The loxo merely has to move over the opponents. The trample deals 1d8 (plus $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the loxo's Strength bonus) points of bludgeoning damage. A trampled opponent can make an attack of opportunity with a -4 penalty against the trampling loxo or attempt a Reflex save for half damage. The DC for the

Reflex save is $10 + 2 (1/2 \text{ of the loxo's racial HD}) + \text{the loxo's Str modifier}$.

- Automatic Languages: Loxo. Bonus Languages: Common, regional dialects.
- Favored Class: Ranger. A multiclassed loxo's ranger class does not count when determining whether he takes an experience point penalty for multiclassing.
- Level Adjustment: +2.

Thri-kreen

Thri-kreen are a mantislike race of hunters that travel in packs across the grasslands of the Shaar. They are reclusive and alien to most other creatures that share the plains with them. Their physical nature and aggressive hunting tactics make them superior in the region, but thri-kreen do not usually attack other sentient creatures without provocation.

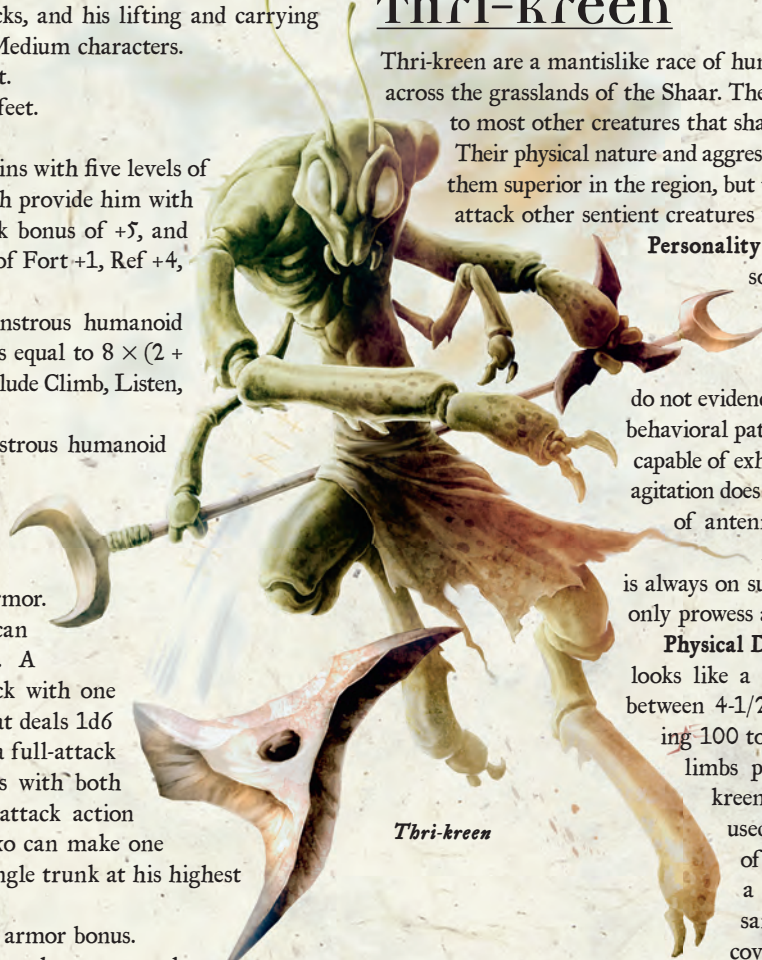
Personality: Thri-kreen have no solid personalities as humans would define them. Unpredictable in everything they do, thri-kreen do not evidence much emotion in their behavioral patterns. Their faces are incapable of exhibiting most feelings, but agitation does show in the rapid motion of antennae and mandibles. The focus of the thri-kreen is always on survival, and they respect only prowess and strength.

Physical Description: A thri-kreen looks like a bipedal praying mantis, between 4-1/2 and 7 feet tall, weighing 100 to 375 pounds. Of the six limbs protruding from a thri-kreen's midsection, two are used for walking, and each of the other four ends in a four-fingered hand. A sand-colored exoskeleton covers an adult thri-kreen's

body. Two compound eyes, two antennae, and a complicated jaw structure, which includes a pair of wicked mandibles, give the head an insectlike appearance. The typical thri-kreen wears a harness, belt, and slings for holding its equipment, but no other clothing or armor.

Relations: Thri-kreen neither seek nor shun contact with other races. They simply exist with other species and share territory so long as others do not begin to over hunt an area or waste precious resources. If a thri-kreen pack perceives interlopers as a danger, they attack relentlessly, heedless of their own safety, until the threat is either driven off or slain. Lacking any sense of honor or loyalty, thri-kreen are a hard species with which to negotiate.

Alignment: Thri-kreen lack devotion beyond the convenience of joining with exceptional hunting companions, and are spontaneous in most of their actions. Adding to this chaotic behavior, they



Thri-kreen

have no traditions of their own and see little value in those of others. Further, while thri-kreen are not needlessly cruel or evil, they do not go out of their way to help others. Simple existence and survival rule the thri-kreen way of life—the strong live and the weak die.

Religion: Thri-kreen have no established religious practices. However, some of them have become attuned to the hunting and resource aspects of nature deities, such as Silvanus or Malar, and developed druidic spellcasting abilities. Others, perhaps influenced by Shaaryan neighbors, see the power in following Tempus or Akadi and become clerics of one of these deities.

Language: Thri-kreen speak their own language, Thri-Kreen, which is composed of clicks and snaps of their mandibles. Most thri-kreen learn to speak a smattering of Common if their packs roam near humanoid civilizations.

Names: Thri-kreen make no distinction between male and female names, and they have no surnames.

Thri-kreen Names: Chit'al, Drik-chkit, Gulnik, Kiktul, Klaktuk, Krik, Pok, Ptekwe, Tal'tich, Tilnak, Tik-tik

Adventurers: Thri-kreen sometimes break with the pack and explore lands beyond their hunting grounds. Typically, this activity is at the behest of leaders, who feel information is important for the survival of the pack. Lone thri-kreen often become caravan guards or join with those that roam the lands, seeking only to better survive, but learning the ways of other folk in the process.

Regions: The Shaar.

Thri-kreen racial traits

- +2 Strength, +4 Dexterity, –2 Intelligence, +2 Wisdom, –4 Charisma. Thri-kreen are superior physically, but their alien thinking prevents them from easily grasping higher concepts or dealing well with others.
- Monstrous Humanoid: Thri-kreen are not subject to spells or effects that affect humanoids only, such as *charm person* or *dominate person*.
- Medium: As Medium creatures, thri-kreen have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Thri-kreen base land speed is 40 feet.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.

- Thri-kreen do not sleep and are immune to sleep spells and similar magical effects. A thri-kreen spellcaster still requires 8 hours of rest before preparing spells.
- +3 Natural Armor: A thri-kreen's exoskeleton is tough and resistant to blows.
- Multiple Limbs: Thri-kreen have four arms, and thus can take the Multiweapon Fighting feat (page 304 of the *Monster Manual*) instead of the Two-Weapon Fighting feat. Thri-kreen can also take the Multiattack feat. These are not bonus feats.
- Natural Attacks: Thri-kreen can attack with four claws and a bite. The claws deal 1d4 points of damage, and the bite is a secondary attack that also deals 1d4 points of damage. A thri-kreen can attack with a weapon (or multiple weapons) at its normal attack bonus and make either a bite or claw attack as a secondary attack. For example, a thri-kreen ranger with the Multiweapon Fighting feat who is armed with four short swords could attack with all four swords at a –2 penalty (the normal penalty for fighting with multiple weapons while using light weapons in off hands) and also make a bite attack at a –5 penalty.
- Poison (Ex): Injury (bite), initial damage 1d6 Dex, secondary damage paralysis for 2d6 minutes, DC 11 + the thri-kreen's Con modifier. A thri-kreen produces enough poison for one bite per day.
- Leap (Ex): Thri-kreen are natural jumpers. They have a +30 racial bonus on all Jump checks.
- Weapon Familiarity: Thri-kreen can treat the gythka and chatkcha (see sidebar) as martial weapons, rather than exotic weapons.
- Naturally Psionic: When using the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, thri-kreen gain 1 bonus power point at 1st level. This benefit does not grant the ability to manifest psionic powers unless such powers are gained through another source, such as levels in a psionic class.
- Psi-Like Abilities: When using the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, apply the following psi-like abilities to a thri-kreen. 3/day—*chameleon, know direction and location*; 1/day—*greater concealing amorphia, metaphysical claw*. Manifest level is equal to 1/2 the thri-kreen's Hit Dice (minimum 1st).

Thri-kreen weapons

Thri-kreen warriors have invented two exotic weapons that are unique to their race: the gythka and the chatkcha.

Gythka: This two-handed exotic melee weapon is a polearm with a blade at each end. You can fight with it as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all the normal attack penalties associated with fighting with two weapons, just as if you were using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. A thri-kreen can wield two gythkas at once as double weapons due to its four arms. When so doing, the creature takes penalties as if its off-hand weapons were one-handed weapons, not light weapons.

Chatkcha: This exotic ranged weapon is a crystalline throwing wedge.

Weapon	Cost	Damage		Range		Weight	Type
		(M)	Critical	Inc.			
Gythka	60 gp	1d10*	×2	—		25 lb.	Slashing
Chatkcha	1 gp	1d6	18–20/×2	20 ft.		3 lb.	Piercing

*Double weapon, deals 1d10/1d10 damage.

- **Racial Hit Dice:** A thri-kreen begins with two levels of monstrous humanoid, which provide 2d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +2, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3.
- **Racial Skills:** A thri-kreen's monstrous humanoid levels grant skill points equal to $5 \times (2 + \text{Int modifier})$. Class skills include Balance, Climb, Hide, Jump, Listen, and Spot.
- **+4 racial bonus on Hide checks** in sandy or arid settings, including the Shaar.
- **Racial Feats:** Thri-kreen characters gain Deflect Arrows as a bonus feat. In addition, a thri-kreen's monstrous humanoid levels grant one feat.
- **Automatic Languages:** Thri-kreen. **Bonus Languages:** Common, Shaaran.
- **Favored Class:** Ranger.
- **Level Adjustment:** +1. If you are using the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, a thri-kreen has a level adjustment of +2 due to his natural psionic abilities.

Age, Height, and weight

The details of your character's age, gender, height, weight, and appearance are up to you. However, if you prefer some rough guidelines in determining these details, refer to Tables 1-2 through 1-4.

character Age

Your character's age is determined by your choice of race and class, as summed up on Table 1-2: Random Starting Ages. For example, a loxo barbarian's starting age is 12 + 1d4 years, or 13-16 years, while a thri-kreen ranger is 5 + 1d2 years old, or 6-7 years of age.

TABLE 1-2: RANDOM STARTING AGES

Race	Adulthood	Barbarian Rogue Sorcerer	Bard Fighter Paladin Ranger	Cleric Druid Monk Wizard
Loxo	12 years	+1d4	+1d6	+2d4
Thri-kreen	5 years	+1d2	+1d2	+1d4

As your character ages, his physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution) decrease and his mental ability scores (Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma) increase. The effects of each aging step are cumulative, but a character's ability scores can never be reduced below 1 by aging.

When a character reaches venerable age, the DM secretly rolls to determine his maximum age. This is the sum of the race's venerable age plus the modifier from the Maximum Age column of Table 1-3. When a character reaches his maximum age, he dies of old age at some point in the following year, as determined by the DM.

TABLE 1-3: AGING EFFECTS

Race	Middle			Maximum
	Age*	Old**	Venerable†	Age
Loxo	30 years	45 years	60 years	+2d12 years
Thri-kreen	12 years	18 years	25 years	+1d10 years

* -1 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

** -2 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

† -3 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

height and weight

Choose your character's height and weight from the ranges mentioned in the racial description, or roll randomly on Table 1-4: Random Height and Weight. The dice roll given in Height Modifier determines a character's extra height beyond the base height. That same number, multiplied by the dice roll given in the Weight Modifier column, determines a character's extra weight beyond the base weight.

TABLE 1-4:

RANDOM HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

Race	Base Height	Height Modifier	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Loxo, male	6' 6"	+2d12	450 lb.	$\times (2d4) \text{ lb.}$
Loxo, female	6' 0"	+2d12	425 lb.	$\times (2d4) \text{ lb.}$
Thri-kreen, male	5' 2"	+2d10	135 lb.	$\times (2d6) \text{ lb.}$
Thri-kreen, female	4' 6"	+2d10	100 lb.	$\times (2d6) \text{ lb.}$

character Regions

Merchant ships flow back and forth along the entire stretch of the southern coast of Faerûn, following the shoreline, transporting goods to market, and gaining new cargos destined for yet another city. Goods and news aren't the only cargos carried along the trade routes, though. Specialists, skilled in everything from commerce to monster hunting, move from place to place, sharing their expertise with others. The wizards of Halruaa might jealously guard their skills, but some have managed to disseminate them all the same.

Regions for humans who call some part of the Shining South home include Dambrath, The Golden Water, Halruaa, and The Shaar. A new region for humans is The Swagdar. Characters might journey to any part of the South from other lands, of course, but any humans native to the area hail from one of these areas. Numerous nonhuman characters are also found in the South. Their regions include Dambrath (half-drow), The Great Rift (gold dwarves), Luiren (strongheart and lightfoot half-lings), and The Shaar (centaurs, loxos, thri-kreen, and wemics). Loxos and thri-kreen also have their own regions described in this book—a character that chooses one of these racial regions could certainly be a native of the Shining South. This section also introduces four new nonhuman regions: Forest of Amtar and the Misty Vale (wild elves), Rathgaunt Hills (gnomes), and Rethild (lizardfolk).

Reading the Region Descriptions

Each of the regions is described in the following way.

Automatic Languages: The character knows all the languages identified here. All player characters also know Common.

Bonus Languages: 1st-level characters, with Intelligence scores of 12 or higher, can choose one language from this list for every point of Intelligence bonus.

Regional Feats: The feats specific to characters of the region. All the feats mentioned in this section are described in *Player's Guide to Faerûn* except for Might Makes Right (in *Races of Faerûn*) and Woodwise (in this book).

Bonus Equipment: A character who chooses the region gains this bonus equipment at 1st level, in addition to any starting money he gains based on his choice of class. He gains only one of the equipment packages provided here. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are masterwork items.

REGIONS FOR CHARACTERS ABOVE 1ST LEVEL

Characters from powerful races might be equivalent to 2nd-, 3rd-, or 4th-level characters despite the fact that they have only one class level. When such a character chooses a region, he gains access to regional feats, automatic and bonus languages, and bonus equipment just like any other character. A beginning character of higher than 1st level should be equipped as a character of his effective character level (ECL), so the bonus equipment is often less important to him than it is to a 1st-level character.

If the character has racial Hit Dice before he adds his first level of a character class, he can still choose a region. This provides the character with the normal benefits of a region, but he can only choose a regional feat if his racial Hit Dice and/or levels would permit him a new feat. For example, a loxo begins with 5 Hit Dice, and thus five levels of monstrous humanoid. He can use his 1st- or 3rd-level monstrous humanoid feat, or his 6th-level character feat (gained when he adds the first level of any character class), to choose regional feats.

Forest of Amtar Region

Deep in the heart of the hot, humid woods north of Dambrath, the wild elves try to preserve their way of life and prohibit incursions from all sides. They use guerrilla tactics to thwart the Crinti logging that is slowly destroying their homeland, drive off bandits to the north, and deter the gnolls and other dark things that lurk beneath the Gate of the Iron Fangs to the west.

Automatic Languages: Elven.

Bonus Languages: Dambrathan, Dwarven, Gnoll, Halfling, Shaaran, Sylvan, Undercommon.

Regional Feats: Forester, Survivor, Treetopper.

Bonus Equipment: (A) Hide armor* and *elixir of hiding* or (B) shortspear*.



A wild elf of the Forest of Amtar

LOXO REGION

The loxos of the Shaar have wandered the grasslands for generations, surviving off the bounty of the earth, sparse as it may be at times. Though they are not aggressive, they do not hesitate to charge into battle to protect their herd.

Automatic Languages:

Loxo.

Bonus Languages: Dwarf, Gnoll, Gnome, Shaaran.

Regional Feats: Bullheaded, Dreadful Wrath, Furious Charge.

Bonus Equipment: *Potion of cure light wounds* and (A) morningstar* or (B) 2 javelins*.

Misty Vale Region

Hidden away in the deepest part of the Misty Vale, the wild elves do everything in their power to keep other races out of their lands. Their viciousness is legendary, and their determination unwavering. They make no exceptions.

Automatic Languages: Elven.

Bonus Languages: Halruaan, Gnoll, Shaaran, Sylvan, Tashalan.

Regional Feats: Forester, Swift and Silent, Woodwise.

Bonus Equipment: (A) Hide armor* and *elixir of hiding* or (B) shortspear*.

Rathgaunt Hills Region

Tucked away in their stout fortress-temple in the western half of the Rathgaunt Hills, the gnomes who follow Gaerdal Ironhand

Illustration by Vince Locke

tirelessly patrol the land, working to keep the caravan traffic safe from marauders and monsters.

Automatic Languages: Gnome, Shaaran.

Bonus Languages: Dwarf, Gnoll.

Regional Feats: Discipline, Fearless, Militia.

Bonus Equipment: (A) Warhammer* and oil of magic weapon or (B) breastplate* and small steel shield*.

Rethild Region

The lizardfolk who live in the Great Swamp west of Dambrath have mastered the art of surviving in a bug-infested, foul-smelling wetland while competing for prestige and pecking order. They are immune to the irritations of the swamp and think only of the power they can attain by defeating their rivals.

Automatic Languages: Draconic.

Bonus Languages: Dambrathan, Elven, Halruaan, Undercommon.

Regional Feats: Blooded, Heat Tolerance, Resist Poison.

Bonus Equipment: (A) Heavy shield* or (B) 3 javelins*.

swagdar Region

On the outskirts of the lands of Dambrath, some folk choose to endure the harshest wilderness rather than submission to the Crinti. These people are ready to fight for what they need, hide from those who would subdue them, and die before they surrender their freedom. They might not be honorable, but at least they answer to no one but themselves.

Automatic Languages: Arkaiun.

Bonus Languages: Drow, Gnoll, Halruaan, Shaaran.

Regional Feats: Blooded, Might Makes Right, Thug.

Bonus Equipment: (A) Hide armor* or (B) shortbow* and 20 arrows.

Thri-kreen Region

The thri-kreen roam the open grasslands of the Shaar, unremittingly hunting the plains. They care little for the other races that share their territory, so long as those species do not encroach on their resources. When that happens, the thri-kreen attack without pity or remorse.

Automatic Languages: Thri-kreen.

Bonus Languages: Shaaran.

Regional Feats: Discipline, Fearless, Tireless.

Bonus Equipment: (A) Chatkcha* and gythka* or (B) 2 *potions of cure light wounds*.

New feats

The new feats described in this section are common in the Shining South. New feats described in this chapter are summarized on the accompanying tables.

Regional feats specify one or more character race and region combinations as prerequisites. To select such a feat, your character must meet one such set of prerequisites. For more information on regional feats, see *Player's Guide to Faerûn*.

Allied defense [general]

You are good at protecting nearby allies.

Prerequisite: Combat Expertise.

Benefit: Whenever you use Combat Expertise to gain a bonus to Armor Class, any adjacent ally gains the same bonus.

Normal: The Combat Expertise feat only grants you an Armor Class bonus.

Ankheg tribe Ambush

[regional]

You have learned how to hide and spring to attack, much like the ankhegs that roam the plains where you hunt.

Prerequisites:

Human (the Shaar), membership in Ankheg Tribe (see Human

Tribes of the Shaar, page 164).

Benefit: You gain a +4 circumstance bonus on Hide checks when prone in tall grass. During a surprise round, you can leap up from prone position as a free action.

Normal: Characters without this feat must use a move action to stand up.

cheetah tribe sprint [regional]

You have learned the secret of lightning-fast running from the cheetah that roams the plains where you live.

Prerequisites: Human (the Shaar), membership in Cheetah Tribe (see Human Tribes of the Shaar, page 164).

Benefit: Once per hour, you can move four times your normal speed when making a charge as a full-round action. You cannot perform this feat while wearing medium or heavy armor or carrying a medium or heavy load.

Normal: Characters without this feat can only move up to twice their speed when making a charge as a full-round action.

Illustration by Carl Frank



A Shaaran of the Ankheg Tribe

cover your tracks [general]

You are good at masking your route, making it difficult for others to track you.

Prerequisite: Track.

Benefit: Add +5 to the DC to follow your tracks, or +10 if you move at half speed and hide your trail. You gain a +2 bonus on Hide checks.

Normal: Characters without this feat can move at half speed and hide their trail, adding +5 to the DC to follow their tracks.

eagle tribe vision [regional]

You have keen eyesight reminiscent of the giant eagles that fly over your tribal lands.

Prerequisites: Human (the Shaar), membership in Eagle Tribe (see Human Tribes of the Shaar, page 164).

Benefit: You gain a +5 bonus on Spot checks.

halruaan adept [regional]

You have studied the old cooperative spellcasting traditions of Halruaa, and you are well-versed in the rites and arcana of Halruaan magic.

Prerequisites: Human (Halruaa).

Benefit: You can participate in Halruaan circle magic under the guidance of a Halruaan elder. In addition, you gain a +3 bonus on Spellcraft checks.

Normal: You cannot participate in circle magic unless you have the appropriate feat or class ability.

heat tolerance [general]

You are used to living in hot, humid conditions.

Benefit: You gain a +10 bonus on Fortitude saves against nonlethal heat damage as described under Heat Dangers, page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

hold the line [general]

You are trained in defensive techniques against charging opponents.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, base attack bonus +2.

TABLE I-5: NEW FEATS

Feat	Prerequisites
Allied Defense ^F	Combat Expertise
Cover Your Tracks	Track
Heat Tolerance	—
Hold the Line	Combat Reflexes, base attack bonus +2
Initiate of Loviatar ^I	Cleric level 5th, patron Loviatar
Natural Scavenger	Survival 5 ranks
Resist Disease	—
Selective Spell ^M	Any other metamagic feat

F A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

I Initiate feat. See *Player's Guide to Faerûn* for information on initiate feats.

M Metamagic feat.

Benefit: You can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who charges you when it enters an area you threaten. Your attack of opportunity happens immediately before the charge attack is resolved. Your attacks of opportunity in a round are still limited to the number allowed by Combat Reflexes.

hyena tribe hunter [regional]

You have learned the secrets of hunting from the hyena that roams the lands where your tribe wanders.

Prerequisites: Human (the Shaar), membership in Hyena Tribe (see Human Tribes of the Shaar, page 164).

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Hide checks and a +2 bonus on trip attempts and rolls to avoid being tripped.

Special: Characters with this feat can take the Improved Trip feat even if they don't meet the other prerequisites for that feat.

initiate of Loviatar [initiate]

You have been initiated into the greatest secrets of Loviatar's church.

Prerequisites: Cleric level 5th, patron deity Loviatar.

Benefit: The first time you take damage in any combat, you gain a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls and saves against fear effects for 1 minute per cleric level.

In addition, you add the following spells to your cleric spell list:

- 2nd **Nybor's Gentle Reminder:** Target is dazed 1 round, thereafter distracted and -2 on attacks, saves, and checks.
- 3rd **Mystic Lash:** Creates energy whip that deals 1d6 electricity damage/three levels (max 4d6) and stuns for 1 round.
- 5th **Fleshshiver:** Target is stunned for 1 round, takes 1d6/level damage, and is nauseated for 1d4+2 rounds.

lion tribe warrior [regional]

You have learned how to pounce on your foes, like the lion that roams your lands.

Prerequisites: Human (the Shaar), membership in Lion Tribe (see Human Tribes of the Shaar, page 164).

Benefit: You may make a full attack with a single light weapon as part of a charge action. If you have light weapons in both hands, you can instead strike with each weapon once, using the normal rules for fighting with two weapons.

Normal: Characters without this feat can make only one attack as part of a charge action.

Natural scavenger [general]

You are particularly adept at finding food while on the move.

Prerequisites: Survival 5 ranks.

Benefit: You can move at your normal overland speed while using Survival to hunt or forage for food. You gain a +4 competence bonus on Survival checks made for that purpose.

Normal: A character without this feat can move at only half speed while foraging for food with a Survival check.

Nomadic trekker [regional]

You are particularly efficient at overland movement across the great grasslands.

Prerequisite: Human (the Shaar) or wemic (the Shaar).

Benefit: You can move overland across trackless plains at normal speed. You gain a +4 bonus on Constitution checks required for forced marches across plains. Up to one ally per character level can also gain these benefits while traveling with you.

Normal: Overland movement across trackless plains is at 3/4 normal speed.

Resist disease [general]

You have developed a natural resistance to diseases.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on Fortitude saving throws against diseases.

Rhinoceros tribe charge [regional]

You use the power of the rhinoceros's charge in battle.

Prerequisites: Human (the Shaar), membership in Rhinoceros Tribe (see Human Tribes of the Shaar, page 164).

Benefit: When you charge, if your melee attack hits, it deals an extra 2d6 points of damage. This feat works only when you make a charge, even when you're mounted. If you have the ability to make multiple attacks on a charge, you can apply this extra damage to only one of those attacks in a round.

selective spell [metamagic]

You can screen allies from the effects of your area spells.

Prerequisite: Any other metamagic feat.

Benefit: You can modify an area spell so that it does not affect one designated creature within its area. All other creatures in the spell's area are affected normally. Selective Spell has no effect on target or effect spells. A Selective Spell uses a slot one level higher than the spell's normal level.

tall moulder hunter [regional]

Because of your cultural hatred for tall moulder, you have had specific training in how best to fight them.

Prerequisite: Halfling (Luiren).

Benefit: You gain +2 competence bonus on damage rolls against aberrations. You also gain the benefit of the Improved Critical feat for the weapon you are using in any such attack. This benefit does not stack with any other effect that expands your weapon's critical threat range. These benefits apply on melee attacks and on ranged attacks at a range of up to 30 feet.

woodwise [regional]

You are trained in fighting in woodlands and know how to use the terrain to best advantage.

Prerequisite: Elf (the Misty Vale), star elf (Sildëyuir), or volodni (the Forest of Lethyr).

Benefit: You ignore hampered movement penalties from naturally occurring light or heavy undergrowth. (You are still hampered by magically enhanced brush and plants.) When fighting in wooded areas, you gain a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class.

Normal: A character without this feat spends 2 squares of movement to move through light undergrowth and 4 squares to travel through heavy undergrowth, and gains no defensive bonus for fighting in woodlands.

TABLE I-6: NEW REGIONAL FEATS

Feat	Benefit
Ankheg Tribe Ambush	+4 bonus on Hide checks in tall grass; leap from prone as free action in surprise round
Cheetah Tribe Sprint	Charge at four times normal speed once per hour
Eagle Tribe Vision	+5 bonus on Spot checks
Halruaan Adept	Participate in Halruaan circle magic, +3 on Spellcraft checks
Hyena Tribe Hunter	+2 bonus on Hide checks, on trip attempts, and on rolls to avoid being tripped
Lion Tribe Warrior	You can attack more than once as part of a charge
Nomadic Trekker	Move overland across trackless plains at normal speed; gain +4 bonus on Con checks for forced marches across plains
Rhinoceros Tribe Charge	+2d6 damage on charge attack
Tall Moulder Hunter	+2 bonus on damage rolls, increased threat range against tall moulder
Woodwise	Move normally through undergrowth; +1 dodge bonus to AC in wooded areas



PRESTIGE CLASSES

The Shining South's cultural and ethnic diversity has resulted in a wide variety of elite organizations, secret orders, and masters of specialized knowledge. Some of these groups serve only their own twisted interests, while others benefit society at large.

Of the prestige classes described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, both the archmage and the dwarven defender are the most familiar in the Shining South. While large numbers of wizards in Halruaa have followed the path of the archmage, a nearly equal amount of gold dwarves in the Great Rift have focused their attention to the task of protecting their ancient home. Among the wild elves of the vast Forest of Amtar and the Misty Vale, more than a few arcane archers practice their craft. Arcane tricksters are prevalent in many parts of the southern regions of Faerûn, particularly in Luiren. Assassins and blackguards certainly exist among the monsters of Veldorn or the Bandit Wastes south of the Shaar, but they are rare elsewhere in the South. On the plains of the Shaar, where dragons have hunted since time immemorial, a number of dragon disciples roam, while on the coasts, particularly in the less savory quarters of sea ports, duelists make themselves at home.

Among the defensive forces in Halruaa, eldritch knights are both ubiquitous and welcome, though they might face off against others of their ilk who hail from across the mountains in Dambrath. Hierophants are scarce in the lands of the Shining South, found mostly around the Golden Water and among the tribes of the Shaar. Horizon walkers are the logical product of such diverse, wild places as are found in southern Faerûn. Loremasters

are almost as widespread in Halruaa as archmages, and so are mystic theurges. Shadowdancers skulk in just about any port city in the Shining South, and perhaps among those wizards in Halruaa who have secretly embraced the Shadow Weave. Finally, a few thaumaturgists might be found on the borders between Durpar and Veldorn, calling on their respective otherworldly powers to aid them in battling their foes.

Many of the classes presented in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*, *Races of Faerûn*, and *Player's Guide to Faerûn* are active in the Shining South. Arcane devotees are common in Dambrath, Halruaa, and the Golden Water region, while divine champions are also numerous among Durpari people, as well as the dwarves of the Great Rift. Divine disciples can be found in temples scattered across the entirety of the South, but they are particularly well known in both Dambrath and the Golden Water. Guild thieves are uncommon, though they might be found in Luiren. A number of shadow adepts are likely scattered throughout the entire region, particularly in Halruaa, where a secret cabal of those who tap the Shadow Weave is suspected. While gnomes themselves are rare in the South, breachgnomes certainly mingle with the followers of Gaerdal Ironhand in the Rathgaunt Hills. Runecasters reside among the gold dwarves and the nomadic tribes of the Shaar that have been influenced by the culture of the Great Rift. These latter two cultures also have distinctive vocations—the Shaaryan hunter is a customary profession among the nomads of the Shaar, and the Great Rift skyguard is unique to the gold dwarves' canyon home.

This chapter presents nine new and two adapted prestige classes for the Shining South: the Crinti shadow marauder, the Great Rift deep defender, the Great Sea corsair, the Halruaan elder, the Halruaan magehound, the hand of the Adama, the hin fist, the jordan vizier, the Luiren marchwarden, the Maquar crusader, and the scourge maiden.

crinti shadow marauder

Among the idly rich Crinti of Dambrath, some thrill in the havoc they wreak on their traditional foes—the halflings to the east, the wild elves to the north, and the wizards to the west. These riders take pleasure in instilling uncertainty in their prey from a shroud of shadows, then imparting feelings of fearful surprise as the marauders appear without warning, escalating finally to sheer terror as the chase begins. Few actually see Crinti shadow marauders coming, and fewer live to tell the tale.

Crinti shadow marauders combine the physical prowess of master rider with the stealth of the most cunning shadowdancers. Rangers work as the best entry class, but multiclass rogues and fighters are also attracted to the path of the Crinti shadow marauder. Clerics, druids, and wizards find themselves particularly ill suited to the strange combination of skills demanded by this class.

Crinti shadow marauders are found almost exclusively in Dambrath, since they tend to come from the aristocracy that rules that land. They ride in packs as small as three to four individuals, all the way up to large skirmishing forces of several hundred. While the riders favor the fine horses of Dambrath, they are by no means limited to such mounts. Occasionally, a Crinti shadow marauder grows tired of the life of riding on the plains with her comrades and leaves Dambrath entirely, perhaps taking up with others to see the wider world.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Crinti shadow marauder, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any nongood.

TABLE 2-1:

THE CRINTI SHADOW MARAUDER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Shadow ride
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Sudden strike +1d6
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Bonus feat, <i>shadow walk</i>
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Sudden strike +2d6
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Shadow pounce

Skills: Handle Animal 4 ranks, Hide 8 ranks, Move Silently 8 ranks, Ride 8 ranks.

Feats: Mounted Combat, Stealthy.

Region: Dambrath.

Special: The character must either be Crinti or have the official sanction of the nobility of Dambrath. Only those accepted by the Crinti can train as shadow marauders.

CLASS SKILLS

The Crinti shadow marauder's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Crinti shadow marauder.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Crinti shadow marauders gain no proficiency with any weapons, armor, or shields.

Shadow Ride (Su): A Crinti shadow marauder can travel on her mount between shadows as if by means of a *dimension door* spell. Such supernatural transport must begin and end in an area with at least some shadow. The marauder can ride up to a total of 50 feet per Crinti shadow marauder level per day in this way. The amount can be split up among many rides, but rides of a distance shorter than 25 feet count as 25 feet.

Sudden Strike (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, if a Crinti shadow marauder can catch an opponent when he is unable to defend himself effectively from her attack, she can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Whenever a Crinti shadow marauder's target is denied his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus to AC or not), the marauder deals an extra 1d6 points of damage with her attack. The extra damage increases to 2d6 at 4th level. The extra damage from the sudden strike ability stacks with extra damage from sneak attack whenever both would apply to the same target.

Ranged attacks count as sudden strikes only if the target is within 30 feet. A Crinti shadow marauder can't strike with deadly accuracy from beyond that range.

A Crinti shadow marauder can only use sudden strike against living creatures with discernible anatomies—undead, constructs, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures lack vital areas to attack. Any creature that is immune to critical hits is not vulnerable to sudden strike damage. The Crinti shadow marauder must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach such a spot. A Crinti shadow marauder cannot make



Furilla Joswyn'n,
a Crinti shadow marauder

a sudden strike while striking a creature with concealment or striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are out of reach.

A Crinti shadow marauder can't use sudden strike to deliver nonlethal damage. Weapons only capable of dealing nonlethal damage don't deal extra damage when used as part of a sudden strike.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd level, the Crinti shadow marauder gains a bonus feat selected from the following list: Mounted Archery, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample. The Crinti shadow marauder must meet the normal prerequisites for the feat.

Shadow Walk (Sp): Starting at 3rd level, a Crinti shadow marauder can use *shadow walk* once per day, affecting only herself and her mount. Her caster level is equal to her Crinti shadow marauder level, and she must be astride her mount to use this ability. This ability does not stack with shadow walk spell-like abilities granted by other sources.

Shadow Pounce (Ex): At 5th level, a Crinti shadow marauder learns how to attack swiftly from the shadows. Any time she uses an ability, spell, or effect with the teleportation descriptor (for example, her shadow ride ability), she can execute a full attack upon completion of the teleportation. The marauder must have line of sight to her intended target from her original location. Further, the spot to which she teleports must be a place from which she can make a melee attack against the intended target with whatever weapon she had in hand at the beginning of her action.

sample crinti shadow marauder

Furilla Joswyv'n: Female half-drow ranger 5 of Talos/Crinti shadow marauder 2; CR 7; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 5d8 plus 2d8; hp 31; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +10 ranged (1d6+2/×3, +1 *mighty composite shortbow*); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +8/+8/+5 ranged (1d6+2/×3, +1 *mighty composite shortbow*); SA favored enemy elves +2, favored enemy humans +4, sudden strike +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., half-drow traits, animal companion (light warhorse; link, share spells), shadow ride, wild empathy +6 (+2 magical beasts); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +5, Hide +13, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +13, Ride +11 (+13 to stay in saddle), Search +5, Spot +5, Survival +7 (+9 aboveground); Endurance^B, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Rapid Shot^B, Stealthy, Track^B.

Languages: Common, Dambrathan, Elven.

Favored Enemy (Ex): Furilla gains a +4 bonus on her Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against humans. She gains the same bonus on weapon damage rolls. Against elves, she gains a +2 bonus on these skill checks and on weapon damage rolls.

Sudden Strike (Ex): Furilla does an extra 1d6 points of damage on any successful attack against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus to AC for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sudden strike attacks. Furilla cannot choose to deliver nonlethal damage with her sudden strike damage; when using a weapon designed to deal nonlethal damage (such as a sap), she cannot deal sudden strike damage with that attack.

Animal Companion (Ex): Furilla has a light warhorse named Kûlfuor as an animal companion. The companion's abilities and characteristics are summarized below. Furilla and Kûlfuor enjoy the link and share spells special qualities.

Link (Ex): Furilla can handle Kûlfuor as a free action. She also gains a +4 circumstance bonus on all wild empathy checks and Handle Animal checks made regarding her horse.

Share Spells (Ex): Furilla may have any spell she casts also affect Kûlfuor, so long as the latter is within 5 feet. She may also cast spells with a target of "You" on Kûlfuor.

Kûlfuor: Light warhorse animal companion; CR —; Large animal; HD 3d8+9; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 60 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +2; Grp +9; Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, hoof); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, 2 hooves) and –1 melee (1d3+1, bite); SA —; SQ low-light vision, scent, tricks; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +4, Spot +4; Endurance, Run.

Tricks: Attack, come, defend, down, perform, stay, and work.

Possessions: +1 leather barding, military saddle, bridle.

Half-Drow Traits: Half-drow have immunity to magic *sleep* effects. For all effects related to race, a half-drow is considered a drow and an elf.

Shadow Ride (Su): Furilla can travel on her mount between shadows as if by means of a *dimension door* spell. She can travel up to a total of 100 feet per day in this way, and the amount can be split up between several rides. A distance of less than 25 feet counts as 25 feet.

Ranger Spells Prepared (caster level 1st): 1st—*pass without trace*.

Possessions: +2 leather armor, masterwork short sword, +1 *composite shortbow* (+1 Str bonus) with 40 arrows, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*.

great rift deep defender

The Great Rift deep defender has a keen understanding of the importance of making a stand. He knows he must remain vigilant against the possibility of attack from the ancient enemies of the gold dwarves, and he has taken it upon himself to become an immovable bastion of protection at the edges of his subterranean home. He acts as a dam against the enemies that would invade his beloved Rift, and such a dwarf refuses to give way to any attacks, no matter how formidable.

Most Great Rift deep defenders are first fighters, paladins, rangers, or clerics. Rogues, bards, and monks depend too heavily on mobility to effectively use the abilities of the Great Rift deep defender, and the gold dwarves don't count many barbarians among their number. While sorcerers and druids might find the defensive capabilities of the Great Rift deep defender beneficial, such individuals usually have other goals.

Great Rift deep defenders serve as the main line of defense along the perimeter of the Deep Realm, that portion of the Great Rift below the surface and adjacent to the Underdark. They work well in units, guarding passages that lead deeper into uncontrolled territory. Occasionally, a Great Rift deep defender can be found on some special mission elsewhere in the Underdark or, more rarely, on the surface.

Hit Die: d12.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Great Rift deep defender, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Gold dwarf.

Alignment: Any lawful.

Base Attack Bonus: +7.

Feats: Dodge, Endurance, Toughness.

Region: The Great Rift.

CLASS SKILLS

The Great Rift deep defender's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Craft (Int), Listen (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2

+ Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Great Rift deep defender.

Weapon and Armor

Proficiency: A Great Rift deep defender is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light, medium, and heavy armor, and shields (including tower shields).

AC Bonus (Ex): The Great Rift deep defender receives a dodge bonus to Armor Class that starts at +1 and improves as the defender gains levels to a maximum of +3 at 5th level.

Hold the Line: The Great Rift deep defender gains Hold the Line (see page 20) as a bonus feat.

TABLE 2-2:

THE GREAT RIFT DEEP DEFENDER

Level	Base					Special
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	
1st	+1	+2	+0	+2	+1	Hold the line
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	+1	Uncanny dodge
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	+2	Uncanny stability
4th	+4	+4	+1	+4	+2	Improved uncanny dodge
5th	+5	+4	+1	+4	+3	Subterranean bulwark

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 2nd level and higher, a Great Rift deep defender gains the extraordinary ability to react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to even be aware of it. He retains his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. (He still loses any Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized).

If the character gains uncanny dodge from a second class (such as rogue), he automatically gains improved uncanny dodge (see below).

Uncanny Stability (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, a Great Rift deep defender improves his racial resistance to being moved from his position. He gains an additional +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped while standing in a narrow or low space (+8 total, counting the dwarf racial trait). See Subterranean Bulwark below for definitions of narrow and low spaces.

Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 4th level and above, a Great Rift deep defender can no longer be flanked, since he can react to opponents on opposite sides of him as easily as he can react to a single attacker. This defense denies rogues the ability to use flanking to sneak attack the deep defender. The exception to this defense is that a rogue at least four levels higher than the deep defender can flank him (and thus sneak attack him).

If the character gains uncanny dodge (see above) from a second class (such as rogue), the character automatically gains improved uncanny dodge, and the levels from those



Galador Gruffeye, a Great Rift deep defender

classes stack to determine the minimum rogue level required to flank the Great Rift deep defender.

Subterranean Bulwark (Ex): When he is in an enclosed area, the Great Rift deep defender can become a stalwart bastion of defense. In a narrow or a low space, he gains DR 3/—, as well as a +1 bonus on attack rolls and a +2 bonus on damage rolls. (A narrow space is an area no wider than 5 feet, while a low area is shorter than the deep defender, but at least half of his height.) He cannot move from the spot he is defending without losing the benefits of this ability.

The deep defender ignores the penalty for hampered melee when fighting in a narrow or low space with light or one-handed melee weapons, and takes only a –4 circumstance penalty on attack rolls when using a two-handed weapon in such conditions. In a space both narrow and low, the deep defender functions as if only one of those conditions applied. In addition, when fighting in cramped quarters the deep defender does not lose his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.



A Great Sea corsair

sample great rift deep defender

Galinor Gruffeye: Male gold dwarf fighter 7/Great Rift deep defender 3; CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 7d10+21 plus 3d12+9 plus 3; hp 91; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +10; Grp +14; Atk +17 melee (1d12+8/×3, +2 greataxe); Full attack +17/+12 melee (1d12+8/×3, +2 greataxe); SA —; SQ AC bonus (+2), darkvision 60 ft., gold dwarf traits, uncanny dodge, uncanny stability; AL LG; SV Fort +11* (+13 against poison), Ref +4*, Will +7*; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +4 (+6 stone or metal), Climb +4, Craft (gem-cutting) +5, Diplomacy +2, Intimidate +6, Jump +4, Listen +5, Sense Motive +7, Spot +5; Blind Fight, Cleave^B, Dichard, Dodge^B, Endurance, Hold the Line^B, Power Attack^B, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greataxe)^B.

Languages: Common, Dwarven.

Gold Dwarf Traits: Gold dwarves have stonecunning, which grants them a +2 racial bonus on Search checks to notice unusual stonework. A gold dwarf who merely

Illustration by Sam Wood

great sea corsair

Plying the trade lanes along the southern coast of Faerûn, the Great Sea corsair is a master of the waves with a devil-may-care attitude. Branded pirate by some and independent mercenary by others, the Great Sea corsair is a privateer who runs things her own way and gets payment for services up front. Those who pay a Great Sea corsair can expect their own ships to sail safely, secure that they have a powerful naval force watching their backs. Ships that haven't bothered to contract with these privateers can anticipate—sooner or later and out of sight of land—to be boarded and plundered. Such is life on the Great Sea.

Rogues are most likely to turn their attention to the path of a Great Sea corsair, while barbarians, bards, fighters, and rangers do so less frequently. Occasionally, a spellcaster might be attracted to life aboard a privateer's ship. Other classes either don't have the requisite skills or simply have no interest in such a drastically different lifestyle.

Great Sea corsairs enjoy one another's company. A number of them might carouse together when ashore, but few ever stray far enough inland to leave behind the tangy smell of salt and the soothing sound of crashing waves. Sometimes a Great Sea corsair takes up with other adventurers, especially if there is seagoing travel to be expected and treasure to be had.

CREATING A GREAT SEA CORSAIR

You can create a Great Sea corsair by adapting the dread pirate prestige class from *Song and Silence* for use in Faerûn. (An updated version of the dread pirate prestige class also appears in the upcoming D&D supplement *Complete Adventurer*.) The prestige class can be used with the following adjustments.

Patron (Ex): At 1st level, the Great Sea corsair must designate some merchant or political entity as her patron. This patron is a person or an organization that the corsair has served in some way. For example, if the Great Sea corsair has been hired by a Dambrathan noble to sink his rivals' merchant ships, then the corsair can designate the noble as a patron. The corsair gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks when dealing with her patron. She gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Intimidate checks when dealing with any of her patron's adversaries, or anyone she is known to have pirated before (as inconsequential as a single ship and its crew to as daunting as an entire nation). At any point, the corsair can switch to a new patron, in which case the circumstance bonuses change accordingly. If the corsair ever chooses to forgo a patron altogether, she immediately takes a –2 circumstance penalty on all Diplomacy checks with anyone the DM deems appropriate, until such time as she establishes a new patron. A corsair without a patron is a mere pirate, unworthy of trust.

comes within 10 feet of it can make a Search check as if actively searching.

When standing on the ground, a gold dwarf is exceptionally stable and has a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped. Gold dwarves have a +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against aberrations. Dwarves have a +4 racial bonus to Armor Class against giants.

*Gold dwarves have a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Galinor retains his Dexterity bonus to AC even when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe. (He still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Uncanny Stability (Ex): Galinor gets an additional +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped while standing in a narrow or low space.

Possessions: +2 full plate of light fortification, +2 greataxe.

Halruaan elder

For a member of Halruaan society, being recognized as a wizard is not enough; the panache with which one utilizes magic is of equal importance. Halruaan elders are the very epitome of such ostentatious thinking, and their dazzling and unique displays of arcane force make them the most respected practitioners in the land. Their unparalleled talents are what earned them a seat on the revered and prestigious Council of Elders, where they participate in the policy-making of the country.

Arcane spellcasters are the only classes eligible to join the ranks of the Halruaan elders, and the vast majority are wizards. Neither bards nor sorcerers are respected in Halruaan society, so few of them ever stay in their homeland long enough to attain the level of talent necessary to become a member of the Council. No other classes have the necessary skills to become a Halruaan elder.

Though Halruaan elders are responsible for governing the country, the demands on their time in this capacity are not great. Thus, they are free to travel, experiment, and research new spells or craft items. A sizable number of elders rarely appear in the court of the netyarch (wizard-king), choosing instead to venture forth in search of wondrous magic elsewhere in Faerûn.

Hit Die: d4.

TABLE 2-3: THE HALRUAAN ELDER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Adroit casting 1, circle link	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Signature Spell	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Adroit casting 2	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Signature Spell	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Adroit casting 3	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Signature Spell	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Adroit casting 4	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Halruaan elder, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Skills: Diplomacy 5 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks, Spellcraft 10 ranks.

Feats: Halruaan Adept, Spell Thematics, any metamagic feat, any one item creation feat.

Spells: Able to cast 4th-level arcane spells.

Region: Halruaa.

Special: The character must petition for entry into the Halruaan Council of Elders and, after a divinatory background check by current elders, be accepted to that ruling body.

CLASS SKILLS

The Halruaan elder's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the Halruaan elder prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Halruaan elders gain no proficiency in weapons or armor.

Spells Per Day/Spells Known: At each level, the Halruaan elder gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if he had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class to which he belonged before adding the prestige class level. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of turning or destroying undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). If he had more than one arcane spellcasting class before becoming a Halruaan elder, he must decide to which class to add each level for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Adroit Casting (Ex): The Halruaan elder has become so skilled at casting his spells with various metamagic feats that utilizing such feats has become easier for him. At 1st level, he picks a metamagic feat he knows. The cost in increased level of spell slots to use that metamagic feat is now permanently reduced by one level, to a minimum total modification of a spell's original

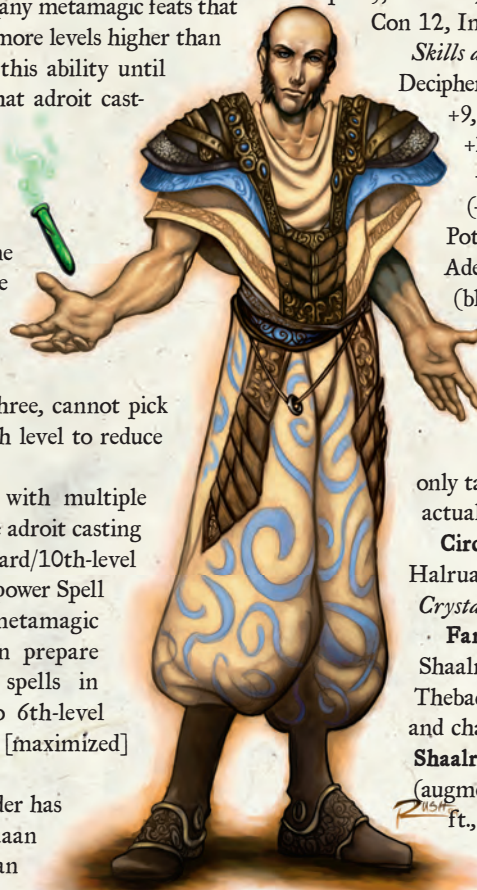
level + 1. For example if a Halruaan elder with *adroit casting* 1 wishes to prepare an empowered magic missile, that spell takes up a slot only one level higher than its original level (instead of two). At 4th level, and every three levels thereafter, the Halruaan elder can choose another metamagic feat he knows. That feat gains the same benefit; spells altered by that feat take up a slot one level lower than normal (minimum of the spell's original level + 1). If the Halruaan elder doesn't have a metamagic feat to apply the ability to when he gains a level that grants *adroit casting*, or if he's has previously applied *adroit casting* to all of the viable metamagic feats he knows (any metamagic feats that require spells to occupy a slot two or more levels higher than normal), he gains no benefit from this ability until he acquires a new metamagic feat that *adroit casting* can affect. At that time, he can automatically designate that feat as altered by the unused application of *adroit casting*.

The elder cannot choose the same metamagic feat more than once with *adroit casting*. For example, a Halruaan elder who picks *Quickened Spell* at 4th level, reducing the cost in increased level of spell slots to three, cannot pick *Quickened Spell* against at 7th or 10th level to reduce the cost again.

The elder can prepare a spell with multiple metamagic feats altered through the *adroit casting* ability. For example, a 10th-level wizard/10th-level Halruaan elder who has selected *Empower Spell* and *Maximize Spell* as two of the metamagic feats altered by *adroit casting* can prepare 1st-level empowered, maximized spells in 4th-level spell slots, as opposed to 6th-level spell slots ($2 - 1$ [empowered] + $3 - 1$ [maximized] = 3 [new spell slot used]).

Circle Link (Ex): A Halruaan elder has the ability to participate in Halruaan circle magic through the Halruaan Adept feat, a prerequisite for entry into the class. Circle magic is described fully on page 59 of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* and page 194 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. A Halruaan elder of at least 5th level can be a circle leader. He also goes through a ritual so he can be contacted via Halruaa's *Crystal Orb* (see page 59).

Signature Spell: A Halruaan elder gains *Signature Spell* as a bonus feat at 2nd, 5th, and 8th levels. He need not meet the prerequisite for the feat, and thus can choose any spell he knows as a signature spell, rather than a spell he has mastered with the *Spell Mastery* feat. See page 43 of *Player's Guide to Faerûn* for the *Signature Spell* feat.



Thebadol, a Halruaan elder

sample halruaan elder

Thebadol: Male human wizard 7/Halruaan elder 3; CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 7d4+7 plus 3d4+3; hp 35; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, +1 *defending quarterstaff*); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, +1 *defending quarterstaff*); SQ +4 on Spellcraft DCs to identify Thebadol's spells, *adroit casting* 1 (*Empower Spell*), circle link, owl familiar, familiar benefits (+3 to Spot in shadowy illumination, *Alertness*, empathic link, share spells); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Craft (alchemy) +9, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +9, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (history) +10 (+12 for Halruaa), Knowledge (Halruaa local) +12, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +21, Spot +1 (+4 in shadowy illumination); *Alertness**, Brew Potion^B, *Empower Spell*, *Extend Spell*, Halruaan Adept, Negotiator, Scribe Scroll^B, *Spell Thematics** (blue fire), *Signature Spell* (*lightning fog*)^B.

* See *Player's Guide to Faerûn*.

Languages: Common, Dambrathan, Draconic, Elven, Halruaan, Shaaran.

Adroit Casting (Ex): When Thebadol uses his *Empower Spell* feat to prepare spells, they only take up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level instead of two levels higher.

Circle Link (Ex): Thebadol can participate in Halruaan circle magic and is attuned to Halruaa's *Crystal Orb*.

Familiar: Thebadol's familiar is an owl named Shaalru. The familiar uses the better of its own and Thebadol's base save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

Shaalru: Owl familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast (augmented animal); HD 10; hp 17; Init +3; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +4; Grp -7; Atk or Full Atk +9 melee (1d4-3, talons); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SQ deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells, speak with master, speak with birds; AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Listen +14, Move Silently +17, Spot +6 (+14 in shadowy illumination); *Weapon Finesse*.

Deliver Touch Spells (Su): Shaalru can deliver touch spells for Thebadol (see Familiars, page 52 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Improved Evasion (Ex): If Shaalru is exposed to any effect that normally allows it to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, it takes no damage with a successful saving throw and half damage if the saving throw fails.

Speak with Master (Ex): Shaalru can communicate verbally with Thebadol. Other creatures do not understand the communication without magical help.

Speak with Birds (Ex): Shaalru can communicate with animals of approximately the same kind as itself (including dire varieties).

Familiar Benefits: Thebadol gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants Thebadol a +3 bonus on Spot checks in shadowy illumination (included in the above statistics).

Alertness (Ex): *Shaalru grants its master Alertness as long as it is within 5 feet.

Empathic Link (Su): Thebadol can communicate empathically with Shaalru at a distance of up to 1 mile. He has the same connection to an item or a place that Shaalru does.

Share Spells (Su): Thebadol may have any spell he casts on himself also affect Shaalru if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. He may also cast a spell with a target of "You" on Shaalru.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 10th):
0—arcane mark, detect magic^T, mage hand, open/close; 1st—chill touch (+4 melee touch; DC 15), Darsson's cooling breeze^T, feather fall, jump, ray of enfeeblement (+5 ranged touch); 2nd—blur, gust of wind^T (2) (DC 16), resist energy, shatter (DC 16); 3rd—brittleskin^T (DC 17), dispel magic, magic circle against chaos, suggestion (DC 17); 4th—Evard's black tentacles, ice storm, phantasmal killer (DC 18), shadow conjuration (DC 18); 5th—Daltim's fiery tentacles^T (DC 19), teleport.

Spellbook: as above plus 0—all; 1st—arcane lock, burning hands, comprehend languages, enlarge person, mount, Nystul's magic aura, sleep; 2nd—bear's endurance, continual flame, misdirection; 3rd—fly, greater magic weapon, ray of exhaustion; 4th—lightning fog^T, suspension^T; 5th—streamers^T, waves of fatigue.

†: New spell described in Chapter 3 of this book.

T: These spells cast at +1 caster level.

Possessions: +1 defending quarterstaff, amulet of natural armor +2, bracers of armor +2, cloak of resistance +2, ring of sustenance, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds, potion of endure elements, wand of burning hands (28 charges), glass rod (with continual flame).

Halruaan magehound

Magehounds are Halruaa's inquisitors. Conceived in the country's earliest days as a means of preventing the kind of tragedy Karsus brought upon the Netherese, magehounds are tasked with keeping renegade practitioners in check. They test the Jordaini for magical ability, track down criminal wizards, and enforce Halruaa's most important laws—those governing the use of magic. Everyone fears magehounds to some degree, for they are considered above the normal laws of the land. They answer only to the Council of Elders, and even those wizards are not immune to a magehound's wrath.

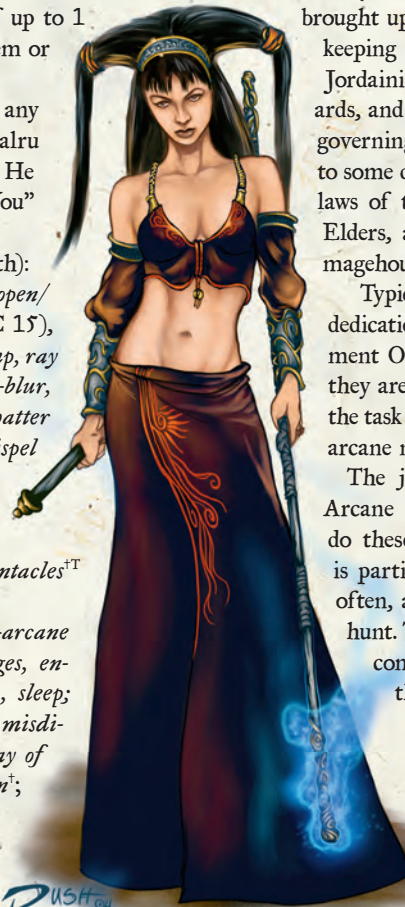
Typically, only wizards or clerics have the insight and dedication to become a Halruaan magehound. Occasionally, sorcerers become magehounds, and they are, in some ways, considered more appropriate for the task because of their perverse (by Halruaan standards) arcane nature.

The job of Halruaan magehounds is often lonely. Arcane spellcasters shun their company, and rarely do these inquisitors gather in force unless their prey is particularly powerful or difficult to capture. More often, a magehound has associates to assist her in the hunt. These companions provide skills and abilities that compliment the magehound's own, making her task that much easier.

Hit Die: d4.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Halruaan magehound, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.



Boryka, a Halruaan magehound

TABLE 2-4: THE HALRUAAN MAGEHOUND

	Base					
	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will		
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Improved spell saves (+1), arcane sensitivity	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Improved spell saves (+2)	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Spell resistance	—
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Improved spell saves (+3)	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Improved spell saves (+4)	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	—	—
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Improved spell saves (+5)	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Antimagic aura	+1 level of existing spellcasting class

Skills: Concentration 5 ranks, Gather Information 4 ranks, Sense Motive 4 ranks, Spellcraft 5 ranks.

Feats: Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes.

Spells: Ability to cast 4th-level arcane or divine spells. Ability to cast at least three spells that require Fortitude saves and at least three spells that require Reflex saves. (A spell that deals damage but allows no saving throw can substitute for any of these required spells.)

Patron Deity: Azuth.

Region: Halruaa.

CLASS SKILLS

The Halruaan magehound's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Halruaan magehound prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Halruaan magehound gains no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells Per Day/Spells Known: At each level except 4th and 8th, a Halruaan magehound gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class level. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of turning or destroying undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). If she had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a Halruaan magehound, she must decide to which class to add each level for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Improved Saves (Ex): The Halruaan magehound learns to improve her resistance to the very sorts of spells she uses against others. At 1st level, she gains a +1 resistance bonus on her saves against spells and spell-like abilities. This bonus increases by +1 every two levels above 1st, to a maximum of +5 at 9th level.

Arcane Sensitivity (Sp): The Halruaan magehound develops a keen awareness of the presence of arcane magic in any living creature. She can use *arcane sensitivity* (see page 44) at will as a wizard whose level is equal to her Halruaan magehound level plus her highest spellcaster level.

Spell Resistance (Ex): The Halruaan magehound develops resistance to magic. At 4th level, she gains a spell resistance equal to 15 + her Halruaan magehound level.

Antimagic Field (Sp): The Halruaan magehound develops a powerful tool to thwart the mages she is hunting. At 10th level, the magehound can use antimagic field once per day as a wizard whose level is equal to her Halruaan magehound level plus her highest spellcaster level.

sample halruaan magehound

Boryka: Female human evoker 7/Halruaan magehound 2; CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 7d4+14 plus 2d4+4; hp 40; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, +1 *spell storing quarterstaff*); Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, +1 *spell storing quarterstaff*); SQ *arcane sensitivity*, familiar, familiar benefits (+2 bonus on Reflex saves, Alertness, empathic link, share spells), improved spell saves (+1 against spells and spell-like abilities); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +10; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +10 (+14 casting defensively), Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (Halruaa local) +11, Move Silently +10, Search +9, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +13; Alertness*, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Investigator, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll^B, Silent Spell^B, Spell Focus (evocation).

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Halfling, Halruaan.

Arcane Sensitivity (Sp): Boryka can use *arcane sensitivity* at will as a 9th-level wizard.

Familiar: Boryka's familiar is a weasel named Incanti. The familiar uses the better of its own and Boryka's base save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

Incanti: Weasel familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast (augmented animal); HD 9; hp 20; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grp -7; Atk or Full Atk +8 melee (1d3-4, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA attach; SQ deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, scent, share spells, speak with master, speak with mustelids; AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +10, Hide +11, Move Silently +8, Spot +3; Weapon Finesse.

Attach (Ex): If Incanti hits with a bite attack, it may use its powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deal bite damage each round it remains attached. When attached, Incanti loses its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (AC 16). To remove Incanti through grappling, an opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Deliver Touch Spells (Su): Incanti can deliver touch spells for Boryka (see Familiars, page 52 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Improved Evasion (Ex): If Incanti is exposed to any effect that normally allows it to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, it takes no damage with a successful saving throw and half damage if the saving throw fails.

Speak with Master (Ex): Incanti can communicate verbally with Boryka. Other creatures do not understand the communication without magical help.

Speak with Mustelids (Ex): Incanti can communicate with animals of approximately the same kind as itself (including dire varieties).

Familiar Benefits: Boryka gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants Boryka a +2 bonus on Reflex saves (included in the above statistics).

Alertness (Ex): *Incanti grants its master Alertness as long as it is within 5 feet.

Empathic Link (Su): Boryka can communicate empathically with Incanti at a distance of up to 1 mile. She has the same connection to an item or a place that Incanti does.

Share Spells (Su): Boryka may have any spell she casts on herself also affect Incanti if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. She may also cast a spell with a target of "You" on Incanti.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 7th; prohibited schools enchantment and necromancy): 0—*detect magic*, *flare* (DC 14), *light*, *ray of frost* (2) (+6 ranged touch); 1st—*burning hands* (DC 15), *mage armor*, *magic missile* (3), *shield*; 2nd—*detect thoughts* (DC 15), *glitterdust* (DC 15), *resist energy*, *scorching ray* (2) (+6 ranged touch), *shatter* (DC 16); 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 17), *lightning bolt* (DC 17), *nondetection*; 4th—*lesser globe of invulnerability*, *Otiluke's resilient sphere*, *shout* (DC 18); 5th—*cone of cold* (DC 19), *wall of force*.

Spellbook: as above plus 0—all except enchantment and necromancy; 1st—*detect secret doors*, *detect undead*, *comprehend languages*, *disguise self*, *identify*, *Tenser's floating disk*, *true strike*; 2nd—*darkness*; 3rd—*daylight*; 4th—*ice storm*.

Possessions: +1 *spell storing quarterstaff* (*dispel magic*), *bracers of armor* +2, *boots of elvenkind*, *ring of feather falling*, *ring of protection* +1, *diamond dust* (500 gp).

Hand of the Adama

The hand of the Adama is a benign leader, judge and jury, and protector of the common folk all rolled into one. In a land where the faith of the people is intertwined with their day-to-day activities, the hand of the Adama is the presence that helps them remember the code of conduct, settles disputes, and assists those who require aid. A hand of the Adama understands better than anyone the truths of "The One" and serves as teacher for others to gain clarity in their actions.

Clerics and paladins most often turn to the role of spiritual advisor and peacekeeper that the hand of the Adama embodies. Very rarely, a druid or ranger accepts the mantle of a hand of the Adama. No other classes have the spiritual connection necessary to serve a temple and its flock in such a manner.

Hands of the Adama often work in small groups together, or with others who are devoted in their own way to furthering the tenets of the faith. Occasionally, a hand of the Adama leaves the Golden Water on some mission or purpose, but most are not often seen far from home. The companions of a hand of the Adama must be individuals of high moral character.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a hand of the Adama, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Lawful good or lawful neutral.

Skills: Diplomacy 8 ranks, Heal 8 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 8 ranks.

Spells: Able to cast 3rd-level divine spells.

Patron Deity: The Adama.

Region: The Golden Water.

CLASS SKILLS

The hand of the Adama's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the hand of the Adama prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Hands of the Adama gain no weapon or armor proficiency.

Spells Per Day/Spells Known: At each level, a hand of the Adama gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if he had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class to which he belonged before adding the prestige class level. He does



Sovial, a hand of the Adama

TABLE 2-5: THE HAND OF THE ADAMA

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Tongues, lay on hands	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Discern lies, remove disease 1/week	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Divination enhancement	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Pierce illusion	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Learn the truth, remove disease 2/week	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of turning or destroying undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). If he had more than one divine spellcasting class before becoming a hand of the Adama, he must decide to which class to add each level for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Tongues (Sp): A hand of the Adama can use *tongues* as the spell a number of times per day equal to his hand of the Adama level plus his Charisma bonus (minimum once per day) as a caster of a level equal to his hand of the Adama level plus his highest divine spellcaster level.

Lay on Hands (Su): A hand of the Adama can heal a total number of hit points of damage equal to his hand of the Adama level \times his Charisma bonus (if any) by touch. See the paladin class feature on page 44 of the *Player's Handbook*. Paladin levels stack with hand of the Adama levels for the purpose of determining how many hit points the hand of the Adama can heal per day.

Discern Lies (Sp): Beginning at 2nd level, a hand of the Adama can use *discern lies* as the spell three times per day as a caster of a level equal to his hand of the Adama level plus his highest divine spellcaster level. The save DC against this ability is $14 +$ the hand of the Adama's Wis modifier.

Remove Disease (Sp): A hand of the Adama of 2nd level can use *remove disease*, as the spell, once per week at 2nd level. At 5th level and higher, he can use this ability twice per week.

Divination Enhancement (Ex): Beginning at 3rd level, a hand of the Adama adds twice his hand of the Adama level to his percentage chance of success

when using divination spells such as augury or divination. If a cleric 11/hand of the Adama 4 casts divination, his chance of success is 70% (base) $+ 15\%$ (1% per caster level) $+ 8\%$ ($2 \times$ his hand of the Adama level), or 93% .

Pierce Illusion (Su): At 4th level and above, a hand of the Adama gains the supernatural ability to penetrate illusions and disguises at will. Whenever a hand of the Adama sees an illusion or disguise spell of any sort, he immediately makes a Will save to see through it. The hand of the Adama need not interact with or touch the illusion; visual contact is enough to give the Will save.

Learn the Truth (Su): By touching a creature that has lied to him, a hand of the Adama of 5th level can force the creature to tell the truth. The creature can make a Will save (DC $15 +$ the hand of the Adama's Cha modifier) to resist this mind-affecting compulsion effect. If the saving throw fails, the creature must speak the true version of the lie it uttered. The hand of the Adama can use this ability at will, but only after casting *discern lies* (or using his spell-like ability of the same name) on the creature in question.

sample hand of the Adama

Sovial: Male human cleric 6 of the Adama/hand of the Adama 4; CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD $6d8+6$ plus $4d8+4$; hp 55; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +7; Grp +2; Atk +8 melee ($1d6+1$ or $2d6+1$ nonlethal, $+1$ *merciful light mace*); Full Atk



Illustration by Carl Frank

hin fist

A hin fist is a devout member of a temple dedicated to both Yondalla and the protection of the halfling realm of Luiren. Brimming with confidence in her own abilities, a hin fist transforms that self-assurance into the power of mastery over herself and the world around her. She sees her body and mind as gifts from Yondalla that should be developed and used to the fullest—there should be no need for artificial tools such as weapons.

Clerics, paladins, and monks make the best hin fists, while bards, fighters, and rogues sometimes narrow the focus of their life to adapt to these ways. Even druids, sorcerers, and wizards can occasionally discipline the mind and body enough to make good use of a hin fist's skills and abilities.

Hin fists usually study and improve themselves among their own kind in temples in Luiren. Otherwise they wander across

the land alone or with small groups, serving as champions of Yondalla. Their strict beliefs require them to select comrades that are true of heart.

CREATING A HIN FIST

You can create a hin fist by adapting the sacred fist prestige class from *Complete Divine* for use in Faerûn. The prestige class can be used with the following adjustments.

To qualify to become a hin fist, a character must fulfill the following criteria (in addition to those of the original prestige class).

Race: Halfling.

Alignment: Lawful good.

Patron Deity: Yondalla.

Region: Luiren.

+8/+3 (1d6 or 2d6 nonlethal, +1 *merciful light mace*), SA spell-like abilities, turn undead 9/day (+4, 2D6+8, 7th); SQ *discern lies* 3/day (DC 17), divination enhancement (+8%), lay on hands (8 points/day), pierce illusion, *remove disease* 1/week, tongues 6/day; AL LG; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +8, Bluff +5, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +14, Heal +11, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Knowledge (religion) +12, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +10; Extra Turning, Improved Turning, Lightning Reflexes, Negotiator, Silver Palm.

Languages: Common, Celestial, Durpari, Halfling.

Pierce Illusion (Su): Sovial can penetrate illusions and disguises at will. Whenever he sees an illusion or disguise spell of any sort, he immediately makes a Will save to see through it. He need not interact with or touch the illusion; visual contact is enough.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 10th): 0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *light*, *mending*; 1st—*bless*, *bless water*, *detect evil*, *protection from evil*^{PG}, *remove fear*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*aid*^{PG}, *augury*, *calm emotions* (DC 15), *owl's wisdom*, *shield other*, *sun bolt*[†] (DC 15); 3rd—*dispel magic*, *helping hand*, *magic circle against evil*^{PG}, *prayer*, *searing light* (+7 ranged touch); 4th—*dimensional anchor* (+7 ranged touch), *divination*, *holy smite*^{PG} (DC 17), *neutralize poison*; 5th—*dispel evil*^{PG} (+7 melee touch; DC 18), *greater command* (DC 18), *true seeing*.

D: Domain spell. Domains: Good (cast good spells [6] at +1 caster level), Healing (cast healing spells at +1 caster level).

[†]: New spell described in Chapter 3 of this book.

Possessions: +1 mithral shirt, +2 light steel shield, +1 *merciful light mace*, *pearl of power* (2nd-level spell), *elixir of fire breath*.

Jordain vizier

The Jordaini are a special servitor caste, though still upper class, in the magocracy of Halruaa. They are trained at a young age to understand magic, schooled in a wide range of academic disciplines, and taught to be imperturbable in the face of the wondrous. Following their graduation from House Jordain, they are assigned to one of Halruaa's ruling class of wizards, where their special skills make them important advisors to and guardians of their new masters.

Most jordain viziers begin their training as experts, and then apply their abilities to the monk class until qualifying as a jordain vizier, whereupon they typically alternate between monk and jordain vizier levels. Members of the jordain order usually multiclass as experts, fighters, jordain viziers, and monks, but some multiclass as rogues. Few take up spellcasting classes, since doing so inevitably makes them hunted by the magehounds.

Jordain viziers approach adventures as unflappably as they approach everything else. While most jordain viziers are found away from their homes only when they accompany their masters

on important missions, a few flee Halruaa due to a breach of their ethical code or to find freedom. Such renegades are hunted persons, likely to surround themselves with likeminded allies and be always on the move.

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a jordain vizier, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Human (Halruaan).

Alignment: Any lawful.

Base Will Save: +6.

Skills: Concentration 8 ranks, Diplomacy 2 ranks, Gather Information 2 ranks, Heal 2 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks, Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) 4 ranks, Knowledge (any one other) 4 ranks, Listen 2 ranks, Spellcraft 4 ranks.

Feats: Iron Will, Spellwise.

Patron Deity: One of Halruaa's accepted deities, usually Mystra or Azuth.

Special: Must be literate and speak Common, Halruaan, and at least two other languages. Must have been raised by House Jordain. Such rearing precludes the practice of arcane magic and the use of many magic items, subject to investigation by a magehound.

CLASS SKILLS

The jordain vizier's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (n/a), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 8 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the jordain vizier prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A jordain vizier gains no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Arcane Nondetection (Ex): A jordain vizier undergoes mental and physical training to make him difficult to detect with arcane divination spells and items. This ability functions exactly like the *nondetection* spell, except that it works only against arcane magic. The DC to overcome this nondetection ability is 15 + the character's jordain vizier level + his Cha modifier.

Arcane Spell Resistance (Ex): A jordain vizier has spell resistance against arcane magic equal to 10 + the character's jordain vizier level + his Cha modifier.

Eidetic Memory (Ex): Jordain viziers are trained so deeply in various forms of mnemonics that their skills become subconscious. They collect knowledge from all disciplines and can process it in a deductive way that defies explanation. This ability has three functions: recollection of knowledge and perceptions, committing specific things to memory, and making accurate conclusions.



Zurleau, a Jordain vizier

Through years of study, with the intention of becoming of the greatest use to his wizard master, a jordan vizier gains the ability to know legends or information regarding various topics, just as a bard can with bardic knowledge. The jordan vizier adds his jordan vizier level + his Int modifier to a lore check, which functions otherwise exactly like a bardic knowledge check. See page 28 of the *Player's Handbook* for more information on bardic knowledge. If a jordan vizier has levels in bard, loremaster, or another class that grants an ability similar to bardic knowledge, those class levels stack for the purpose of determining the efficacy of this aspect of eidetic memory. Table 2-6: Eidetic Memory shows additional example DCs for recalling or knowing a particular fact.

A jordan vizier can also commit an item to memory with perfect accuracy. He can store a number of items equal to his jordan vizier level + his Int modifier. The jordan vizier can drop older items in favor of new ones. Dropped items can be recalled as if they were other types of memories, using the DCs on Table 2-6: Eidetic Memory.

TABLE 2-6: EIDETIC MEMORY

Type of Memory	DC
Recall obvious detail or common knowledge	10
<i>Several noblewomen attended Elder Thebadol's induction celebration; the gist of a conversation; silver weapons hurt lycanthropes.</i>	
Recall important detail or specialized knowledge	15
<i>Thebadol's third daughter was absent; key phrases of a conversation; fiendish creatures have cold resistance.</i>	
Recall noticeable detail or esoteric knowledge	20
<i>Boryka, a magebound, asked several ball-goers about Thebadol's daughter; word-for-word recollection of key portions of a conversation; which spells affect a particular kind of golem.</i>	
Trivial detail or obscure knowledge	25
<i>Thebadol grimaced briefly when Boryka asked about his daughter; word-for-word recollection of an entire conversation; the resistances and immunities of various outsiders.</i>	

Finally, the jordan vizier can use his honed memory to make lightning-fast deductions based on only the slightest clues, patterns, or scraps of information. He can make reasonable statements about a person, place, or object, from seemingly little knowledge. However, this ability is the result of a rigorously logical process, involving recalling and correlating every possible piece

of data with bearing on the topic. The nature of the knowledge the jordan vizier gains is subject to DM discretion, but might include the answer to a riddle, the way out of maze, or even a conclusion concerning a dilemma. An eidetic memory check, with a bonus equal to the character's jordan vizier level + his Int modifier, must be made to compile the desired information. The DM secretly determines the DC.

Bonus Language (Ex): During their laborious studies, jordan viziers learn new languages to access more knowledge and better serve their wizard masters. The jordan vizier can choose a new language at 2nd and 4th level.

Combat Insight (Ex): Due to their quick, deductive minds and extensive training, jordan viziers can predict an opponent's next move to some extent. Jordan viziers gain a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls and a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class. At 4th level, the bonuses increase to +2.

Counterspell (Su): While jordan viziers do not learn to cast spells, beginning at 3rd level, they learn to direct their spell resistance outward. This, combined with their knowledge of wizardry and how to disrupt spells, gives them the ability to prepare to counterspell an arcane spell as a ready action. (For more information on counterspells, see page 170 of the *Player's Handbook*.)

Like a spellcaster, a jordan vizier must select an opponent as the target of the counterspell and ready an action to counter her spell. When the opponent tries to cast a spell, a vizier makes a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + the spell's level) as a free action to identify the opponent's spell. Unlike a spellcaster, to complete the action, the jordan vizier must make a special class level check (1d20 + jordan vizier level) that equals or exceeds 5 + the spell's caster level. If successful, the jordan vizier negates the arcane spell with no other results. The jordan vizier can only counterspell spells of a level equal to or less than his jordan vizier level + his Cha modifier, and he can only attempt to counterspell a number of times per day equal to the same number. This power is Weave-based and can be affected by Shadow Weave feats and magic just as any other Weave magic.

An ex-jordan vizier who gains the ability to counterspell as a spellcaster must choose, after making his Spellcraft check, to counterspell either as a jordan vizier or as his spellcaster class. The abilities do not stack in any way.

Aide-de-Camp (Ex): Jordan viziers eventually become indispensable assistants to their masters. At 5th level, the character doubles his Intelligence and Wisdom bonuses (if any) for the purposes of eidetic memory and all appropriate class skill checks.

TABLE 2-7: THE JORDAIN VIZIER

	Base				
	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Arcane nondetection, arcane spell resistance, eidetic memory
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Bonus language, combat insight +1
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Counterspell
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Bonus language, combat insight +2
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Aide-de-camp, grace

Grace (Ex): At 5th level, jordan viziers become more resistant to the effects of magic. The character can apply his Charisma bonus (if any) as a bonus on saving throws against supernatural abilities, spells, and spell-like abilities.

Code of Conduct: Jordan viziers are indoctrinated to never lie, never utilize spells (or magic items that produce spell-like effects), and obey Halruaan wizards, authorities, and laws. The punishment for breaking these rules is usually death. All Jordaini are rendered infertile upon graduation, so no jordan vizier can have children. Jordan viziers seldom handle money on the theory that they are less likely to be corrupted by its lure. They are taught to value the philosophical over the material and rely on their wizard masters to handle most of their material needs.

Multiclass Note: Most jordan viziers multiclass in expert, monk, and/or fighter. Jordan viziers can add levels in any of these classes without losing the ability to advance as a monk. This is an exception to the rule in the Ex-Monks section, page 42 of the *Player's Handbook*. Violating this expanded limit by multiclassing into a class other than those listed above ends the jordan vizier's development as a monk, as described in the standard rules. Such multiclassing does not end the jordan vizier's development as a jordan vizier.

Some jordan viziers multiclass as rogues or sorcerers, though the latter choice almost assuredly forces them out of the jordan order and makes them fugitives hunted by the deadly magehounds.

Ex-Jordan Viziers: A jordan vizier who becomes nonlawful cannot gain further levels as a jordan vizier, but he retains all jordan vizier abilities. In addition, a jordan vizier who gets caught violating the code of conduct can be thrown out of the jordan order, thereby preventing him from gaining new levels in this class. Unfortunately, such banishment is more rare than a death sentence.

sample jordan vizier

Zurleau: Male human expert 1/monk 5/jordan vizier 1; CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1 plus 5d8+5 plus 1d6+1; hp 35; Init +7; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 16, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk +6 melee (1d8+1, unarmed strike); Full Atk +4/+4 melee (1d8+1, unarmed flurry); SA *ki* strike (magic); SQ arcane nondetection, arcane spell resistance 14, eidetic memory +5 (3 items in memory), evasion, purity of body, slow fall (20 ft.), still mind; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +7, Heal +6, Jump +10, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (Halruaa local) +7, Knowledge (history) +7 (+9 for Halruaa), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6 (+8 for Halruaa), Listen +5, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +12, Spot +5, Tumble +10; Combat Reflexes^B, Improved Counterspell, Improved Grapple^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike^B, Spellwise, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Halruaan.

Arcane Nondetection (Ex): Zurleau is difficult to detect with arcane divination spells and items. If such a spell or item is used

against Zurleau, the user must make a DC 19 caster level check for the divination to work.

Evasion (Ex): If Zurleau is exposed to any effect that normally allows him to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, he takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Purity of Body (Ex): Immune to all normal diseases. Magical and supernatural diseases still affect Zurleau.

Slow Fall (Ex): A monk within arm's reach of a wall can use it to slow his descent while falling. Zurleau takes damage as if the fall were 20 feet shorter than it actually is.

Still Mind (Ex): +2 bonus on saves against spells and effects of the enchantment school.

Possessions: *Amulet of natural armor* +1 (with symbol of House Jordain).

Luiren marchwarden

The Luiren marchwarden is the defender of the frontier in the land of the halflings. In Luiren, much of the territory is still verdant and untamed. The hin rarely settle down for long stretches, but their communities are still threatened by encroaching monsters and would-be invaders from other lands. The halflings need protectors to watch over them and keep dangers from slipping past the borders unobserved. Such is the task of the Luiren marchwarden.

Rangers and druids are best suited to become marchwardens, but sometimes other classes choose this path. Of those classes, only wizards and sorcerers truly lack the defensive instincts necessary to carry out the tasks of the marchwarden effectively. Barbarians are unusual in Luiren, and thus they are also rare as marchwardens.

Marchwardens work alone and in small groups. Either way, they accept responsibility for a specific region of the countryside, and they consider it their duty to defend that plot of land—and the halflings who reside on it—from any and all threats. They seldom roam beyond their home territory, because many of their abilities and powers are tied to the region where they stand vigilant.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Luiren marchwarden, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Halfling.

Alignment: Any nonevil.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Skills: Knowledge (Luiren local) 5 ranks, Knowledge (geography) 8 ranks.

Feats: Alertness, Investigator, Track

Spells: Able to cast 1st-level divine spells.

Region: Luiren

CLASS SKILLS

The Luiren marchwarden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (Luiren local) (Int),

Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Luiren marchwarden prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Luiren marchwarden gains no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

March Bonus (Ex): A Luiren marchwarden gets a morale bonus on saves and to Armor Class whenever he is within the boundary of his march (see Sanctify March, below). He also gets this bonus on Hide, Knowledge (nature), Listen, Move Silently, Spot, and Survival checks while within his march. This bonus starts at +2 and improves with every odd marchwarden level, until it reaches +4 at 5th level.

Sanctify March (Ex): A Luiren marchwarden establishes a territory, called a march, which is his to defend against all threats. This march is an area 5 miles per marchwarden level in a radius from a central point—usually the center of a village or town, but sometimes an unusual place, such as a sacred grove or a waterfall. To consider a location for his march, a marchwarden must know the terrain exceptionally well (as indicated by the skill requirements for this class). While a marchwarden is within his sanctified march, he gains all the additional abilities and bonuses of the class as specified below.

If a Luiren marchwarden chooses to establish a new march, he must first create familiarity with the location by living there for a month. Once he has become accustomed to the area, the marchwarden can designate the locale as his march, but the benefits of the march are not

fully vested immediately. The first week a Luiren marchwarden occupies his new march, he has only the benefits of a 1st-level marchwarden. During the second week, the benefits due a 2nd-level marchwarden activate, and so on each week, until the maximum benefits of the marchwarden's own level function. The moment a marchwarden establishes a new march, he loses all benefits in the old one.

Detect Evil (Sp): A Luiren marchwarden can use *detect evil* at will while inside the boundary of his sanctified march.

Share March Bonus (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, a Luiren marchwarden can share the morale bonuses he gains from his march bonus ability with a single ally within 30 feet. Sharing the march bonus is a free action that can be performed at will, but a marchwarden must be able to see his ally at the time the ability is activated. The effect lasts until the target is out of range or until the Luiren marchwarden ends it as a free action.

Easy Trail (Su): From 2nd level on, any time a Luiren marchwarden is inside the boundary of his sanctified march, he can move through all types of terrain as though under the effects of an *easy trail* spell. This spell is found on page 46.

Safe Clearing (Sp): A 3rd-level and higher marchwarden gains the ability to use the spell *safe clearing* (see page 48) once per day. The effect is treated as if improved by the Widen Spell metamagic feat. A marchwarden must be within his march to use this ability, and he uses it at a caster level equal to twice his Luiren marchwarden level.

Dispel Evil (Sp): Once he reaches 4th level, a Luiren marchwarden inside the boundary of his sanctified march can use *dispel evil* once per day. His caster level is equal to twice the character's Luiren marchwarden level.

Land Womb (Sp): A 4th-level Luiren marchwarden gains the ability to use the spell *land womb* once per day, so long as he is inside the boundary of his sanctified march. His caster level is equal to twice the character's Luiren marchwarden level.



Quillan, a Luiren marchwarden

Illustration by Jason Engle

TABLE 2-8: THE LUIREN MARCHWARDEN

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	March Bonus	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	+2	Sanctify march, <i>detect evil</i>
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	+2	Share march bonus, easy trail
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	+3	<i>Safe clearing</i>
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	+3	<i>Dispel evil</i> , <i>land womb</i>
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	+4	<i>Commune with march</i> , hide in plain sight

Commune with March (Sp): Beginning at 5th level, a marchwarden can gather information about her entire march once per day as if he had cast the *commune with nature* spell.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex): At 5th level, within the confines of his march, a marchwarden can use the Hide skill even while being observed.

sample Luiren marchwarden

Quillan: Male strongheart halfling ranger 7 of Sheela Peryroyl/Lurien marchwarden 3; CR 10; Small humanoid; HD 7d8+14 plus 3d8+6; hp 65; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +10; Grp +6; Atk +12 melee (1d4, masterwork sickle) or +17 ranged (1d6+1/×3, +1 composite longbow of distance) or +14 ranged (1d6+2/×3 plus 1d6+2 [two arrows], +1 composite longbow of distance with Manyshot); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d4, masterwork sickle) or +15/+15/+10 ranged (1d6+1/×3, +1 composite longbow of distance); SA favored enemy animals +4, favored enemy aberrations +2; SQ animal companion (war dog; link, share spells), *detect evil*, easy trail, march bonus, *safe clearing*, sanctify march (15-mile radius), share march bonus, wild empathy +8 (+4 magical beasts), strongheart halfling traits, woodland stride; AL NG; SV Fort +10*, Ref +11*, Will +4*; Str 11, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10 (+12 with rope), Gather Information +5, Hide +13, Jump +13, Knowledge (geography) +10 (+12 in Luiren), Knowledge (Luiren local) +10, Knowledge (nature) +12, Listen +10, Move Silently +14, Ride +9 (+11 to stay in saddle), Search +12, Spot +10, Survival +11 (+13 to avoid getting lost and to track, +2 additional aboveground), Swim +10, Use Rope +10; Alertness, Dodge, Endurance^B, Investigator, Manyshot^B, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot^B, Track^B.

Languages: Common, Goblin, Halfling, Shaaran.

Favored Enemy (Ex): Quillan gains a +4 bonus on his Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against animals. He gains the same bonus on weapon damage rolls. Against aberrations, he gains a +2 bonus on these skill checks and on weapon damage rolls.

Animal Companion (Ex): Quillan has a war dog named Ducs as an animal companion. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below. Quillan and Ducs enjoy the link and share spells special qualities.

Link (Ex): Quillan can handle Ducs as a free action. He also gains a +4 circumstance bonus on all wild empathy checks and Handle Animal checks made regarding his dog.

Share Spells (Ex): Quillan may have any spell he casts also affect Ducs, so long as the latter is within 5 feet. He may also cast spells with a target of "You" on Ducs.

Ducs: War dog animal companion; CR —; Medium animal; HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (1d6+4, bite); SA trip; SQ evasion, low-light vision, scent, tricks; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +9, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +4, Survival +3; Alertness, Light Armor Proficiency, Track^B.

Trip (Ex): If Ducs hits with a bite attack, it can attempt to trip the opponent (+1 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking attacks of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip Ducs.

Evasion (Ex): If Ducs is exposed to any effect that normally allows it to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, it takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Tricks: Attack (all creatures), come, defend, down, heel, perform, and stay.

Possessions: Masterwork leather barding, military saddle, bridle.

Detect Evil (Sp): Within the limits of his march, Quillan can use *detect evil* at will, as the spell.

Easy Trail (Su): When Quillan is inside the boundary of his sanctified march, he can move through all types of terrain as though under the effects of an *easy trail* spell.

March Bonus (Ex): While within the borders of his march, Quillan gets a +3 morale bonus on saves and to Armor Class. He also gets this bonus on Hide, Knowledge (nature), Listen, Move Silently, Spot, and Survival skill checks while within his march.

Safe Clearing (Sp): Once per day, Quillan can use a widened *safe clearing* as a 6th-level caster, so long as he is inside the boundary of his sanctified march.

Share March Bonus (Ex): At will and as a free action, Quillan can share his march bonus with a single ally within 30 feet. Quillan must be able to see his ally at the time the ability is activated, and the effect lasts until the target is out of range or until Quillan ends it (a free action).

Strongheart Halfling Traits: *Strongheart halflings have a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against fear.

Woodland Stride (Ex): Quillan may move through natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain at normal speed and without damage or other impairment. However, thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that are magically manipulated to impede motion still affect him.

Ranger Spells Prepared (caster level 3rd): 1st—*endure elements*, *speak with animal*.

Possessions: +2 leather armor, +1 composite longbow of distance, masterwork sickle, masterwork light crossbow, boots of striding and springing, potion of cat's grace, 2 potions of cure light wounds.

Maquar crusader

The Maquar are the noble class of warriors in the nation of Estagund that exist for one purpose—devoted service to the rajah of that land. A Maquar crusader follows a strict code of conduct that not only limits what he can own or where he can live, but also limits the ways in which merchants can influence him. Traditionally, Maquar crusaders are charged with protection of the royal house and family, defense of the nation, and consultation on battle tactics. They are both powerful champions, capable of impressive combat prowess with the falchion, and renowned defenders, skilled at protecting those who cannot defend themselves.

Fighters and paladins make up the bulk of recruits to the ranks of the Maquar, though rangers and clerics sometimes hear the call to serve the rajah. Members of few other classes have the combination of dedication, military skill, and discipline to succeed as Maquar crusaders.

Maquar crusaders usually operate in groups, though these can be small elite units tasked with specific jobs—such as security for the rajah's daughter—or in larger forces during times of war. A lone Maquar crusader might be sent on a serious mission in the service of his rajah, perhaps as a guardian for diplomats. At these times, the crusader might welcome the companionship of adventurers, though some find the Maquar's strict code of conduct inconvenient at times.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Maquar crusader, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Lawful good or lawful neutral.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Skills: Knowledge (nobility and royalty) 4 ranks.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Expertise, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Patron Deity: The Adama.

Region: The Golden Water.

Special: The character must have a reputation as an honorable and dedicated person. He must spend one full month living by

the standards of the Maquar crusader's code of conduct before being admitted into the Maquar.

CLASS SKILLS

The Maquar crusader's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Maquar crusaders are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor, and shields.

Uncanny Loyalty (Ex): The Maquar crusader's unswerving dedication and loyalty to his duty makes him difficult to corrupt or influence. Beginning at 1st level, he gains a +1 resistance bonus on Will saves against all mind-affecting spells and spell-like abilities; this bonus increases as the crusader gains levels, until it reaches +4 at 10th level.

Harm's Way (Ex): A Maquar crusader can elect to place himself in the path of danger to protect a single ally, called his charge. Anytime the crusader is within 5 feet of his charge, and the charge is subject to an attack, the crusader can elect to switch places with her and take the attack in her place (the two physically switch spaces). The crusader must declare his intent to switch places with his charge before the attack roll is made. A charge can be selected as a free action when the crusader rolls initiative at the beginning of a combat and cannot be changed for the duration of that combat. The Maquar crusader can only use this ability if his charge is one size category larger than he is, or smaller.

Greater Weapon Focus: Maquar crusaders receive Greater Weapon Focus (falchion) as a bonus feat.

Smite (Su): Once per day, a Maquar crusader of 2nd level or higher can make a single melee attack with a +4 attack bonus and a damage bonus equal to his Maquar crusader level. The crusader must declare the smite before making the attack roll, and that

TABLE 2-9: THE MAQUAR CRUSADER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Greater Weapon Focus (falchion), harm's way, uncanny loyalty +1
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Smite 1/day
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Allied Defense, uncanny loyalty +2
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Defensive strike
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Deflect attack
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Smite 2/day, uncanny loyalty +3
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Defensive strike (+1)
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Deflect attack (+1)
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Smite 3/day, uncanny loyalty +4
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Defensive strike (+2)

smite use is wasted for the day if he misses. At 6th level, the smite is usable two times per day, increasing to three times per day at 9th level.

Allied Defense: A 3rd-level Maquar crusader gains Allied Defense (see page 19) as a bonus feat.

Defensive Strike (Ex): Starting at 4th level, a Maquar crusader can make an attack of opportunity against an adjacent opponent who attacks his charge in melee. The crusader is still limited to one attack of opportunity per round, unless he has the Combat Reflexes feat. He gains a +1 bonus on this attack for every three levels above 4th.

Deflect Attack (Ex): Beginning at 5th level, the Maquar crusader can attempt to parry a melee attack against his charge. To attempt this, he must be within 5 feet of his charge, aware of the impending attack, not flat-footed, and holding a melee weapon or shield capable of deflecting the attack. Once per round when his charge would normally be hit with a melee weapon, the crusader can make a Reflex save (DC 20 + attacking weapon's magic enhancement bonus [if any]). If he succeeds, he deflects the blow as a free action, rendering it harmless. At 8th level, the Maquar crusader gains a +1 competence bonus on this Reflex save.

Code of Conduct: The Maquar crusader must adhere to a strict code of conduct at all times or risk being expelled from the Maquar and losing his honored status within society. A Maquar cannot own anything other than the clothes he wears, his armor, his sword, and a small amount of personal effects that he can carry himself. (Maquar crusaders hailing from the paladin class can keep their special mounts and the gear required for riding.) He has no home other than the one his rajah supplies him. It is the rajah's responsibility to provide for a Maquar crusader (one cannot hold a job other than as a crusader), but he is expected to assist the public in a time of need, whether that means defending the rajah from assassins or helping to build a new public building in a small village. A Maquar crusader cannot take payment for his service, whether in coin or other material goods, but he can ask for a single night's hospitality from any citizen when he is away from his usual quarters. The Maquar are expected to obey the rajah (or a leader he appoints to operate on his behalf) unquestioningly.

Multiclass Note: A character who was a paladin before joining the Maquar crusader prestige class can freely add levels of Maquar crusader without losing the ability to advance as a

paladin, so long as he continues to meet all other requirements for maintaining paladin status. This is an exception to the rule in the Ex-Paladins section, page 44 of the *Player's Handbook*. Violating this expanded limit by multiclassing into a class other than Maquar crusader ends the character's development as a paladin, as described in the standard rules. Such multiclassing does not end the character's development as a Maquar crusader.

sample maquar crusader

Lysan: Male human paladin 5 of the Adama/Maquar crusader 1; CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 5d10+10 plus 1d8+2; hp 44; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +12 melee (2d4+5/18–20, +1 *falchion*); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (2d4+5/18–20, +1 *falchion*); SA smite evil 2/day, turn undead 5/day (+4, 2d6+4, 2nd); SQ aura of courage, aura of good, *detect evil*, divine grace, divine health, harm's way, lay on hands (10 points/day), *special mount* (heavy warhorse; empathic link, share spells), uncanny loyalty +1; AL LG; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +9, Heal +8, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +8, Ride +7 (+9 to stay in saddle), Spot +8, Sense Motive +8; Alertness, Combat Expertise, Greater Weapon Focus (*falchion*)^B, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (*falchion*).

Languages: Common, Durpari, Halfling.

Smite Evil (Su): Twice per day, Lysan may attempt to smite evil with one normal melee attack. He adds +2 to his attack roll and deals an extra 5 points of damage.

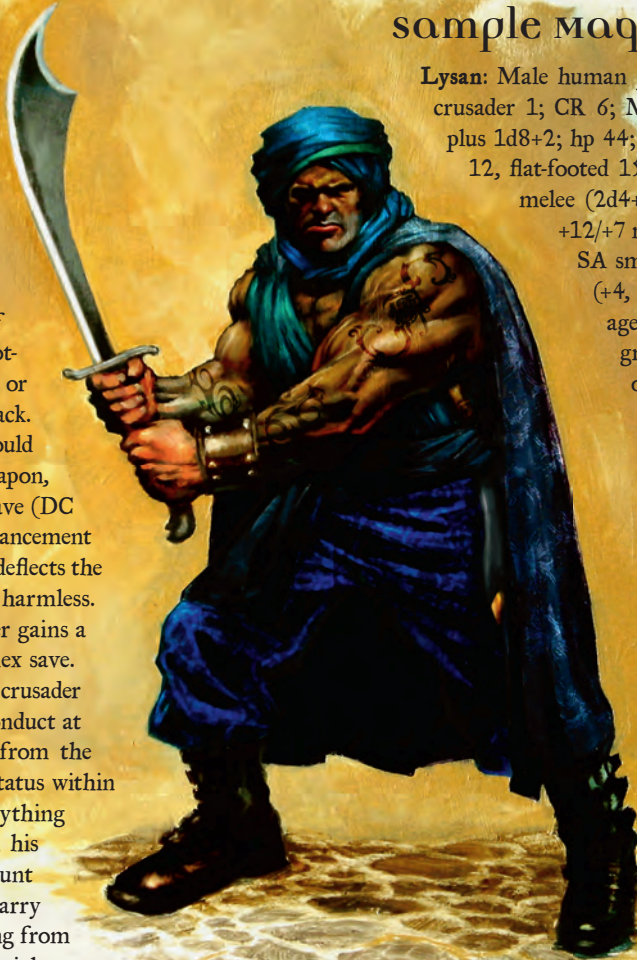
Aura of Courage (Su): Immune to fear and each ally within 10 feet of Lysan gains a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects.

Detect Evil (Sp): *Detect evil* at will, as the spell.

Divine Health (Ex): Immunity to disease.

Harm's Way (Ex): Lysan can elect to place himself in the path of danger to protect a single ally, called his charge. Anytime Lysan is within 5 feet of his charge, and the charge is subject to an attack, Lysan can elect to switch places with the charge and take the attack in her place. He must declare his intent to switch places with his charge before the attack roll is made. Lysan's charge can be selected as a free action when he rolls initiative

Illustration by Chris Hawkes



Lysan, a Maquar crusader

at the beginning of a combat and cannot be changed for the duration of that combat.

Special Mount (Sp): Once per day, as a full-round action, Lysan can call his heavy warhorse from the celestial realms to serve him for up to 10 hours. Lysan can dismiss Ogladi at any time as a free action. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below. Lysan and Ogladi enjoy the empathic link and share spells special qualities.

Empathic Link (Su): Lysan can communicate empathically with Ogladi at a distance of up to 1 mile.

Share Spells (Su): Lysan may have any spell he casts also affect Ogladi, so long as the latter is within 5 feet. He may also cast spells with a target of "You" on Ogladi.

Ogladi: Heavy warhorse special mount; CR —; Large animal; HD 6d8+9; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 50 ft.; AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +4; Grp +12; Atk +8 melee (1d6+4, hoof); Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+4, 2 hooves) and +3 melee (1d4+2, bite); SA —; SQ low-light vision, scent; AL LG; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Spot +5; Endurance, Improved Natural Armor, Run.

Possessions: Military saddle, bridle.

Uncanny Loyalty (Ex): +1 resistance bonus on Will saves against all mind-affecting spells and spell-like abilities.

Paladin Spells Prepared (caster level 2nd): 1st—*protection from evil*.

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 falchion, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds.

scourge maiden

Scourge maidens are warrior-priestesses of Loviatar dedicated to pain and anguish. They have perfected the art of torture, both physical and mental, and they find their own spiritual satisfaction by tormenting anyone they can. The scourge, Loviatar's favored weapon, is an implement of war and persecution for all scourge maidens.

Clerics and cleric/fighters who are initiated into inner circle of Loviatar's followers are eligible to become scourge maidens. Few others have the demeanor and talents to serve in such a fashion.

Scourge maidens are the frontline combatants within temples dedicated to Loviatar. They are responsible for fetching prisoners, defending high-ranking priestesses, and inflicting painful punishment on offenders. Though scourge maidens typically work in groups with one another, they can and do undertake solitary quests. These servants of Loviatar can be found in the company of adventurers—so long as those adventurers are not squeamish and have the moral latitude to accept a sadist in their midst.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a scourge maiden, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Gender: Female.

Alignment: Lawful evil, lawful neutral, or neutral evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Skills: Heal 4 ranks, Intimidate 8 ranks, Use Rope 4 ranks.

Feats: Initiate of Loviatar, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (scourge).

Patron Deity: Loviatar.

CLASS SKILLS

The scourge maiden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int Modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the scourge maiden prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Scourge maidens gain no weapon or armor proficiencies.

Spells Per Day/Spells Known: At each odd-numbered level, a scourge maiden gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class level. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of turning or destroying undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so

TABLE 2—10: THE SCOURGE MAIDEN

Level	Base				Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save		
1st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Weapon Focus (scourge)	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	<i>Bane</i> 3/day	—
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	<i>Crushing despair</i> 3/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Stunning strike	—
5th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Painful strike	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
6th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Agonizing strike	—

on). If she had more than one divine spellcasting class before becoming a scourge maiden, she must decide to which class to add each level for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Weapon Focus: A scourge maiden receives Weapon Focus (scourge) as a bonus feat.

Bane (Sp): At 2nd level and above, a scourge maiden can fill her enemies with fear and doubt. This ability, usable three times per day, duplicates the effects of the *bane* spell, with a save DC equal to 11 + the scourge maiden's Cha modifier. The caster level is equal to her divine spellcaster level.

Crushing Despair (Sp): A 3rd-level scourge maiden can evoke great sadness. Three times per day, the scourge maiden can use *crushing despair*, with a save DC equal to 14 + the scourge maiden's Cha modifier. The caster level is equal to her divine spellcaster level.

Stunning Strike (Ex): Beginning at 4th level, a scourge maiden can stun an opponent with a blow from her scourge. She must declare that she is using this ability before she makes her attack roll (thus, a failed attack roll ruins the attempt). This ability forces a foe damaged by the scourge maiden's attack to make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 the scourge maiden's character level + the maiden's Wis modifier), in addition to dealing damage normally. An opponent who fails this saving throw is stunned for 1 round (until just before the scourged maiden's next action). A stunned character can't act, loses any Dexterity bonus to AC, and takes a -2 penalty to AC. A scourge maiden can attempt a stunning attack once per day for every scourge maiden level she has attained, and no more than once per round. Constructs, oozes, plants, undead, incorporeal creatures, and creatures immune to critical hits cannot be stunned.

Painful Strike (Ex): At 5th level, the scourge maiden can cause great pain with her scourge attacks. She can spend one of her stunning strike daily uses to subject the target of her scourge to such debilitating pain that he is nauseated for 2 rounds. A successful Fortitude save (DC as stunning strike) negates the effect. Creatures immune to stunning attacks are also immune to this ability.

Agonizing Strike (Ex): At 6th level, the scourge maiden can cause crippling pain with her scourge attacks. She can spend one of her stunning strike daily uses to subject the target to such punishing pain that he immediately drops prone and is dazed by the agony for 1d4 rounds. Being prone means the victim

gains a +4 bonus to Armor Class against ranged attacks, but takes a -4 penalty to Armor Class against melee attacks. A successful Fortitude save (DC as stunning strike) negates the effect. Creatures immune to stunning attacks are also immune to this ability.

sample scourge maiden

Rytella: Female human fighter 3/cleric 5 of Loviatar/scourge maiden 3; CR 11; Medium humanoid; HD 3d10+9 plus 5d8+15 plus 3d8+9; hp 85; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +13 melee (1d8+1 plus 2d6 and 1d6 to wielder, +1 *vicious scourge*) or +12 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork composite shortbow); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+1 plus 2d6 and 1d6 to wielder, +1 *vicious scourge*) or +12/+7 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork composite shortbow); SA *bane* 3/day, *crushing despair* 3/day, rebuke undead 6/day (+3, 2d6+8, 5th); SQ —; AL NE; SV Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +11, Climb +2, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +7, Heal +8, Intimidate +15, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +8, Swim +1, Use Rope +6; Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (scourge), Improved Disarm^B, Initiate of Loviatar, Lightning Reflexes, Persuasive, Weapon Finesse^B, Weapon Focus (scourge)^B.

Languages: Common, Halruaan.

Bane (Sp): Three times per day, Rytella can use *bane*, as the spell. A DC 14 Will save negates the effect. Caster level 7th.

Crushing Despair (Sp): Three times per day, Rytella can use *crushing despair*, as the spell. A DC 17 Will save negates the effect. Caster level 7th.

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 7th):
0—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance* (2), *purify food and drink*, *virtue*; 1st—*cause fear* (DC 13), *curse water*, *doom* (DC 13), *magic weapon*, *protection from winged flyers*[†], *shield of faith*^D; 2nd—*endurance*^D, *enthrall* (DC 14), *hold person* (DC 14), *sound burst* (DC 14), *zone of truth* (DC 13); 3rd—*bestow curse*^D (DC 15), *blindness/deafness* (DC 15), *redirect spell*[†]; 4th—*energization*^D (+11 ranged touch), *wall of pain*[†] (DC 16).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Retribution (strike of vengeance 1/day), Suffering (pain touch 1/day).

†: New spell described in Chapter 3 of this book.

Possessions: +2 chain shirt, +1 *vicious scourge*, masterwork composite shortbow, *amulet of health* +2, *ring of mind shielding*.



Rytella, a scourge maiden

MAGIC AND SPELLS

The Shining South is a region of trade and commerce, where many consider magic a commodity just like precious metals and foodstuffs. Ships arrive in every port along the coast of the Great Sea carrying strange and wondrous spells, items, and components from distant lands. Of course, the most prevalent magic of all is that of the wizards of Halruaa, who do not sell their secrets, but are certainly interested in buying everyone else's. The clerics of the Adama in Durpar hold sway over their flock with a different kind of magic, but one that holds sway in the everyday practice of trade.

secrets of the south

Secret magic is not so widespread in the South as in other parts of Faerûn, but no culture guards its magical research and ability as jealously as the wizards of Halruaa, partly out of fear that such power could lead to another cataclysm like the fall of ancient Netheril, and partly out of greed.

Rune magic

Rune magic is an ancient form of the Art considered unrefined by many practitioners today, but it still has its adherents. In the Great Rift, many dwarves still retain the old ways of harnessing magic through the crafting of runes, a practice they use to aid in defending their homeland from the vile terrors of the Underdark.

Rune magic is described in Chapter 2 of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*. Numerous gold dwarf (and a few

Shaaryan) clerics learn the Inscribe Rune feat, and a sizable portion of them take up the mantle of runecaster. Most of these remain within the confines of their home territories, but others set out on the road and offer their services abroad. Few demonstrate the power of runes to any other than their most trusted servants.

In some parts of the South, rune magic is seen as a wicked power, because it is in the hands of dangerous creatures. A few among the lizardfolk of Rethild have learned rune magic, as have some ogres in the Toadsquat Mountains and some giant clans in the Dustwall.

The shadow weave

Few folk are really sure just how prevalent wielders of the Shadow Weave actually are in the Shining South. No one would actually confess to any proficiency in the dark side of magic, though rumors abound that a cult of Shadow Weave users is growing in power in the highest ranks of the Council of Elders in Halruaa. Such tales claim that this secret organization has designs on overthrowing the established regime and all who serve Mystra and Azuth, replacing it with their own members. Nearly half of the rumblings suggest that the fabled Conclave of Halruaa, a second secretive organization of wizards, is on the verge of exposing the shadow wizards. Just as many claim that the two groups are in league or, even more insidious, one and the same. The only certainty is very few know the truth, and none of those who do are admitting anything.

new bard spell

1ST-LEVEL BARD SPELL

Sea Legs: Target creature can maneuver easily while on a ship.

new cleric spells

1ST-LEVEL CLERIC SPELLS

Protection from Winged Flyers: Like *protection from evil*, but benefits apply to winged flyers.

Sea Legs: Target creature can maneuver easily while on a ship.

2ND-LEVEL CLERIC SPELLS

Dispel Fog: Cancels natural and magical fogs in affected area.

Rock Catch: Catch hurled rocks.

Sun Bolt: Ray deals 2d6 damage, more against undead, and might blind target.

3RD-LEVEL CLERIC SPELLS

Entropic Shield, Mass: Ranged attacks against many creatures have 20% miss chance.

Redirect Spell: Spells targeting ally target you instead.

Rockburst: Cause stone object to explode, dealing 1d4 damage +1 point/level.

Sticks and Stones: Create stone and wood skeleton with energy drain attack to fight for you.

4TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

Wall of Pain: Wall causes pain to creatures passing through.

5TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELLS

Stonefire: Natural stone combusts, dealing fire damage to nearby creatures.

Streamers: Ranged touch attack deals 5d10 damage, +1 streamer/three levels (max four).

6TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

Fiery Vision: Twin eye rays deal 4d6 fire damage each for 1 round/level.

7TH-LEVEL CLERIC SPELL

Stone Trap: Block of stone turns invisible, hovers in the air, and drops when condition is met.

new druid spells

1ST-LEVEL DRUID SPELLS

Darsson's Cooling Breeze: Create light breeze that travels in one direction.

Protection from Winged Flyers: Like *protection from evil*, but benefits apply to winged flyers.

2ND-LEVEL DRUID SPELLS

Dispel Fog: Cancels natural and magical fogs in affected area.

Easy Trail: Create safe passage through overgrown areas and hide your back trail.

Rockburst: Cause stone object to explode, dealing 1d4 damage +1 point/level.

3RD-LEVEL DRUID SPELLS

Brittleskin: Subject's natural armor becomes brittle, causing weapon attacks against it to deal more damage.

Coral Growth: Cause living coral to grow into shape you desire.

Jump, Mass: Many creatures gain bonuses to Jump checks.

4TH-LEVEL DRUID SPELL

Land Womb: You and allies sink into a protective bubble 10 feet below the earth.

6TH-LEVEL DRUID SPELL

Shuffle: Subjects can teleport short distances as move actions.

new hathran spell

4TH-LEVEL HATHRAN SPELL

Land Womb: You and allies sink into a protective bubble 10 feet below the earth.

new paladin spells

1ST-LEVEL PALADIN SPELL

Protection from Winged Flyers: Like *protection from evil*, but benefits apply to winged flyers.

3RD-LEVEL PALADIN SPELL

Redirect Spell: Spells targeting ally target you instead.

new ranger spells

2ND-LEVEL RANGER SPELLS

Dispel Fog: Cancels natural and magical fogs in affected area.

Easy Trail: Create safe passage through overgrown areas and hide your back trail.

Rock Catch: Catch hurled rocks.

3RD-LEVEL RANGER SPELLS

Brittleskin: Subject's natural armor becomes brittle, causing weapon attacks against it to deal more damage.

Jump, Mass: Many creatures gain bonuses to Jump checks.

Safe Clearing: Area becomes safe, as if protected by sanctuary.

4TH-LEVEL RANGER SPELL

Land Womb: You and allies sink into a protective bubble 10 feet below the earth.

new sorcerer/wizard spells

1ST-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Arcane Sensitivity: Discern subject's spellcasting ability and power level.

Darsson's Cooling Breeze: Create light breeze that travels in one direction.

Protection from Winged Flyers: Like *protection from evil*, but benefits apply to winged flyers.

Sea Legs: Target creature can maneuver easily while on a ship.

2ND-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Darsson's Chilling Chamber: Lower temperature in area to extreme cold.

Darsson's Fiery Furnace: Raise temperature in area to extreme heat.

Dispel Fog: Cancels natural and magical fogs in affected area.

Sun Bolt: Ray deals 2d6 damage, more against undead, and might blind target.

3RD-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Brittleskin: Subject's natural armor becomes brittle, causing weapon attacks against it to deal more damage.

Jump, Mass: Many creatures gain bonuses to Jump checks.

Rockburst: Cause stone object to explode, dealing 1d4 damage +1 point/level.

Sticks and Stones: Create stone and wood skeleton with energy drain attack to fight for you.

4TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Coral Growth: Cause living coral to grow into shape you desire.

Lightning Fog: Create fog that deals lightning damage.

Sparkles: Cloud of sparkling motes outlines invisible creatures.

Suspension: Touched object floats in the air at your direction, remaining in place for days.

Wall of Pain: Wall causes pain to creatures passing through.

5TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Circlet of Enervation: Subject takes damage and gains one negative level.

Daltim's Fiery Tentacles: Like *Evard's black tentacles*, but creatures in the area also take fire damage.

Streamers: Ranged touch attack deals 5d10 damage, +1 streamer/three levels (max four).

6TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Kyristan's Malevolent Tentacles: Like *Evard's black tentacles*, but grappled creatures gain negative levels.

Shuffle: Subjects can teleport short distances as move actions.

7TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELL

Stone Trap: Block of stone turns invisible, hovers in the air, and drops when condition is met.

9TH-LEVEL SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

Mycontil's Last Resort: Sacrifice all remaining spells to unleash devastating explosion.

Tidal Wave: Massive wave damages boats, creatures, and structures on a coast.

New spells

The following spells are common in the Shining South.

ARCANE SENSITIVITY

Divination

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: One creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

With a touch, you instantly determine if a creature can cast arcane spells and the maximum spell level it can cast.

BRITTLESKIN

Transmutation

Level: Druid 3, ranger 3, sorcerer/wizard 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You cause a creature's natural armor to crystallize and become brittle. Whenever the affected creature is hit in combat, part of the crystallized hide cracks and shatters, dealing it additional lethal damage equal to its natural armor bonus. Thus, if a creature with +3 natural armor is affected by this spell, it takes an extra 3 points of damage each time it is struck by a melee, ranged, or natural weapon. The creature's actual Armor Class does not change.

CIRCLET OF ENERVATION

Necromancy

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 5

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: 6-inch circlet of negative energy

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Fortitude partial; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

You form a small ring of negative energy in your hand, which harms neither you nor your equipment. The circlet launches from your hand, and you must succeed on a ranged touch attack to strike your target. A struck creature takes 2d6 points of damage and gains one negative level (a Fortitude save negates the negative level). No sooner do you hurl the circlet than another one appears in your hand, ready to be launched again on your next turn.

Negative levels from *circlet of enervation* function exactly like those gained from the *enervation* spell.

Since undead are powered by negative energy, this spell heals 2d6 points of damage when it strikes an undead, rather than harming it. Further, each time an undead creature is struck by the circlet, it gains 5 temporary hit points. The spell has no effect on constructs or inanimate objects.

Focus: A jet bracelet worth 100 gp.

CORAL GROWTH

Transmutation

Level: Druid 3, sorcerer/wizard 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: 5 ft. cube of coral/level (S)

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You cause living, submerged coral to grow at an accelerated pace in a shape you control. Since you control the form, you can cause the coral to grow into a wall, a large ball, and so forth. You are limited in the size of the new coral, but this is not dependent upon the amount of existing material—a tiny piece can be used as a starter seed for the new growth, so long as that piece is alive.

Coral growth is popular for constructing buildings and statues out of coral in Halruaa. It is also a favorite of various aquatic races for building underwater cities.

Material Component: A small piece of coral.

DALTIM'S FIERY

TENTACLES

Conjuration (Creation) [Fire]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 5

Saving Throw: None and Reflex half; see text

This spell functions similarly to *Evard's black tentacles*, except that the tentacles are limned in blue-white fire. Every creature within the area of the spell takes 1 point of fire damage per caster level (maximum 15 points) each round. A successful Reflex save halves this damage, but a character grappled by the tentacles cannot make the save.

DARSSON'S CHILLING CHAMBER

Evocation [Cold]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: Up to a 10-ft. cube/level (S)

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: Yes

You lower the temperature in the affected area to the level of extreme cold (as defined under Cold Dangers, page 302 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). For every minute spent in the area, a creature vulnerable to cold takes 1d6 points of lethal damage (no save).

In addition, a creature must make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Those wearing metal armor, as well as those coming in contact with metal that has been in the area for at least 1 hour, are affected as if by a *chill metal* spell.

This spell was originally developed as a means of preserving food (cast inside cellars), but wizards quickly determined that it could be used as a deterrent (on long hallways or in treasure vaults, for example) or for creating a comfortable environment for cold-loving pets.

Darsson's chilling chamber can be made permanent with a *permanency* spell.

DARSSON'S COOLING

BREEZE

Evocation [Air]

Level: Druid 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 60 ft.

Effect: Line-shaped breeze emanating out from a point you designate within 10 feet of you to the extreme of the range

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

You create a light breeze (approximately 9 mph) that originates from a point you designate, affecting all creatures, gasses, clouds, and fogs in its path. Any airborne vapors, fumes, smoke, clouds, and gasses drift away from the point at a speed of 80 feet per round and dissipate in one-fourth the normal time.

In addition to the effects noted, the cooling breeze can do anything that a normal breeze would be expected to do. It can



Brittleskin

move wind chimes, scatter pieces of paper or parchment, cause candle or hearth flames to flicker, and so forth.

Darsson's cooling breeze can be made permanent with a *permanency* spell.

DARSSON'S FIERY FURNACE

Evocation [Fire]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: Up to one 10-ft. cube/level (S)

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: Yes

You raise the temperature in the affected area to the level of extreme heat (as defined under Heat Dangers, page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). For every minute spent breathing the air in the area, a creature vulnerable to heat takes 1d6 points of lethal damage (no save). In addition, the creature must make a Fortitude save every 5 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor take a -4 penalty on their saves. In addition, those wearing metal armor, as well as those coming in contact with metal that has been in the area for at least 1 hour, are affected as if by a heat metal spell.

This spell was originally developed as a means of cooking food (cast inside cauldrons, brick ovens, and smoke houses), but wizards quickly determined that it could be used as a deterrent (on long hallways or in treasure vaults, for example) or for creating a comfortable environment for heat-loving pets.

Darsson's fiery furnace can be made permanent with a *permanency* spell.

DISPEL FOG

Abjuration

Level: Cleric 2, druid 2, ranger 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: Up to four 10-ft. cubes/level (S)

Duration: 1 min./level; see text

Saving Throw: Fortitude half; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

You make normal or magical fog within the affected area instantly and completely vanish. This spell is effective against fog and mist from any source, including spells such as *obscuring mist* or *cloudkill*, but not against bodies of water, precipitation, or smoke. The dispelled area stays clear for 1 minute per level regardless of other conditions—after that, it can fill in again if there is sufficient fog in the surrounding vicinity. Natural fog is automatically cleared in the affected area; natural fog reform within 1 minute after the expiration of the spell. Magical fog (such as that from a *fog cloud* spell) requires you to make a dispel check (1d20 + your caster level, maximum +10) against

the spell to clear the area. The DC for this dispel check is 11 + the spell's caster level. Success means the spell is dispelled in the area you designate, but magic fogs covering large areas might not be completely cleared away by *dispel fog*.

Creatures in fog or mist form who are in the area must succeed on a Fortitude save or take 2d10 points of damage. Even those who make their saves must immediately assume another shape.

EASY TRAIL

Abjuration

Level: Druid 2, ranger 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: None (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You radiate energy that gently pushes plants aside, allowing easy movement and hiding your trail after you pass. Creatures in the effect (including the caster) find the undergrowth held aside as they pass. This essentially provides a "trail" through any terrain (see Table 9-5: Terrain and Overland Movement, page 164 of the *Player's Handbook*). Once you have passed, plants return to their normal shapes. The DC to track anyone who traveled within the effect is increased by 5 (the equivalent of hiding the trail).

This spell cannot push or hold plant creatures aside.

ENTROPIC SHIELD, MASS

Abjuration

Level: Cleric 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration: 1 min./level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: No

This spell functions like *entropic shield*, except that it affects multiple creatures.

FIERY VISION

Evocation [Fire]

Level: Cleric 6

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Two rays of fire per round

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

Immediately on completion of the spell, and once per round thereafter, you can emit two fiery rays from your eyes, targeting

one or two opponents within range as a free action during your turn each round. A successful ranged touch attack is required to strike with each beam, and one that hits deals 4d6 points of fire damage.

You need not use your eye rays while the spell is in effect; other actions, such as spellcasting, can be performed. However, each round after the first you can use a standard action (concentrating on the spell) to use the eye rays.

JUMP, MASS

Transmutation

Level: Druid 3, ranger 3, sorcerer/wizard 3

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: One creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

This spell functions like *jump*, except that it affects a group of creatures in an area, all of which gain a +10 enhancement bonus on Jump checks. The enhancement bonus increases to +20 at caster level 10th, and to +30 (the maximum) at caster level 14th.

Pirates on the Great Sea are fond of this spell during boarding actions.



Illustration by Mike Dubisch

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You descend into a protective bubble in the earth 10 feet below where you are standing. It appears as though the ground opened up and swallowed you. A *land womb* only opens through tillable soil, not rock.

One additional creature per caster level can accompany you into the *land womb*. Such creatures must be touching one another, with at least one touching you (a ring of hands, for instance).

Creatures inside the *land womb* can breathe and speak normally, but the space is too tight to move about in or cast spells with somatic components. The surface above the *land womb* cannot be sensed without magical means, and anything within the *land womb* cannot be detected by divination spells of 4th level or lower.

At the end of the duration, or upon the spell's dismissal, everything inside the *land womb* returns to the spot where it stood before the spell took effect.

KYRISTAN'S

MALEVOLENT TENTACLES

Necromancy

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 6

Saving Throw: None and Fortitude negates; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell functions similarly to *Evard's black tentacles*, except that the tentacles are formed of negative energy. Living creatures grappled by the tentacles gain one negative level each round unless they succeed on Fortitude saves.

LAND WOMB

Abjuration

Level: Druid 4, hathran 4, ranger 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: You and one other creature/level

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Fiery vision

LIGHTNING FOG

Conjuration [Electricity]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect: Fog spreads in a 20-ft. radius, 20 ft. high

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: No

You conjure a smoky cloud that fills the area with small electrical discharges. The smoke obscures all sight as a *fog cloud* does. In addition, the discharges deal 1d4 points of electricity damage plus 1 point per caster level (maximum +15) to everything within the cloud on your turn each round.

As with a *fog cloud* spell, wind disperses the smoke, and the spell can't be cast underwater.

MYCONTIL'S LAST RESORT

Evocation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 9**Components:** V, S, M**Casting Time:** 1 standard action**Range:** Personal**Area:** 30-ft.-radius burst**Duration:** Instantaneous**Saving Throw:** Reflex half**Spell Resistance:** Yes

You unleash deadly explosive power, similar to the effects of a retributive strike created by breaking a *staff of power* (see page 245 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information). The spell converts any remaining spell slots in your mind into a blast of magical energy. All creatures within 10 feet of you take 8 points of damage per spell slot remaining, creatures between 11 and 20 feet take 6 points per spell slot, and creatures between 21 and 30 feet take 4 points per remaining spell slot. You take maximum damage and are allowed no saving throw.

It is widely thought that Mycontil and his assistants used this spell in a circle magic ceremony to defeat the Arkaion barbarian chieftain, Reinhar I of Dambrath, during Dambrath's invasion of Halruaa. Mycontil and his assistants vanished after the blast and were presumed destroyed. There has been no other recorded use of the spell.

Material Component: The finger bone of an archmage that has been packed in diamond dust worth 5,000 gp for 1 week.

PROTECTION FROM WINGED FLYERS

Abjuration

Level: Cleric 1, druid 1, paladin 1, sorcerer/wizard 1**Components:** V, S, M/DF**Casting Time:** 1 standard action**Range:** Touch**Target:** Creature touched**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)**Spell Resistance:** No; see text

The spell functions like *protection from evil*, except that the bonuses apply to attacks from creatures that have wings and a fly speed. Summoned creatures that fly with wings cannot touch the subject. Spell resistance can allow a creature to overcome this protection and touch the warded creature.

Arcane Material Component: A feather or bat wing.

REDIRECT SPELL

Abjuration

Level: Cleric 3, paladin 3**Components:** V, S, DF**Casting Time:** 1 standard action**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)**Target:** One creature**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)**Spell Resistance:** Yes

You create a magical connection between you and an ally such that any spells targeting the ally (rather than an area or effect) are redirected to you. For example, *magic missiles* cast at your ally target you instead.

Both you and your ally must be within range of a spell for the redirect to occur. If your ally is within range of the caster but you are not, the spell targets your ally normally. Should you and the subject of the spell move out of range of each other, the spell ends.

ROCK CATCH

Transmutation

Level: Cleric 2, ranger 2**Components:** V, S**Casting Time:** 1 standard action**Range:** Touch**Target:** One creature touched**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)**Spell Resistance:** Yes

A single creature you touch gains the ability to catch hurled rocks of Small to Large size (including projectiles of a similar shape and size, such as catapult ammunition). Once per round, as an immediate action (a free action taken during another creature's turn), when the subject of this spell would normally be hit by a rock, he can make a Reflex save to catch it. The DC for catching a Small or smaller rock is 15, 20 for a Medium one, and 25 for a Large one. Caught rocks must be subsequently dropped as part of the action.

ROCKBURST

Evocation

Level: Cleric 3, druid 2, sorcerer/wizard 3**Components:** V, S**Casting Time:** 1 standard action**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)**Area:** 20-ft.-radius burst**Duration:** Instantaneous**Saving Throw:** Reflex half or Fortitude negates; see text**Spell Resistance:** No

You cause a stone object, with volume of at least 8 cubic feet, to explode. Rock shards fly outward from the detonation, and all creatures within the area of the spell take 1d4 points of damage plus 1 point per caster level (maximum +15). A successful Reflex save halves this damage.

A magic stone object, or a nonmagic stone object in the possession of another creature, gets a Fortitude save to negate the effect. Creatures cannot be affected by *rockburst*.

SAFE CLEARING

Abjuration

Level: Ranger 3**Components:** V, S**Casting Time:** 1 full round**Range:** Touch**Area:** 30-ft.-radius spread

Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes (object)

You make an area safe from attacks, as if the entire space were under a *sanctuary* spell. Once the spell is cast, its area is immobile.

Any opponent attempting to strike or otherwise directly attack a creature within the area, even with a targeted spell, must attempt a Will save. If the save succeeds, the opponent can attack normally and is unaffected by the spell. If the save fails, the opponent cannot follow through with the attack, that part of its action is lost, and it can't directly attack anyone in the safe clearing for the duration of the spell. Those not attempting to attack creatures inside the warded area remain unaffected. This spell does not prevent the warded creatures from being affected by area or effect spells.

Those inside the *safe clearing* cannot attack without breaking the spell, even if they are unaffected by it.

SEA LEGS

Transmutation
Level: Bard 1, cleric 1, sorcerer/wizard 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 hour/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes

You grant a creature the ability to maneuver easily while aboard ship, even during inclement weather. Any creature affected by a sea legs spell automatically succeeds on Balance checks (DC 20 or lower) made due to sloped surfaces and slightly slippery conditions. Furthermore, the creature can move at its normal speed while balancing on a ship's deck, rather than half speed. See the Balance skill description in the *Player's Handbook* for more information.

SHUFFLE

Conjuration (Teleportation)
Level: Druid 6, sorcerer/wizard 6
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: One or more willing creatures touched
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes

You grant one creature, plus one additional creature for every five caster levels, the ability to teleport a short distance as a move action. Each subject can use the ability once per round, on its turn, to travel to a spot it knows intimately or can see, which can be no more than 5 feet per two caster levels away (maximum 50 feet at 20th level). Creatures affected by this spell can carry

objects, as long as the weight of those objects doesn't exceed the subject's maximum load. If a subject of *shuffle* would arrive in an area occupied by solid material, that attempted teleport simply fails.

SPARKLES

Conjuration (Creation)
Level: Sorcerer/wizard 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Area: 10-ft.-radius/level spread
Duration: 1 min./level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You create a cloud of multicolored, sparkling motes that shower down and attach to any living creature in the area. The *sparkles* visibly outline anything to which they stick, cannot be removed by nonmagical means, continue to twinkle and glow until the spell fades, and visibly outline invisible things in the area for the duration of the spell. Any creature covered by motes takes a -40 penalty on Hide checks.

This spell is popular during festivals in Halruaa, where the wizards cast it over the cities from their skyships and let the motes decorate the celebrants. However, others have found more practical uses for it, including exposing invisible and hiding foes.

Arcane Material Component: A pinch of ground mica.

STICKS AND STONES

Necromancy
Level: Cleric 3, sorcerer/wizard 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One Small pile of debris
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You animate a pile of rocks, branches, limbs, and other debris into the crude shape of a skeletal creature of Medium size that immediately attacks whatever foe you designate. You can change the animated creature's chosen target as a move action. The creature's combat statistics are those of a 2 HD humanoid skeleton, except that it also has a wight's energy drain supernatural ability (see the Skeleton and Wight entries in the *Monster Manual* for details).

STONE TRAP

Transmutation
Level: Cleric 7, sorcerer/wizard 7
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: Stone object up to 200 lb./level
Duration: See text

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You cause a block of stone to turn invisible and hover at a designated point in the air. The stone remains there until triggered, either by special conditions set by you or by a command word you choose. Once triggered, the *stone trap* turns visible and falls naturally.

The stone of the *stone trap* can be positioned so that it holds up additional material within the weight limit of the spell. For example, a 2,200-pound stone with *stone trap* cast on it by a 13th-level cleric could support an additional 400 pounds. This additional weight could be placed on top of the stone in midair, the stone could function as a plug in a hole in a ceiling, and so on.

As a trap, the suspended stone has an attack bonus equal to your caster level. Any creatures hit by the stone when it falls take 1d6 points of damage for every 200 pounds of weight, plus 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet the stone falls, for a maximum of 20d6 points of damage. Anything atop the stone might deal additional damage, but such supplementary material can only deal damage above and beyond the maximum (20d6) if it doesn't rely on the fall to deal that damage.

The conditions for triggering a *stone trap* can be as simple or as elaborate as you desire. Special conditions can be based on a creature's name, identity, or alignment, but otherwise must be based on observable actions or qualities. Other intangibles such as level, class, Hit Dice, and hit points don't qualify. For example, a *stone trap* can be set to activate when a lawful evil creature approaches, but not when a blackguard approaches.

Arcane Material Component: A drop of blood and a pebble.

STONEFIRE

Evocation [Fire]

Level: Cleric 5

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Area: One 5-ft. square + one 5-ft. square/four levels

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

You cause natural, nonliving stone to combust, emitting thick black smoke and sending forth waves of heat. Anyone touching the burning rock takes 2d6 points of fire damage each round, while the intense heat coming from the stone deals 2d4 points of fire damage to creatures within 10 feet and 1d4 points of fire damage to those past 10 feet but within 20 feet.

The burning stone deals its damage to all creatures in the area when it appears and on your turn each round. Undead take double damage from *stonefire*.

Ignited stone is consumed by the flames at the rate of 1 foot of thickness per round (so a 10-foot-thick wall covered with *stonefire* would require 10 rounds to burn through). Burning away load-bearing walls, columns, or other supports might cause cave-ins or collapses. See Cave-Ins and Collapses, page 66 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

If the burning stone takes 20 points of cold damage or more in 1 round, the flames go out. (Do not divide cold damage by 4, as normal for objects.)

STREAMERS

Evocation

Level: Cleric 5, sorcerer/wizard 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect: One or more streamers

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

You cause a number of glowing, red streamers to shoot forth from the your hand when you cast the spell. You may fire one streamer, plus one additional streamer for every three levels beyond 9th (to a maximum of four streamers at 18th level). Each streamer targets one creature; multiple streamers can each be targeted at a different creature, or many streamers can target one creature. A streamer moves on its own, pursuing its target without your concentration, hovering in the same space as the target with a readied touch attack. Whenever the target next takes any sort of action, the streamer makes a touch attack against it (at the caster's base attack bonus). On a successful attack roll,



Sticks and stones

Illustration by Ralph Horsley

the streamer deals 5d10 points of damage. If a target takes no actions for the duration of the spell, the streamers around it disappear with no effect.

Streamers can be attacked (AC 20), but only magic weapons have any effect on them. Any successful attack destroys a streamer.

Material Component: 6-inch strand of red spider silk.

SUN BOLT

Evocation [Light]

Level: Cleric 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect: Ray

Duration: 1 round

Saving Throw: Reflex partial

Spell Resistance: Yes

A ray of burning sunlight springs from your hand. You must make a ranged touch attack to hit your target. A creature struck by the bolt is blinded for 1 round and takes 2d6 points of damage. Creatures harmed by sunlight take double damage. Undead always take double damage, as do fungi, molds, oozes, and slimes; undead damaged by sunlight (such as vampires) always take triple damage. A successful Reflex save negates the blindness.

SUSPENSION

Transmutation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Any nonliving object up to 1,000 lb./level

Duration: 1d4 days + 1 day/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell functions like *levitate*, except as noted above and as follows. You can mentally direct the object to move up or down as much as 45 feet each round for the duration of the spell; doing so is a move action. When you cease concentration, the object remains in place for the duration of the spell.

Material Component: A small leather loop suspended from a bent wire of gold.

TIDAL WAVE

Evocation

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 9

Components: V, S, M, XP

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Area: A wave 75 ft. high and 500 ft. wide

Duration: 1 min./level; see text

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You create a moving wall of water that can drown swimmers, swamp ships, and flood port cities. Upon completion of the spell, the tidal wave forms and moves from the starting point you designate in the direction you specify at a speed of 150 feet per round for the duration of the spell, or until it strikes land. Any creature swimming in the water as the tidal wave hits it must make a DC 30 Swim check each round to remain afloat. Creatures that succeed are washed forward by the tidal wave and must continue to make Swim checks each round. Creatures that fail the check are sucked beneath the tidal wave and forced 8d10 feet below the surface of the water, taking 4d6 points of nonlethal damage. The wave passes over submerged creatures, which are subject to drowning (see page 304 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Any Medium or smaller ship caught in the path of the tidal wave takes 6d10 points of damage, while larger ships take an additional 6d10 points of damage per size category they are larger than Medium. Furthermore, the ship is carried along by the tidal wave for a number of feet equal to the number of points of damage taken $\times 5$. For example, a sailing ship that takes 66 points of damage is carried in the surge of the wave for 330 feet. If the movement of the ship results in a collision with another ship or with land, the ship takes additional damage (see below). Any creatures and equipment aboard the ship that are not lashed down are swept off the decks and into the sea (and creatures are then subject to the Swim checks noted above).

If a tidal wave drives up onto shore, it deals 6d10 points of damage to everything in its path within 200 feet of the shore, 3d10 points of damage to everything farther than 200 feet but within 400 feet of the shore, and 1d10 points of damage to everything farther than 400 feet but within 1,000 feet of shore. Any ships in port or washed ahead of the tidal wave take 6d10 points of damage in addition to any taken for being struck by the wave (see above) and end up 5d10 \times 10 feet inland when they come to rest.

Material Component: A plank of wood smacked against the surface of the water.

XP Cost: 500 XP.

WALL OF PAIN

Necromancy [Evil]

Level: Cleric 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Wall whose area is up to one 10-ft. square/level

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You fill an area with horrid energy that inflicts severe pain upon any who pass through it. Affected creatures take a -2 penalty on all attacks, saving throws, and checks while inside the area of the wall. Further, the wall deals 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per caster level (to a maximum of 15d4) per round to anyone caught in it.

Focus: A miniature scourge.

MAGIC ITEMS

The wizards of Halruaa are every bit as skilled as those of Thay in crafting magic items, but the Halruaans officially export nothing, guarding the secrets and results of their workmanship quite closely. Still, the products of their expertise have found their way beyond the Walls and into distant lands. The gold dwarves of the Great Rift also make remarkable items that they sell in their surface markets on a regular basis. Spellcasters among Dambrath's Crinti manufacture sinister objects designed for macabre entertainment and war, while the Durpari make up for what they don't construct with the prolific amounts of magic they import from distant lands.

Magic Items

In addition to the magic items presented in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and any other items in an ongoing FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign, the following magic items can be found in the Shining South or in the hands of people or creatures from those regions.

Armor

In the Shining South, several new kinds of magic armor have been developed to deal with the unique threats found there, some of which come from the environment itself.

MAGIC ARMOR AND SHIELD

SPECIAL ABILITIES

A suit of magic armor or a magic shield with a special ability must have at least a +1 enhancement bonus.

Anchoring: A character wearing a suit of armor or a shield with this property is difficult to move from his position during a fight. The wearer gains a +5 enhancement bonus on the appropriate ability checks to resist bull rush, overrun, and trip attacks.

Faint transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength*; Price +3,750 gp.

Anchoring, Greater: As anchoring, except it grants a +10 enhancement bonus on the appropriate ability checks against bull rush, overrun, and trip attacks.

Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength*; Price +15,000 gp.

Blinking: On command, a character wearing armor with this property can blink back and forth from the Material Plane and the Ethereal Plane (as the *blink* spell). This ability can be activated once per day and lasts for 1 minute.

Faint transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *blink*; Price +15,000 gp.

Blurring: The form of a creature wearing this type of armor or shield shifts and wavers. This distortion grants the wearer concealment (20% miss chance). Those who cannot see the wearer may ignore the effect, as can someone under the effect of *true seeing*.

Faint illusion; CL 3rd; Craft Arms and Armor, *blur*; Price +36,000 gp.

Comfort: Armor with this property allows its wearer to ignore the effects of intense natural heat or cold. The character can exist comfortably in conditions between -50 and 140 degrees Fahrenheit without having to make Fortitude saves (as described on pages 302 and 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The character's other equipment is likewise protected.

Faint abjuration; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *endure elements*; Price +5,000 gp.

Freedom: A character wearing armor with this property can act as if continually under the effect of a *freedom of movement* spell.

Moderate abjuration; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *freedom of movement*; Price +60,000 gp.

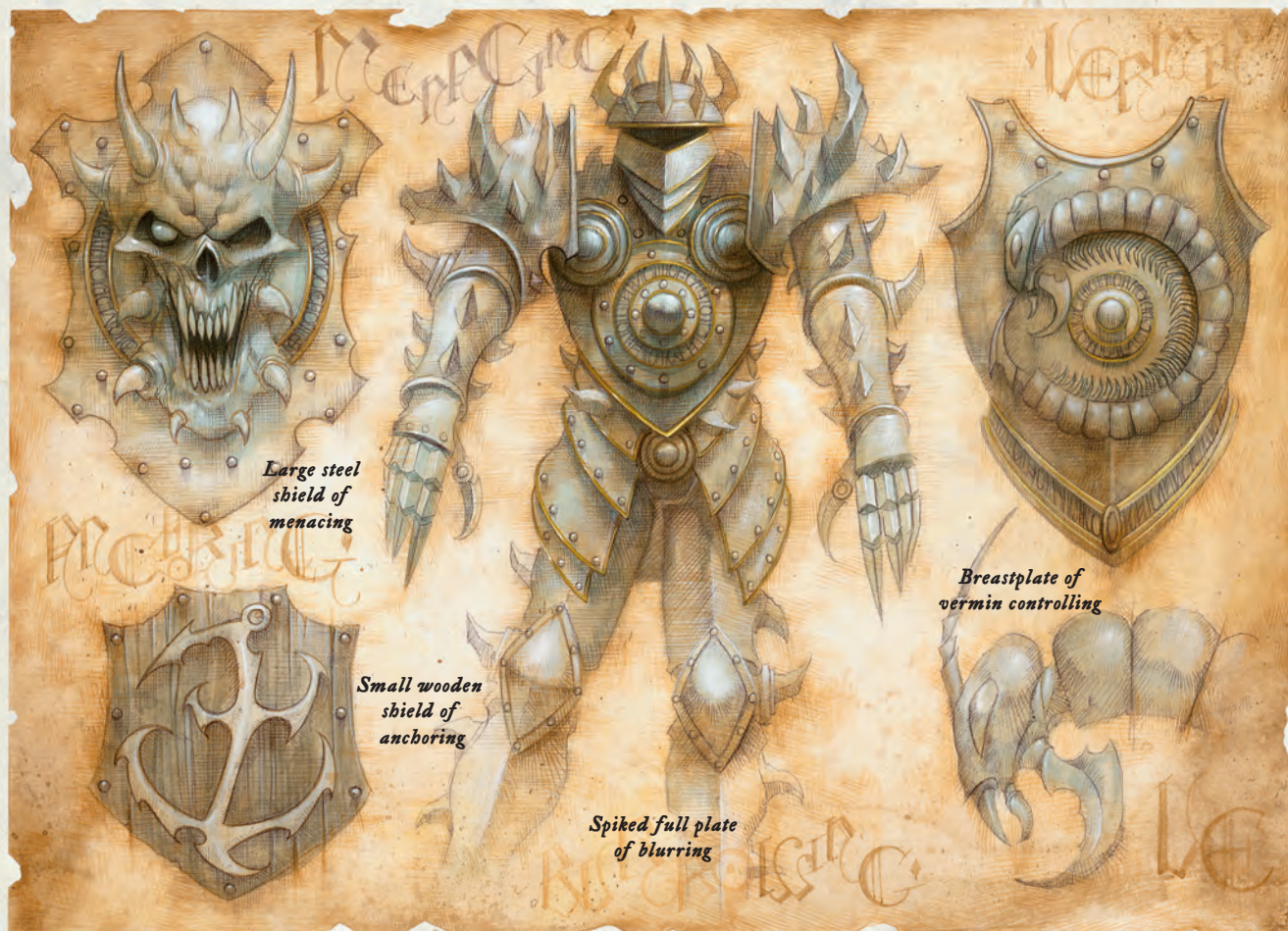


Illustration by Wayne England

Healing: When someone wearing armor with this property is rendered disabled or dying from injuries, the armor heals 20 points of damage automatically (the wearer does not need to activate the property). This ability functions once per day.

Moderate evocation; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *contingency, cure moderate wounds*; Price +32,000 gp.

Health: A character wearing a suit of armor or a shield with this property is immune to all types of diseases, whether natural or supernatural.

Faint conjuration; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *remove disease*; Price +11,250 gp.

Masking: A suit of armor or a shield with this ability protects its wearer and his gear from divination spells and items (such as *crystal balls*). If a divination is attempted on the wearer, the caster of the divination must succeed on a DC 20 caster level check.

Faint abjuration; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *nondetection*; Price +45,000 gp.

Menacing: Armor or shields with this property allow their users to terrify foes. Three times per day, on command, the wearer becomes frightening, forcing any opponent within 30 feet and with fewer HD than she possesses to make a Will saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 the wearer's HD + her Cha modifier). Those who fail become panicked for 10 rounds and cower if cornered. Those who

make the saving throw are shaken for 1 round, but are immune to further uses of this ability from the same menacing armor for 24 hours.

Moderate necromancy; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Selective Spell, fear*; Price +60,000 gp.

Mirror Image: On command, three times per day, a suit of armor or a shield with this property allows the user create images of himself such as those created by the *mirror image* spell. The ability creates six images that last for 6 minutes or until they are struck, whichever comes first.

Moderate illusion; CL 6th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *mirror image*; Price +20,000 gp.

Proof against Enchantments: A character wearing a suit of armor or a shield that possesses this property gains immunity to the first three enchantment spells that would otherwise affect him each day.

Moderate abjuration; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *break enchantment*; Price +50,000 gp.

Sailing: The wearer of armor with this quality automatically succeeds on Balance checks (up to DC 20) while on board a ship. Though its weight does not change, the armor itself is slightly buoyant, granting the wearer a +5 circumstance bonus on Swim checks.

Moderate transmutation; CL 6th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *sea legs*, creator must have 5 ranks in the Swim skill; Price +20,000 gp.

Sanctuary: Three times per day, on command, a character wearing armor or a shield with this property is protected as if by a sanctuary spell (Will DC 11 negates). The effect lasts for 1 minute.

Moderate abjuration; CL 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *sanctuary*; Price +1 bonus.

Vermin Controlling: The wearer of a suit of armor or a shield with this property may control up to 26 HD of vermin per day, similar to the undead controlling property (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more details). At dawn each day, the wearer loses control of the vermin still under his sway. Armor or shields with this ability appear to be made of segmented body parts (such as an arachnid or an insect); this feature is entirely decorative and has no other effect on the armor.

Strong enchantment; CL 15th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *mass charm monster*; Price +49,000 gp.

weapons

As a place where certain nations can trace their roots back to some of the most powerful spell-using cultures in the history of Faerûn, the Shining South is the source of a wide variety of new magic weapons.

MAGIC WEAPON SPECIAL ABILITIES

A magic weapon with a special ability must have at least a +1 enhancement bonus.

Enervating: An enervating weapon is particularly insidious and favored by dark-hearted cultures such as that found in Dambrath or Veldorn. On a critical hit, a creature hit by an enervating weapon takes damage and also gains one negative level, and that creature dies if it has total negative levels equal to or exceeding its HD. Spell resistance applies. If the creature survives, any negative level bestowed by this weapon is removed after 13 hours. Undead struck by an enervating weapon take weapon damage normally, but they also gain 5 temporary hit points instead of a negative level. Bows, crossbows, and slings so crafted confer the enervating ability upon their ammunition.

Strong necromancy; CL 13th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *enervation*; Price +3 bonus.

Weakening: Weakening weapons deal 1 point of Strength damage in addition to their regular damage with each successful attack. Spell resistance applies. This weakness lasts for 10 minutes, and multiple strikes on the same creature are cumulative, but the creature's Strength score cannot drop below 1 as a result of this ability. Bows, crossbows, and slings so crafted confer the weakening power upon their ammunition.

Moderate necromancy; CL 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *ray of enfeeblement*; Price +3 bonus.

Exhausting: Any creature struck by an exhausting weapon must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or become fatigued for 5 minutes. Spell resistance applies. The ability has no effect on creatures that are already fatigued or those immune to fatigue.

Bows, crossbows, and slings so crafted confer the exhausting ability upon their ammunition.

Faint necromancy; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *ray of exhaustion*; Price +1 bonus.

Paralyzing: On a successful critical hit, a paralyzing weapon renders any living creature immobile for 10 rounds unless it succeeds on DC 17 a Will save. Each round on its turn, the paralyzed creature gets a new saving throw to break the effect. Spell resistance applies. Creatures immune to mind-affecting magic are immune to this property. Bows, crossbows, and slings so crafted confer the paralyzing ability upon their ammunition.

Moderate enchantment; CL 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *hold monster*; Price +2 bonus.

Rusting: A rusting weapon is never constructed of any iron parts, but must be built of wood, bone, stone, or other nonferrous materials. When it is employed, it can cause metal objects with which it comes into contact to quickly rust. A wearer of a ferrous armor or shield that is struck by a rusting weapon must make a DC 16 Fortitude saving throw or the item loses 1 point of armor bonus—shields are struck first. Once an item loses its entire armor bonus, it falls to pieces, ruined. Bows, crossbows, and slings so crafted confer the rusting ability upon their ammunition.

Moderate transmutation; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *rusting grasp*; Price +1 bonus.

SPECIFIC MAGIC WEAPONS

The following weapons are usually constructed with exactly the abilities described here.

Great Rift Blazing Skylance: This +2 lance is specifically designed for use by Great Rift skyguards. Three times per day, the lance can be commanded to fire a cone of searing flames out to a distance of 15 feet from the tip, dealing 5d4 points of fire damage to targets within the cone's area. Victims can make a DC 13 Reflex save for half damage.

Faint evocation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *burning hands*; Price 14,334 gp.

Great Rift Forceful Skylance: A variation on the *Great Rift blazing skylance*, this +2 lance can produce a *magic missile* effect on command, three times per day, firing three missiles with each use. These missiles can be aimed at up to three targets within 150 feet of the lance.

Faint evocation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *magic missile*; Price 14,334 gp.

Pick of Piercing: Crafted by the dwarves of the Great Rift, this +1 heavy pick destroys objects made of force, such as *Bigby's forceful hand* or a *wall of force*. To destroy such objects, the wielder of the pick must touch them with the pick.

Moderate transmutation; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *disintegrate*; Price 13,508 gp.

Scourge of Pain: This +1 scourge is covered in razor-sharp barbs. Each time it strikes, it deals an extra 1d8 points of non-lethal damage and causes agonizing pain in the creature struck. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or take a -4 penalty on attacks, saving throws, and checks for 1d4 rounds. Priestesses of Loviatar are fond of these weapons.

wondrous items

In addition to the vast varieties of wondrous items found elsewhere in Faerûn, the following unusual magic items are popular in the Shining South.

Amulet of Proof Against Petrification: This amulet gives its wearer immunity to any petrifying attack.

Strong transmutation; CL 11th; Craft Wondrous Item, *stone to flesh*; Price 66,000 gp.

Belt of Priestly Might: Many of these items first appeared in Halruaa at the end of the Time of Troubles, which the wizards took as a sign that Mystra had returned. Each broad leather belt has a stamp of the holy symbol of a deity in the front, and followers of that deity or anyone of the deity's alignment can wear the belt safely. (If this item is placed as treasure, select or randomly determine the deity to whom it is dedicated.) Any other creature gains one negative level from wearing the belt. The negative level remains as long as the belt is worn. This negative level never results in actual level loss, but it cannot be overcome in any way (including *restoration* spells) while the belt

is worn. Three varieties of this sort of belt exist.

Belt of Priestly Might: This version grants its wearer a +2 natural armor bonus to Armor Class and a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength.

Moderate transmutation; CL 8th; Craft Wondrous Item, *barkskin*, *bull's strength*; Price 28,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Belt of Priestly Might and Warding: This version has all the abilities of a *belt of priestly might*, plus once per day, on command, it can create a *magic circle against evil* (or a *magic circle against good*, if the belt is devoted to an evil deity) that lasts for 80 minutes.

Moderate transmutation; CL 8th; Craft Wondrous Item, *barkskin*, *bull's strength*, *magic circle against evil* (or *magic circle against good*); Price 41,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Belt of Holy Might: This version has all the abilities of a *belt of priestly might and warding*. Its *magic circle against evil* (or *magic circle against good*) ability lasts for 110 minutes, plus its wearer may use a *word of recall* once per day, affecting only himself and his equipment, that transports him to the nearest temple devoted to the belt's deity.

Moderate transmutation; CL 11th; Craft Wondrous Item, *barkskin*, *bull's strength*, *magic circle against evil* (or *magic circle against good*), *word of recall*; Price 70,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Dweomered Doors: A wide variety of these magic doors exist in the Shining South, serving both beneficial and baleful purposes. Such doorways are widespread in Halruaa, where wizards install them in their sanctums. These doors might come in odd shapes, be crafted of unusual materials, and possibly have other features



Moderate necromancy; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *symbol of pain*; Price 26,320 gp.

Stun Bolt: This +1 *bolt* has been specially enhanced so that it deals normal damage and stuns a creature struck by it. A target struck by a *stun bolt* must make a DC 20 Will save or be stunned for 1d6 rounds. Creatures immune to mind-affecting spells and abilities are also immune to *stun bolts*.

Strong enchantment; CL 13th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *symbol of stunning*; Price (50 bolts) 9,630 gp.

Whip of Constricting: This +2 *whip* has the ability to entangle and crush opponents it strikes. A Large or smaller creature struck by the whip takes normal damage and must make a DC 15 Reflex save or become entangled, if the wielder so wishes. A creature capable of spellcasting that is bound by the whip must make a DC 15 Concentration check to cast a spell. An entangled creature can slip free with a DC 20 Escape Artist check. If you've commanded the whip to entangle someone, you can't continue to use it as a weapon.

Once per day, the whip's wielder may command it to constrict whatever it has entangled. For 17 rounds, the whip gains a Strength score of 35 and a grapple bonus of +41. Every grapple check that succeeds against the entangled creature deals 2d6+12 points of damage.

Strong evocation; CL 17th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *animate rope*, *Bigby's crushing hand*; Price 97,381 gp.

(locks, traps, additional spells) set on them as well. The doors are often masterfully crafted, with highly stylized motifs, but just as many are unremarkable. Some guard valuable prizes, some block a means of escape, and some open onto blank walls, nothing more than a trap for the overly curious. Eight examples follow.

Animating Door: Any dead creature that falls or is carried through a doorway of this type is temporarily animated (as the *animate dead* spell) for 1d6+4 rounds. The animated creatures function in all ways as either zombies or skeletons, depending on the state of decomposition (DM's discretion) and attack any other living creatures in the area.

Moderate necromancy; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *animate dead*; Price 15,000 gp.

Holding Door: Doors of this type are often constructed as an exit from a particularly dangerous area to give those fleeing from danger a false sense of impending escape. When they pass through such a door, living creatures vulnerable to mind-affecting spells and abilities must succeed on a DC 17 Will save or be held immobile for 9 rounds. Immobilized creatures get a new saving throw to end the effect each round.

Moderate enchantment; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *hold monster*; Price 90,000 gp.

Door of Beasts: This door is always found shut, locked, and adorned with an elaborate knocker or doorknob in the shape of a beast-head decorated with gems for eyes. Any time the gems are disturbed, the door flies open and emits monsters (as the *summon monster IV* spell) that immediately attack. The same happens if the door is opened from the side of the knocker. Summoned creatures disappear 7 rounds after they appear, but the door has no limit to the number of creatures it can summon.

Moderate conjuration; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *summon monster IV*; Price 56,000 gp.

Door of Derangement: Typically, this doorway affects only every third creature that passes through it, though variations are not uncommon. The affected creature must make a DC 17 Will save or be blinded, deafened, and feebleminded (as the respective spells) for 1d4+1 minutes.

Moderate enchantment; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *blindness/deafness, feeblemind*; Price 40,500 gp.

Door of Mirrors: This type of doorway usually functions sporadically—one creature in four, once per day, or randomly (20% chance). Those affected by the door are surrounded by 1d4+2 exact images of themselves, which duplicate their every

move for 1d6+1 minutes. After that time the images remerge with the affected creature, dealing it 1d6 points of electricity damage and subjecting the victim to a *confusion* effect for 1 round per image.

Moderate varies; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *confusion, mirror image, shocking grasp*; Price 22,000 gp.

Door of Negation: This powerful doorway suppresses the spell and spell-like functions of magic items. The door makes a dispel check (1d20+20) against the caster level of any magic item that passes through it. If the dispel check equals or exceeds the 11 + the item's caster level, its functions are suppressed for 1d4 rounds. Artifacts are immune to this effect.

Strong abjuration; CL 20th; Craft Wondrous Item, *greater dispel magic*; Price 80,000 gp.

Door of Visions: Each creature passing through this doorway sees a very distinct and clear image (determined at the time of the door's creation) such as that created by a *silent image* spell.

Faint illusion; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *silent image*; Price 8,000 gp.

Silencing Door: This type of door is crafted so that it shuts automatically when left unattended. When it shuts, a *silence* spell is cast upon the door itself, affecting those nearby.

Doors of this type are frequently made with passwords or special keys that temporarily negate the effect.

Faint illusion; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *silence*; Price 12,000 gp.

Halruaan Skyship: Of all the wonders of Halruaa, the most famous is the skyship—a sailing vessel that floats on air instead of water. Halruaa's elders guarded their methods of creating these devices for centuries, leaving others to experiment (and fail) with various methods. Recently, a renegade Halruaan wizard let the secret out, and a couple of wealthy governments have commissioned their own skyships.

A skyship is much like a standard sailing vessel in appearance and crew needs. The typical Halruaan skyship has three masts, square sails, two panels that can be swung out on each side for guidance, and a broad beam that allows it to land on flat surfaces without listing. Ten plates are affixed to the underside of the ship, which are traditionally made from the shells of Halruaan sea turtles.

The magic of a skyship comes in multiple parts. Essential is the control rod, a narrow cylinder of silver with a tube of gold slipped over each end, which is linked to the plates on the ship's belly. These ten plates contain the magic that causes the vessel to rise into the air (a larger ship requires more plates). The rod



Halruaan skyship

amplifies the will of the ship's helmsperson and thereby controls the vertical movement of the ship, allowing the vessel to rise and fall at a speed of 45 feet. While most of the ship's horizontal movement is at the mercy of the wind, its sails, steering panels, and supplemental magic from the plates allow it to turn with clumsy maneuverability. A skyship can also enter and sail in water and cannot be sunk so long as its magic remains intact.

Strong transmutation; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *fly*, *suspension*; Price 400,000 gp; Weight 20 tons.

Pouch of Winds: This item looks like an ordinary leather pouch, tied shut and bulging at the seams with its contents. It weighs no more than the leather it is made of. Once per day, when the pouch is opened, the user can select one of two effects: a favorable wind or a contrary wind. If the user chooses a favorable wind, then the prevailing wind conditions shift so that a strong wind (see Table 3–24: Wind Effects, page 95 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) turns to blow in the direction the user wishes. If a contrary wind is called from the bag, a strong wind blows directly opposite the current heading of a single ship within sight of the user. Either of these conditions last for 2d12 hours before the wind shifts back to its original course.

Moderate evocation; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *wind wall*; Price 12,000 gp; Weight —.

Solution of Stillness: This stoppered bottle contains a thick, oily substance that, when poured into a storm-tossed ocean, calms the waters (winds become light/moderate) in a 100-foot radius for 2d12 hours. The solution negates magically created waves and also acts as an *antipathy* spell against any creatures from the Elemental Plane of Water.

Strong varies; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *antipathy*, *control weather*; Price 9,500 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Vapor Bottle: This item looks like a simple silver flask with a silver stopper. It functions exactly like an *eversmoking bottle*, except that fog billows forth rather than smoke.

Faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *fog cloud*; Price 5,400 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Minor Artifacts

In the lands of the Shining South, particularly Halruaa, mighty wizards and priests have crafted some amazing items, a few of which are described below.

Dread Doorway: Perhaps the most infamous item known to come from Halruaa's magical history, a *dread doorway* is a truly frightening item to encounter. Three forms of *dread doorways* are known.

Annihilation Doorway: This item is usually more of a passage or tunnel than an actual door. It is often carved or constructed to look like something else, such as a demonic head with its mouth (the passage) open wide, a water slough between levels of a dungeon, and so forth. The open space of an *annihilation doorway* functions as a *sphere of annihilation*, except that the black void is shaped to match the passage and it cannot be moved by any means. A creature passing through an *annihilation doorway* is utterly consumed and destroyed. Only the intervention of a deity can reverse the effect.

Strong transmutation; CL 20th.

Imprisoning Doorway: Like an *annihilation doorway*, an *imprisoning doorway* is often more of a passage or tunnel. Any creature passing through the doorway is instantly bound into the door (as per the *trap the soul* spell) unless it makes a DC 22 Will save. Spell resistance does not apply. An *imprisoning doorway* can hold up to 100 HD of creatures, and when new victims are imprisoned, creatures that have been trapped in the doorway the longest are released to keep the total at or below this maximum. To all outward appearances, an affected creature seems to disappear (or shapechange into a new form, if another creature is released). If an *imprisoning doorway* is destroyed, all the creatures bound within it are released (DM determines randomly; hostile creatures immediately attack others in the area).

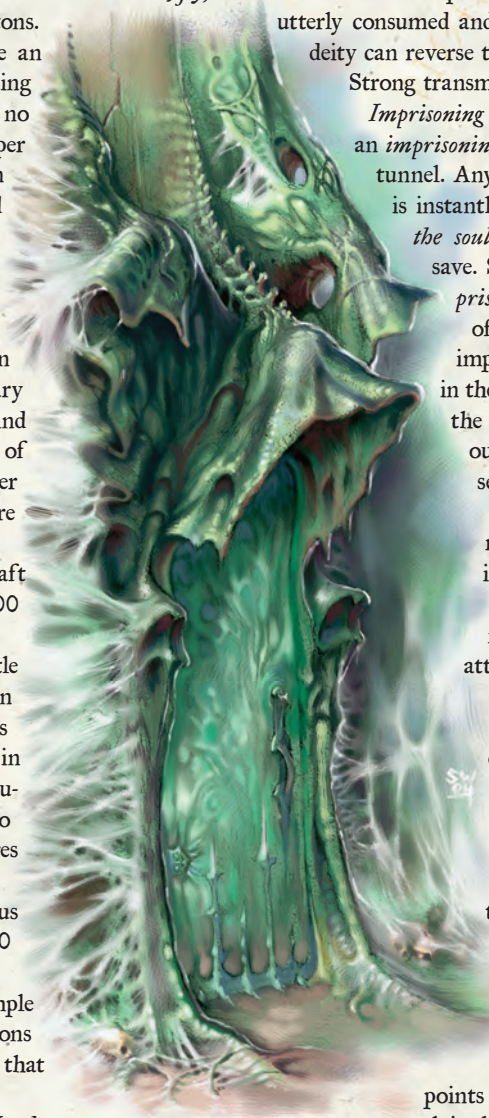
Strong conjuration; CL 20th.

Wraith Doorway: This form of dread doorway houses a dread wraith inside (see page 258 of the *Monster Manual*). The door is always encountered locked, and it usually also has other magical means of barring passage. Each time a creature touches or walks through a *wraith doorway* (or each round, if continuous contact is maintained or a creature stands in the open doorway for consecutive rounds), it must succeed on a DC 22 Fortitude save or take 1d8 points of Constitution drain. If a creature is slain by this drain, it rises as a wraith 1d4 rounds later.

The dread wraith within a *dread doorway* cannot be turned or attacked while imprisoned in the dread doorway. Destroying the door releases the dread wraith, which immediately attacks. At that point, the dread wraith can be attacked normally.

Strong necromancy; CL 19th.

Great Elixir: Of all the tales of powerful magic that have emerged from Halruaa, the legend of the great elixirs is perhaps the most remarkable. The first *great elixir* concoction possibly originated in Netheril itself. Regardless of their origins, the chaotic nature of these liquids made them an unappealing risk, and



Wraith doorway

the formula for their creation was eventually lost and forgotten. Some caches of the unpredictable stuff do pop up every once in a while.

A *great elixir* is a translucent, aquamarine liquid that twinkles and swirls gently about in endless motion. It is described as tasting like fine wine on fire. Oddly, the fluid works on a particular creature only once per experience level; additional consumptions generate no results. The possible effects of a dose of the elixir are as follows:

d%	Elixir Result
01-14	Death occurs instantly (no saving throw).
15-26	A <i>feeblemind</i> condition (as the spell) sets in (no saving throw).
27-32	Imbiber is infected with mindfire (see Diseases, page 292 of the <i>Dungeon Master's Guide</i>). If the imbiber is an arcane spellcaster, her spells turn wild and unpredictable—75% of the times she attempts to cast a spell, the normal result is replaced by a result from the <i>rod of wonder</i> table, page 237 of the <i>Dungeon Master's Guide</i> . This spellcasting affliction is permanent unless the imbiber makes a DC 25 Fortitude save. It lasts 4d12 days if the save succeeds.
33-39	Blindness sets in (no saving throw).
40-46	Imbiber is subjected each day to an uncontrolled <i>shapechange</i> (as the spell) into a random beast that breathes air and can live on dry land (no saving throw). The change lasts for 1d4 hours, but the daily occurrence of the change is permanent.
47-56	Imbiber is afflicted with lycanthropy (DM's choice of lycanthrope, no saving throw).
57-75	Imbiber takes 1 point of ability drain to one random ability score (no saving throw).
76-77	Imbiber gains <i>mage armor</i> spell-like ability 4/day.*
78-79	Imbiber gains <i>alter self</i> spell-like ability 1/day.*
80-81	Imbiber gains <i>detect magic</i> spell-like ability at will.*
82	Imbiber gains <i>dimension door</i> spell-like ability 1/day.*
83	Imbiber gains <i>dispel magic</i> spell-like ability 3/day.*
84-85	Imbiber gains <i>detect thoughts</i> spell-like ability 2/day.*
86	Imbiber gains <i>feather fall</i> spell-like ability at will.*
87	Imbiber gains <i>hold person</i> spell-like ability 1/day.*
88	Imbiber gains <i>invisibility</i> spell-like ability 2/day.*
89	Imbiber gains <i>pass without trace</i> spell-like ability at will.*
90	Imbiber gains <i>spell turning</i> spell-like ability 1/day.*
91-92	Imbiber gains <i>spider climb</i> spell-like ability 3/day.*
93	Imbiber gains <i>water breathing</i> spell-like ability 3/day.*
94	Imbiber gains <i>ethereal jaunt</i> spell-like ability 1/day.*
95	"Greatness"—imbiber gains 1d2+1 of the powers listed above (from d% roll of 76 through 94; other powers can be created at the DM's discretion).
96-100	Imbiber gains 2d4 points of either Intelligence or Charisma (50% chance of either) and permanent <i>greater spell immunity</i> against one school of spells (randomly determined).

*As cast by a 12th-level wizard.

Overwhelming transmutation; CL 30th.

Zarangan: Each one of these wondrous stones, almost certainly created in Netheril, is a smooth rock that has been polished to a glassy sheen. A *zarangan* is shaped to fit in a wielder's hand, with small protrusions jutting up between the fingers of a closed fist. In this way, it can function as a +1 *weapon* that deals 1d4+1 points of damage.

A *zarangan's* main powers are far more impressive—an individual grasping the stone can, on command:

—use *dimension door* as the spell 1/round as a 20th-level wizard;

—use *word of recall* to teleport to the *zarangan's* "home" (a destination determined during the item's creation) 1/day;

—use *cure critical wounds* (on the bearer only) 1/day.

A *zarangan* often has its command word inscribed on its surface somewhere. It can only transport the individual grasping it, regardless of how many other creatures are in contact with the bearer. It frees the bearer from all nonmagical restraints and forcibly separates him from the grasp of other creatures when it is called upon to use its *word of recall* ability.

In addition to the above common faculties, each *zarangan* also has additional unique capabilities. First, it has one of the following spells as an ability usable 1/hour: *chain lightning*, *cone of cold*, *invisibility*, *lesser ironguard*, *levitate*, *unseen servant*, or *water breathing*. Second, it grants *spell immunity* against 1d3 spells (determined randomly).

Many *zarangans* were carried to Halruaa after the fall of Netheril, and several have been taken to other lands or buried in ancient tombs in the intervening years. More than a few liches have manufactured a *zarangan* that has since found its way elsewhere, and those who try to use one of these mysterious stones might find themselves in an undead wizard's home, far from their own.

Strong varies; CL 19th; Weight 2 lb.

major Artifacts

A few unique and ultrapowerful items with ties to places and people in the Shining South are known (or believed) to exist to this day.

Astrolabe of Nimbral: This large and cumbersome apparatus is covered with an assortment of levers, knobs, and buttons, looking remarkably like a cross between a printing press and a pipe organ. With it, a character can transport an entire structure, such as a vehicle or a small tower, anywhere on Toril in a great display of teleportation. As its name implies, the *Astrolabe of Nimbral* was crafted by the most powerful of wizards from the island nation of Nimbral, and stored in the treasure vaults of the Nimbral Lords. It was eventually stolen by a particularly resourceful band of adventurers led by the Halruaan wizard Dwalimar Omen and taken back to his home nation. From there, it was installed on the Halruaan skyship *Realms Master* and used by Omen and several others to hunt down dangerous artifacts at the behest of Netyarch Zalathorm.

The *Astrolabe of Nimbral* allows one who is skilled in its use to teleport an object of up to twenty 10-foot cubes in size, as well as everything contained inside that object, anywhere on

Toril. To properly understand and control the *Astrolabe*, the user must make a DC 30 Intelligence check. A character gains a +2 bonus on this check for every 5 ranks in Spellcraft and Knowledge (arcana) he has. Failure by 4 or less indicates the destination is off by 5d10×10 miles; failure by 5 or more means the destination is randomly determined.

Objects moved from one location to another are subject to changes in slope, altitude, and stability in the foundation. Thus, it is considered wise to be aloft (such as in a skyship) before operating the *Astrolabe*.

Crystal Orb: Thought to have been crafted by the wizard Halruaa (one of the first wizard-kings of the nation bearing the same name), the *Crystal Orb* is a large, clear sphere about 1 foot in diameter. Since the beginning of the rule of the netyarchs, the *Orb* has been the primary means of communicating and managing the affairs of Halruaa. The *Crystal Orb* currently resides in an inner chamber in Zalathorm's palatial tower in Halarahh.

The *Orb* only responds to the primary user, which was designated as the reigning netyarch of Halruaa during its creation. With the *Crystal Orb*, a user can communicate with up to five hundred unique individuals at once. During a conversation, the user has complete control over who can speak and be heard by the rest of those mentally present. The link also provides a mental image of the face of any speaker.

The *Orb* must be attuned to contact any particular individual through a minor activation sequence whereby the user touches both the *Orb* and the potential recipient at the same time and utters a command word. Thereafter, the user can mentally contact the recipient when that command word is uttered a subsequent time. Zalathorm has established a single command word for the entire Council of Elders, and he is able, thusly, to reach every member at the same time to conduct the business of running Halruaa.

Contact from the *Orb* is not compulsory. The recipient can feel a mental signal, but he can choose to ignore it. If the recipient chooses to respond to the signal, he immediately finds himself in telepathic contact with the wielder of the *Orb* and anyone else the wielder has contacted at that time.

To protect the *Crystal Orb*, it has been further imbued with a contingent *teleport object* spell. Anyone attempting to remove it from the chamber where it is kept causes the *Orb* to be sent to the inner sanctuary of the high priest of Mystra at Mount Talath, who magically contacts Zalathorm to make arrangements for the artifact's safe return.

Gulkuluster's Deathstaff: Created by one of the most powerful of Halruaa's wizards centuries ago, *Gulkuluster's Deathstaff* was designed to be used as a means of ultimate destruction against almost any foe. Each use of the *Deathstaff* produces one of the following effects.

- Maximized widened *fireball*
- Maximized widened *acidball**
- Maximized widened *electricity ball**
- Maximized widened *frostball**
- Maximized widened *sonicball**

*These are variations on *fireball* created with alternate energy descriptors; for example, an *acidball* spell functions as a *fireball* spell but deals acid damage. *Gulkuluster's Deathstaff* can hold 50 charges—and through a unique property of its construction, it automatically regains 1 charge each week. If it ever reaches 0 charges, it becomes nonfunctional until a week has passed.

Ongild: Named for the Halruaan wizard that created it, the *Ongild* is a fist-sized emerald that has been imbued with a variety of powers. Its last known location was in the belly of the red dragon Hoondarrh, who lairs on the isle of Skadaurak in the kingdom of Mintarn. The *Ongild* continually allows its wearer to heal 1 point of damage per level every hour. Furthermore, its wearer can use each of the following effects as an 18th-level wizard 1/day—*delayed blast fireball*, *prismatic spray*, *reverse gravity*, and *spell turning*.

Sunphelm of Shandaular: The *Sunphelm of Shandaular* is an ancient crown that has served as the regalia of at least three kingdoms: Ashanath, Eltabranar, and Arkaia. Its origin is unknown, having been discovered by Shan the Golden, a wizard in the employ of the gold dwarves of the Great Rift, in an ancient crypt buried beneath the waters of the Akanamere shortly before the opening of the Orcgate.

Shan bore the crown for many years, first as a mercenary leader of the Nars, and later as the first queen of Ashanath. After her death, it passed to her son, grandson, and great-grandson (Arkaius the Archmage), each ruling Ashanath from the city of Shandaular in turn. It is from this era that the headpiece became known as the *Sunphelm of Shandaular*.

Today, the *Sunphelm's* fate remains unknown, although knowledgeable scholars speculate that it rests atop the brow of some matron mother in the drow city of T'lindhet.

Fashioned of silver and gilt with golden runes, the *Sunphelm* is a simple circlet with seven beljuril-tipped spikes that seem to flicker with inner light. A trio of king's tears dangles from the front of the crown on silver chains. Each king's tear contains a different image within—a view of the arch in the northern half of Shandaular circa -1000 DR, a view of the arch in the southern half of Shandaular circa 200 DR, and a view of the city of Arkatuil and the Bay of Dancing Dolphins circa 750 DR.

The seven beljurils of the *Sunphelm of Shandaular* collectively provide light equal to that of a candle and exhibit the effects of a *holy star* spell (see page 104 of *Player's Guide to Faerûn*) as commanded by the wearer. In addition, the wearer of the *Sunphelm* is continuously girded by the benefits of a contingent *heal* spell that activates immediately whenever the wearer would be killed from damage or Constitution damage or drain.

MONSTERS OF THE SOUTH

The expanses of the Shining South serve as home to a wide variety of creatures, gentle beasts and fierce predators alike. A few are unique to this region of Faerûn, such as the rattelyr dragon that burrows under the grasslands of the Shaar, or the enigmatic laraken that inhabits a swamp in Halruaa. Others are not only common to many parts of the continent, but also infest the dark places of the South.

Some of the creatures presented in this chapter are suitable for characters; such monsters have a level adjustment given in their statistics. Creatures without a level adjustment entry are not recommended as characters (they are mindless predators, for example, or they have an effective character level above 20th).

Beguiler

Small Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 1d10 (5 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 30 feet (6 squares), climb 10 ft.

Armor Class: 14 (+1 size, +3 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 11

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/-5

Attack: Claw +5 melee (1d3-2)

Full Attack: 2 claws +5 melee (1d3-2), bite +3 melee (1d4-2), and short sword +3 melee (1d4-2)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Rake 1d3-2

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, true sight

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +0

Abilities: Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 11

Skills: Balance +5, Climb +8, Hide +9*, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Spot +2

Feats: Multiattack^B, Weapon Finesse

Environment: Warm plains

Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (1-4)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral

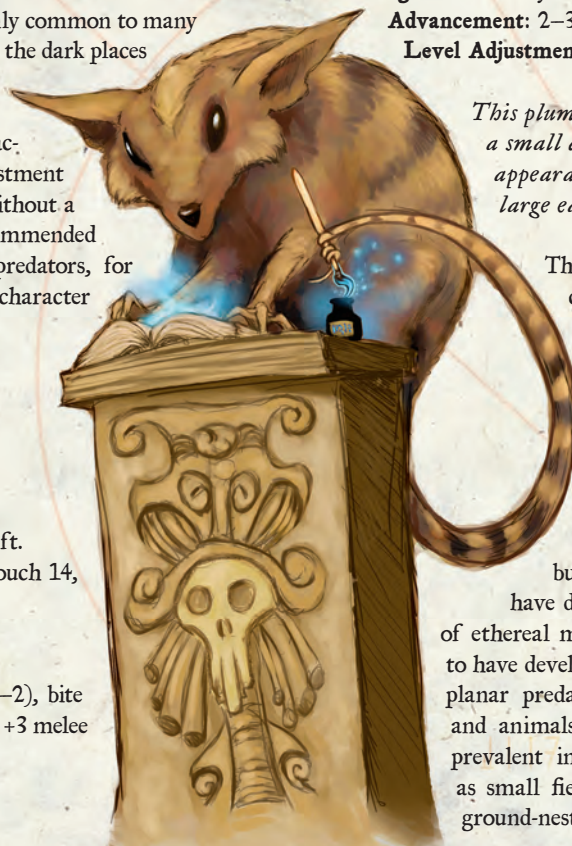
Advancement: 2-3 HD (Small)

Level Adjustment: +0 (cohort)

This plump quadruped is about the size of a small dog. It is somewhat mouselike in appearance, with big, glistening black eyes, large ears, and a pointed snout.

The beguiler is an exceptionally intelligent creature with natural camouflaging and the ability to see the truth behind any illusion. A beguiler is about a foot tall and around 2 feet long. Though not particularly aggressive, beguilers are prized by wizards as familiars or for the magic inherent in their pelts.

The origin of the beguiler's unusual powers has long been a mystery, but those who have studied this creature have determined that it is the favored prey of ethereal marauders. The beguiler species seems to have developed its unique abilities to avoid these planar predators. Beguilers feed on both plants and animals, preferring plump, water-rich cacti prevalent in their native environment, as well as small field mice and the eggs and young of ground-nesting birds.



Beguiler

Beguilers speak their own language and Common.

A beguiler can be acquired as a familiar by a 7th-level arcane spellcaster with the Improved Familiar feat. See page 200 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

combat

Beguilers possess four sets of sharp, retractile claws and a sharp bite attack. Beguilers can also wield weapons in their hairless, prehensile tails.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +5 melee, damage 1d3–2.

True Seeing (Su): Beguilers always see as if under the effect of a *true seeing* spell.

Skills: While dry, beguilers can change the hue and pattern of their fur to match the coloration of their surroundings, even to colors and patterns not found in nature, giving them a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks. Beguilers have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A beguiler can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Behir, Halruaan

Medium Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 5d10+25 (52 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 10 ft.

Armor Class: 18 (+1 Dex, +7 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 17

Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+9

Attack: Bite +9 melee (1d6+6 plus 1d4 electricity)

Full Attack: Bite +9 melee (1d6+6 plus 1d4 electricity)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, constrict 2d6+6 plus 1d4 electricity, rake 1d2+2 plus 1d4 electricity, static discharge

Special Qualities: Can't be tripped, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity, low-light vision, scent

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +0

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 12

Skills: Climb +16, Hide +3, Spot +1

Feats: Cleave, Power Attack

Environment: Warm hills or any (Halruaa)

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 6–9 HD (Medium); 10–15 HD (Large)

Level Adjustment: —

This creature looks like a cross between a large snake and a crocodile with horns and too many legs. Its thick scales are brilliant blue.



Halruaan behir

The Halruaan version of the many-legged behir is a smaller, more magical breed than its cousin. They are kept as guardians and occasionally pets. It is rumored that unsavory elements in Halruaan society raise vicious strains of these creatures for behir-baiting dens, but such sport is frowned upon, if not actually illegal.

Halruaan behirs take about five years to reach adult size, which is about half the size of average behirs. They seldom reach 20 feet or weigh more than 1,500 pounds. Halruaans usually "harvest" a behir long before it gets too big.

Halruaan behirs are known for their colorful hides. Blue is the most common color, but innovative breeders (who are invariably necromancers) have developed strains of green, coral, and even rose-hued monsters. The intelligence of the Halruaan behir has suffered, due to this forced breeding for color and size. They are still cunning predators and sharp-eyed guardians, however, and their breath weapon is fully as strong as that of their larger kin.

Halruaan behirs do not speak any recognizable language.

combat

A Halruaan behir is likely to rely on its breath weapon when threatened, because hatchlings are often trained not to bite, maul, or crush. Some Halruaan behirs are trained to constrict prey—or intruders—to the point of unconsciousness. Since they emit discharges of electricity when agitated, any form of combat with a Halruaan behir can be dangerous.

Breath Weapon (Su): 20-foot line, once every 10 rounds; damage 7d6 electricity, Reflex DC 17 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Constrict (Ex): A Halruaan behir deals 2d6+6 points of damage plus 1d4 points of electricity damage on a successful grapple check. It can make six rake attacks against a grappled foe.

Rake (Ex): Six claws, attack bonus +9 melee, damage 1d2+2 plus 1d4 electricity.

Static Discharge (Ex): When angry or agitated, a Halruaan behir generates electricity with its body. This discharge deals 1d4 points of electricity damage to any creature hit by the behir, touches it, or makes a successful melee attack against it with a natural or metal weapon.

Skills: Halruaan behirs have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A Halruaan behir can always choose to take 10 on climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

dark tree

Huge Plant

Hit Dice: 10d8+50 (95 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares)

Armor Class: 20 (-1 Dex, -2 size, +13 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 20

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+24

Attack: Claw +15 melee (1d8+9) or bite +14 melee (2d6+13)

Full Attack: 2 claws +15 melee (1d8+9) or bite +14 melee (2d6+13)

Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft. (5 ft. for bite)

Special Attacks: Blood drain, confusion, improved grab

Special Qualities: Low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to fire 15, vulnerability to cold

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +2, Will +3

Abilities: Str 28, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 7

Skills: Listen +13

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claws)

Environment: Warm forests

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: 11-16 HD (Huge);
17-30 HD (Gargantuan)

Level Adjustment: —

What seemed to be a normal cypress tree moments ago begins to slash and claw with its thick, woody limbs. A terrible maw opens along one side of its trunk, lined with wicked teeth.

Native to the Shining South, dark trees drink the blood of humans and other intelligent creatures that wander into their native jungles. A renegade Halruaan wizard named Benaurl created them about 200 years ago, hoping for servants not unlike treants. His creations slew him instead and have now spread from Aerialpar Forest to the Forest of Amtar, Rethild, the Toadsquat Mountains, and the southern and eastern reaches of the Lluirwood.

Dark trees resemble cypress trees, but their bark is darker, and little moss grows on them. Usual specimens are about 18 to 20 feet in height, with a span of branches 40 feet across, but dark trees can grow to twice this size. They weigh as much as a normal tree. Two deep black eyes, which are almost impossible to find unless one knows precisely where to look, are set above a dark tree's maw. These creatures superficially resemble treants, but anyone who sees a dark tree can hardly ignore the palpable hatred and evil emanating from it.

Dark trees do not speak.

combat

Dark trees prefer intelligent prey and delight in tormenting their victims before the kill. They attack with their two arms, trying to draw victims toward their gaping maws to bite and drink blood.

Blood Drain (Ex): A dark tree can feast on the blood of its victims by making a successful grapple check. If it has a creature grappled, it can make a grapple check to deal bite damage and drain blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution damage to the creature.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a dark tree must hit a single target with both of its claw attacks. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can begin to drain blood.

Confusion (Sp): As a free action once per round, a dark tree can use *confusion* on one victim within 50 feet (Will DC 12 negates). In combat, this has the same effect as the *confusion* spell cast by a 10th-level sorcerer.

Occasionally, victims of the dark tree's *confusion* ability end up wandering deep

into the surrounding wilderness, becoming hopelessly lost. More often than not, a dark tree takes advantage of a victim's *confused* state and drains it of its blood.



Dark tree

Illustration by Jason Engle

Dragon, Rattelyr

Dragon (Fire)

Environment: Warm deserts

Organization: Solitary pair, or family (1-2 adults, 2-5 offspring)

Challenge Rating: Wyrmling 2; very young 3; young 4; juvenile 6; young adult 8; adult 10; mature adult 12; old 14; very old 16; ancient 18; wyrmling 19; great wyrmling 20

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: Wyrmling 3-4 HD; very young 6-7 HD; young 9-10 HD; juvenile 12-13 HD; young adult 15-16 HD; adult 18-19 HD; mature adult 21-22 HD; old 24-25 HD; very old 27-28 HD; ancient 30-31 HD; wyrmling 33-34 HD; great wyrmling 36+ HD

Level Adjustment: Wyrmling +2; very young +3; young +3; juvenile +5; others —

This wingless dragon has a great hood, dark with hints of violet, all about its head. The beast's charcoal-colored scales glow dully in the bright sun as it shakes its tail with a menacing rattle.

Age	Size	Hit Dice (hp)	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha	Base Attack/Grapple	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Breath Weapon (DC)	Frightful Presence DC
Wyrmling	T	2d12+2 (15)	11	11	13	10	11	8	+2/-6	+4	+4	+3	+3	1d6 (12)	—
Very young	S	5d12+5 (37)	13	11	13	12	13	10	+5/+2	+7	+5	+4	+5	2d6 (13)	—
Young	S	8d12+16 (68)	15	11	15	12	15	10	+8/+6	+11	+8	+6	+8	3d6 (16)	—
Juvenile	M	11d12+22 (93)	17	11	15	14	15	12	+11/+14	+14	+9	+7	+9	4d6 (17)	—
Young adult	M	14d12+42 (133)	19	11	17	14	17	12	+14/+18	+18	+12	+9	+12	5d6 (20)	18
Adult	L	17d12+51 (161)	23	11	17	16	17	14	+17/+27	+22	+13	+10	+13	6d6 (21)	20
Mature adult	L	20d12+80 (210)	27	11	19	18	19	16	+20/+32	+27	+16	+12	+16	7d6 (24)	23
Old	L	23d12+115 (264)	29	11	21	20	19	18	+23/+36	+31	+18	+13	+17	8d6 (26)	25
Very old	H	26d12+130 (299)	31	11	21	22	21	20	+26/+44	+34	+20	+15	+20	9d6 (28)	28
Ancient	H	29d12+174 (362)	33	11	23	24	23	22	+29/+48	+38	+22	+16	+22	10d6 (30)	30
Wyrmling	H	32d12+192 (400)	35	11	23	26	25	24	+32/+52	+42	+24	+18	+25	11d6 (32)	33
Great wyrmling	G	35d12+245 (472)	37	11	25	28	27	26	+35/+60	+44	+26	+19	+27	12d6 (34)	35

Age	Speed	Initiative	AC	Special Abilities	Caster Level	SR
Wyrmling	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	14 (+2 size, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14	Resistance to electricity 20, immunity to fire, rattle, tremorsense	—	—
Very young	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	15 (+1 size, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 15	—	—	—
Young	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	17 (+1 size, +6 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 17	—	—	—
Juvenile	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	18 (+8 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 18	—	—	—
Young adult	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	20 (+10 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 20	—	1st	—
Adult	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	21 (-1 size, +12 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 21	Hood extension	3rd	11
Mature adult	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	23 (-1 size, +14 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 23	DR 5/magic	5th	13
Old	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	25 (-1 size, +16 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 25	—	7th	15
Very old	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	26 (-2 size, +18 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 26	DR 10/magic	9th	17
Ancient	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	28 (-2 size, +20 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 28	—	11th	19
Wyrmling	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	30 (-2 size, +22 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 30	DR 15/magic	13th	21
Great wyrmling	60 ft., burrow 30 ft.	+0	30 (-4 size, +24 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 30	—	15th	23

Rattelyr dragons are territorial creatures, but they take interest in the world beyond their lairs. They like to burrow through loose earth and surprise opponents by bursting out of the soil.

Rattelyrs are wingless dragons with webbed claws, a fanged maw, and the serpentine tail of a rattlesnake. They have glossy, rust-colored scales at birth, which slowly deepen into hues of deep magenta, charcoal, and black at maturity. Young rattelyrs possess small nodules of violet at the base of their heads, which grow into distinctive ribbed hoods by adulthood. An adult rattelyr's hood tenses and extends forward in proportion to how angry it is, usually reaching full extension only during a battle to the death for dragons, rattelyrs age five times faster than normal for the species, becoming great wyrms in 240 years and dying of old age before 300.

Rattelyrs prefer warm climates and usually restrict themselves to environs with loose soil. Although they get some of their nourishment by absorbing heat and sunlight, these carnivores favor flesh and will not hesitate to eat sentient beings. These dragons dwell in large, low-ceilinged burrows or caverns, but spend much of their time stalking their home territories in search of intruders or any form of excitement.

If well fed and approached cautiously, rattelyrs have been known to converse and deal with other intelligent creatures. On occasion, rattelyrs might ally themselves with beings of great power for the promise of wealth or sport. They can be sociable, and have been known to capture adventurers or lost merchants just to gain news of the outside world. Of course, such guests only depart with their lives if the dragon isn't hungry.

Rattelyrs speak Common, Draconic, and various regional tongues.

combat

Rattelyrs employ their keen eyesight to spot potential prey from far off, which usually gives them sufficient warning to prepare for combat. If time permits, they bury themselves under a light layer of sand or dirt, waiting for the target to approach, and then erupt directly into melee combat. Against formidable opponents, rattelyrs unleash their breath weapon first and follow up with their fearsome rattle. Rattelyrs enjoy toying with weak opponents.

Breath Weapon (Su): A rattelyr has one type of breath weapon: a cone of fire.

Rattle (Su): A rattelyr can employ the rattle on its tail as a standard action. Any nondragon within 240 feet of the rattelyr must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the rattelyr's HD + its Cha modifier) against this sonic, mind-affecting ability or become panicked for 4d6 rounds. Those with 5 or more HD are shaken for 4d6 rounds instead. A creature that makes the Will save cannot be affected by the same dragon's rattle for one day. All creatures (including dragons) that are within range and can hear the rattle must make a DC 15 Concentration check to employ any spells or spell-like abilities for as long as the rattling noise lasts.

Hood Extension (Su): A rattelyr can extend its hood as a free action. When fully extended, the hood reflects spells as if the rattelyr were affected by *spell turning* (as the spell). The dragon can reflect as many levels of spells per day as it has Hit Dice.

Tremorsense (Ex): Rattelyrs can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

Skills: Climb, Hide, Jump, and Move Silently are considered class skills for rattelyrs. They have a +8 racial bonus on Spot checks and a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks in sandy terrain or in areas of loose dirt.

giant, cyclops

Large Giant

Hit Dice: 13d8+52 (110 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armor Class: 18 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +10 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 18

Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+21

Attack: Longspear +16 melee (2d6+12/×3) or slam +16 melee (1d4+8) or rock +8 ranged (2d6+8)

Full Attack: Longspear +16/+11 melee (2d6+12/×3) or slam +16/+22 melee (1d4+8) or rock +8 ranged (2d6+8)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft. (10–20 ft. with longspear)

Special Attacks: Rock throwing

Special Qualities: Low-light vision, rock catching

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +3, Will +3

Abilities: Str 27, Dex 9, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +13, Jump +13, Spot +4

Feats: Cleave, Far Shot, Great Cleave, Point

Blank Shot, Power Attack

Environment: Warm mountains

Organization: Solitary or fist (2–5)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +4



Rattelyr dragon

This bizarre giant has a brutish look about it, with thick limbs and a bowlegged gait. One huge eye rests below its low brow.

Cyclopes are loutish giants that enjoy tormenting and eating smaller folk. They are easily tricked, but they fight fiercely and to the death.

Cyclopes look like very tall humans with light tan to deep brown skin, a dark eye, and dark hair. They dress in hides. Their teeth are usually crooked and yellowed, and they are fond of crude jewelry made of bones and colorful rocks. A cyclops is usually around 12 feet tall and weighs about 1,500 pounds.

All cyclopes speak Giant.

combat

Cyclopes like to attack from higher ground, usually springing up from behind outcroppings of rock where they can hurl boulders with minimal risk to themselves.

Rock Throwing (Ex): Rocks thrown by a cyclops have a range increment of 120 feet (240 feet with the Far Shot feat).

cyclops society

Cyclopes are aggressive and enjoy raiding caravans, taking whatever goods interest them, and capturing humanoids for food. Whether alone or in a small band, cyclopes lair in shallow caves on mountainsides. They seem to be particularly bad-tempered and rarely bargain or trade, preferring to attack any and all interlopers, including other giants.

cyclopes as characters

Most cyclopes never interact with other races, except in combat, but a loner occasionally finds his way into civilization and adapts to different ways. The few cyclopes that become clerics worship Grolantor and may choose two of the following domains: Chaos, Death, Earth, Evil, or Hatred. Most cyclopes spellcasters are adepts.

Cyclopes characters possess the following racial traits.

—+16 Strength, -2 Dexterity, +8 Constitution, -4 Intelligence, -2 Wisdom, -4 Charisma.

—Large size: -1 penalty to Armor Class, -1 penalty on attack rolls, -4 penalty on Hide checks, +4 bonus on grapple checks, lifting and carrying limits double those of Medium characters.

—Space/Reach: 10 feet/10 feet.

—Cyclopes base land speed is 40 feet.

—Racial Hit Dice: A cyclops begins with 13 levels of giant, which provide 13d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +9, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +8, Ref +4, and Will +4.

—Racial Skills: A cyclops's giant levels grant skill points equal to $16 \times (2 + \text{Int modifier})$. Class skills include Climb, Jump, and Spot.

—Racial Feats: A cyclops's giant levels grant five feats.

—Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A cyclops is automatically proficient with simple weapons.

—Low-light vision.

—+10 natural armor bonus.

—Natural Attack: Slam (1d4).

—Special Attacks (see above and the Giant entry in the *Monster Manual*): Rock throwing.

—Special Qualities (see the Giant entry in the *Monster Manual*): Rock catching.

—Automatic Languages: Giant. Bonus Languages: Common, regional dialects.

—Favored Class: Barbarian.

—Level Adjustment: +4.

Illustration by Vince Locke



Cyclops

Laraken

Large Outsider (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 15d8+75 (142 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 30 ft.

Armor Class: 14 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +15/+24

Attack: Tentacle +19 melee (1d6+5 plus absorption) or absorbed magical power (see below)

Full Attack: 2 tentacles +19 melee (1d6+5 plus absorption) or absorbed magical power (see below)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Absorb magic

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., dimension door, sense magic, spell resistance 35

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +8

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 3, Wis 8, Cha 10

Skills: Escape Artist +19, Listen +19, Spot +19, Swim +31

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Environment: Warm marshes or Nishrek

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 14

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 16–20 HD (Large); 21–45 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: —

This yellow sphere glistens from moisture as it undulates through the muck. Two thick, twitching tentacles protrude from opposite sides of its body.

A laraken is a magic-absorbing creature from the plane of Nishrek, home of the orc pantheon, that hates all other living things and attacks any that approach. It prefers to lurk in wet places such as marshes and swamps where it can stay moist. Indeed, a laraken will not willingly come onto dry land, except to pursue its food—magic.

Also known as a magic-drainer, a laraken appears as a glistening, yellow sphere with two long tentacles protruding from opposite sides of its fleshy body. A full-size laraken is about 10 feet in diameter and can weigh as much as 2,500 pounds.

Larakens do not speak.

combat

A laraken lashes out with both of its tentacles each round. In addition to dealing bludgeoning damage, the touch of a laraken's tentacle drains magic. Larakens sometimes use magical abilities they have absorbed.

Absorb Magic (Su): A laraken absorbs magic in the form of spells cast at it, magic items it contacts, or the spells of spellcasters the creature strikes. Larakens prefer to drain spells, but they settle for the powers of magic items.

Spellcasters struck by a laraken must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or lose their highest-level spell slot or prepared spell. The laraken can then use that spell on its next turn if it so chooses. If the victim possesses two or more spells of the same level, the drained spell is randomly chosen.

If a spell cast at a laraken fails to overcome the creature's spell resistance, it absorbs the spell and has the ability to cast that spell on its next turn as a standard action.

Each time a laraken is struck by a magic item with charges, bonuses, or other special powers (or it strikes the item using the rules for sundering found on page 158 of the *Player's Handbook*), the item must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or be permanently drained of one charge, power, or bonus. Larakens first drain charges the item has, then powers (most potent first), then each individual point of enhancement bonus the item possesses.

A laraken gains 1 temporary hit point for every charge it absorbs, gains a +1 bonus on its attack rolls until the end of its next turn each time it absorbs a point of enhancement bonus, and it can use any power it drains from an item until the end of its next turn.

Temporary hit points fade in 1 hour. Absorbed powers, spells, and enhancement bonuses last only until the end of the laraken's next turn—a laraken cannot cast a spell it absorbed 2 rounds ago.

These magic-absorbing abilities do not function against arcane spells (or items) utilizing the Shadow Weave. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Dimension Door (Sp): As a standard action, a laraken can use *dimension door* as an 8th-level caster.



Laraken

Illustration by Mike Dubisch

Sense Magic (Su): A laraken can discern magical auras and their strengths, as well as remaining spell slots within a spellcaster, choosing its targets based on this perception. Even without the aid of sight, the creature can sense a spellcaster with remaining spell slots, a functioning spell, or magic item within 60 feet. This ability functions automatically and is always active.

Skills: A laraken has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

LOXO

Large Monstrous Humanoid

Hit Dice: 5d8+5 (27 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 14 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+13

Attack: Morningstar +8 melee (3d6+6) or slam +8 melee (1d6+4), or javelin +5 ranged (1d8+4)

Full Attack: Morningstar +8 melee (3d6+6) and slam +3 melee (1d6+2), or 2 slams +8 melee (1d6+4), or javelin +5 ranged (1d8+4)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Berserk rage, trample 1d8+6

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft.

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +4

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8

Skills: Climb +7, Listen +4, Spot +4, Survival +5

Feats: Cleave, Power Attack

Environment: Warm plains

Organization: Solitary, pair, company (3–5), or herd (20–40 plus 20% noncombatants plus 1–4 2nd-level rangers, 1 2nd-level spellcaster, and 1 3rd–5th level ranger)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +2

This elephantlike humanoid has bluish-gray skin and two trunks, each of which ends in a three-fingered handlike appendage. The creature is stocky in all extremities, sporting large ears and tusks. It wears loose, patterned clothing.

Loxos are peaceful creatures, but they defend their territories and families with great tenacity, becoming highly enraged when they see other members of their clan hurt. They are among the most dangerous of all plains dwellers to those who incur their wrath.

Loxos prefer simple, rustic clothing, particularly cut from cloth patterned with circles or diamonds. The typical loxo stands about 7 to 7 1/2 feet tall and weighs about 500 pounds.

Loxos speak their own language. Some individuals also speak Common or other dialects.

combat

Loxos prefer melee to ranged combat, and they use thrown weapons only when they can't close with enemies. If a herd is threatened, the adult male loxos charge intruders while the females move the young to a defensible location. Once the young are secure, the males make a fighting retreat toward the females, so that they too can join the melee.

Berserk Rage (Ex): A loxo that sees a clan member killed or incapacitated enters a berserk rage. For 6 rounds, the loxo gains a +4 bonus to Strength, a +4 bonus to Constitution, and a +2 morale bonus on Will saves, but takes a –2 penalty to Armor Class.

The following changes are in effect as long as the berserk rage lasts: HD 5d8+15 (37 hp); AC 12, touch 8, flat-footed 11; Base Attack/Grapple +5/+15, Full Attack +10 melee (3d6+9, morningstar), or +10 melee (1d6+6, 2 slams), or +5 ranged (1d8+6, javelin); SA trample 1d8+9 (DC 18); SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 23, Con 17, Climb +9. After the berserk rage ends, the loxo is fatigued (–2 penalty to Strength, –2 penalty to Constitution, can't charge or run) until the end of the encounter.

Trample (Ex): As a standard action during its turn each round, a loxo can trample creatures of Medium size or smaller. The loxo merely has to move over the opponents. The trample deals 1d8+6 points of bludgeoning damage. A trampled opponent can either make an attack of opportunity at a –4 penalty or attempt a DC 16 Reflex save for half damage. The save DC is Strength-based.

Loxo society

Loxo herds are nomadic. They move about, grazing and harvesting fruits and nuts from groves of trees they have planted. When they reach a grove or a good area for grazing, they build temporary huts to serve as shelter until it's time to move on. Loxos need



Loxo

massive amounts of grass and other vegetable material to fuel their big bodies. When not eating, these creatures create rustic works of art that they barter for items or tools they need.

Loxo herds are divided into clans, and all members of a clan wear the same pattern of clothing. Each herd has a chief (called a lox-fithik, or herd-lieutenant), who is a ranger, and a tannuk, who has at least two levels of spellcaster.

Loxos as characters

Leaders of loxo herds tend to be rangers. Loxo clerics worship aspects of the Faerûnian giant deities Hiatea and/or Iallanis and can choose two of the following domains: Animal, Good, Family, Healing, Moon, Plant, Strength, and Sun.

Loxo characters possess the following racial traits.

—+8 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution, –2 Charisma.

—Large size: –1 penalty to Armor Class, –1 penalty on attack rolls, –4 penalty on Hide checks, +4 bonus on grapple checks, lifting and carrying limits double those of Medium characters.

—Space/Reach: 10 feet/10 feet.

—Loxo base land speed is 30 feet.

—Racial Hit Dice: A loxo begins with five levels of monstrous humanoid, which provide 5d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +5, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4.

—Racial Skills: A loxo's monstrous humanoid levels grant skill points equal to $8 \times (2 + \text{Int modifier})$. Class skills include Climb, Listen, Spot, and Survival.

—Racial Feats: A loxo's monstrous humanoid levels grant it two feats.

—Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A loxo is automatically proficient with simple weapons and light armor.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—+4 natural armor bonus.

—Natural Attacks: Two trunk slams (1d6).

—Special Attacks (see above): Berserk rage, trample.

—Automatic Languages: Loxo. Bonus Languages: Common, regional dialects.

—Favored Class: Ranger.

—Level Adjustment: +2.

Mantimera

Large Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 9d10+27 (76 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 50 ft. (poor)

Armor Class: 19 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +9 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 18

Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+17

Attack: Bite +12 melee (2d6+4)

Full Attack: Bite +12 melee (2d6+4) and bite +12 melee (1d8+4) and gore +12 melee (1d8+4) and 2 claws +10 melee (1d6+2); or 6 spikes +10 ranged (1d8+2/19–20)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, spikes

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 10

Skills: Hide +1*, Listen +11, Spot +11, Survival +1

Feats: Alertness, Flyby Attack^B, Hover, Iron Will, Multi-attack, Track^B, Weapon Focus (spikes)^B

Environment: Warm hills

Organization: Solitary or pack (2–5)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic evil

Advancement: 10–13 HD (Large); 14–27 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: —

This creature has the hindquarters of a big goat and the forequarters of a great lion.

It has batlike wings and three heads—a horned goat, a vaguely humanoid beast, and a fierce dragon. Its back is set with curved barbs, and its long tail ends in a cluster of deadly spikes.



Mantimera

Illustration by Ralph Horsley

Mantimeras are the sterile crossbreeds resulting from the mating of a manticore with a chimera.

The creature has the humanlike head of a manticore, as well as its wings and tail. Its other two heads are those of the chimera—the goat and the dragon. A mantimera is about 10 feet long, stands around 5 feet tall at the shoulder, and weighs between 3,000 and 4,000 pounds.

Mantimeras speak Draconic and Common.

combat

Like its chimera parent, the mantimera prefers to surprise prey. It swoops down from the sky or lies concealed, loosing a volley of tail spikes and its dragon breath weapon before closing to fight. If possible, the beast stays aloft during battle.

Breath Weapon (Su): A mantimera's breath weapon depends on the color of its dragon head. To determine the head color and breath weapon randomly, roll 1d10 and consult the table below. Regardless of its type, a mantimera's breath weapon is usable once every 1d4 rounds, deals 3d8 points of damage, and allows a DC 17 Reflex save for half damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

d10	Head Color	Breath Weapon
1–2	Black	40-ft. line of acid
3–4	Blue	40-ft. line of lightning
5–6	Green	20-ft. cone of gas (acid)
7–8	Red	20-ft. cone of fire
9–10	White	20-ft. cone of cold

Spikes (Ex): With a snap of its tail, a mantimera can loose a volley of six spikes as a standard action (make an attack roll for each spike). This attack has a range of 180 feet with no range increment. All targets must be within 30 feet of each other. The mantimera can launch only twenty-four spikes in any 24-hour period.

Skills: A mantimera's three heads and manticore parentage give it a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. *In areas of scrubland or brush, a mantimera gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a mantimera is up to 348 pounds; a medium load, 349–696 pounds; and a heavy load, 697–1,044 pounds.

starsnake

Medium Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 5d10 (27 hp)

Initiative: +9

Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 60 ft. (average)

Armor Class: 19 (+5 Dex, +4 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+4

Attack: Bite +10 melee (1d4–1 plus poison)

Full Attack: Bite +10 melee (1d4–1 plus poison)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.



Starsnake

Special Attacks: Poison, spell-like abilities, static discharge

Special Qualities: Dream shield, spell resistance 15

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +4

Abilities: Str 9, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 26

Skills: Diplomacy +18, Listen +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Environment: Warm plains

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic neutral

Advancement: 6–10 HD (Medium); 11–15 HD (Large)

Level Adjustment: —

This gossamer-winged snake glitters with an iridescent sheen, resembling a rope of gemstones as it flies through the air.

A starsnake is an antisocial creature that is most dangerous while asleep. Though it is native to open grasslands, the creature prefers to rest on high rocks or trees.

A starsnake's glossy scales range in hue from luminous shades of blue and green to radiant ruby. Their eyes always possess a sky-blue hue. Starsnakes can reach 8 to 10 feet long when fully grown but weigh only 6 to 8 pounds. A starsnake finds its own kind

abhorrent, and being hermaphroditic, doesn't seek the company of other starsnakes to produce young.

When resting during the heat of the day, the snakes employ a dream shield that repels magic and rewards anyone who touches them with a jolt of electricity. They are reclusive creatures that are usually seen only at twilight, their beautiful wings reflecting the sunset colors. Starsnakes feed upon rodents, presenting a threat only to other creatures foolish enough to disturb their slumber.

They do, however, delight in playing pranks on intelligent beings, coming to rest in spots where they might engage such creatures in conversation. While talking, starsnakes often plant ludicrous (but usually harmless) suggestions. A common explanation for foolish behavior is to claim, only half in jest, that someone was "beguiled by a starsnake."

Starsnakes speak Sylvan. Individuals might speak other languages as well, such as Halruaan and Common.

A starsnake can be acquired as a familiar by a 12th-level arcane spellcaster with the Improved Familiar feat. See page 200 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

combat

Starsnakes spend much of the day and night dreaming, for their abilities are as potent asleep as awake. When awake, a starsnake defends itself with its spell-like abilities if it can, using its bite attack only if it must.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 12, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Dex. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*charm person* (DC 19), *hold person* (DC 21); 3/day—*charm monster* (DC 22), *suggestion* (DC 21); 1/day—*eyebite* (DC 24), *hold monster* (DC 23). Caster level 12th.

Static Discharge (Ex): A starsnake generates electricity within its body while it sleeps. If a starsnake is asleep, any creature that touches it or makes a successful melee attack against it with a natural or metal weapon takes 1d4 points of electricity damage from the discharge.

Dream Shield (Su): While asleep, a starsnake generates an aura that absorbs spells and spell-like abilities. Any targeted spell directed at the starsnake is absorbed and instantly converted into electrical energy. This energy is discharged back at the original caster in a bolt that deals 1d10 points of electricity damage per level of the spell absorbed.

The bolt is 5 feet wide with a maximum range of 200 feet, and a successful DC 20 Reflex save halves the damage. It can set fire to combustibles and damage objects in its path. If the damage caused to an interposing barrier breaks through that barrier, the bolt might continue if range permits. Otherwise, the bolt stops at the barrier. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Tall moulder

Large Aberration

Hit Dice: 7d8+7 (38 hp)

Initiative: +4

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armor Class: 18 (+4 Dex, -1 size, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+14

Attack: Slam +9 melee (1d6+5)

Full Attack: 4 slams +9 melee (1d4+5) and bite +7 melee (2d6+2)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft. (slam 15 ft.)

Special Attacks: —

Special Qualities: Arrow evasion, darkvision 60 ft.

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +5

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 19, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 7

Skills: Climb +9, Hide +1, Listen +4, Search +2, Spot +4, Survival +2

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack

Environment: Warm forests

Organization: Solitary, pair, or handful (3–5)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: 8–14 HD (Large); 15–21 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: —

Six gangly, blue-furred limbs support a head that looks like a crazed, tusked gorilla. The 4-foot-long head is all teeth and big, leering eyes. No torso is visible.



Tall moulder

Illustration by Chris Hawkes

The tall moulder is a whirling dervish of devastation in melee. It's an object lesson in the value of being close friends with a powerful spellcaster or archer—someone who can kill the beast without having to charge into melee range. These creatures plague Luiren.

A tall moulder has a huge head with six long limbs protruding directly from it, and no torso to speak of. At any given time, two or three of the surprisingly flexible, 15-foot-long limbs are on the ground to support the weight of the head and give the moulder stability. The moulder's head rarely rises 15 feet high, unless it's attempting to avoid the blow of a weapon. The creature's natural motion keeps the head 5 to 7 feet off the ground. It weighs about 500 pounds.

Tall moulders speak Common and broken Halfling, both in accents that can only be described as obscene.

combat

Tall moulders stand out of their opponents' melee range and use their slam attacks. If would-be prey rushes in to fight and moves more than 5 feet into or through a moulder's threatened area, the moulder gets an attack of opportunity (or multiple attacks of opportunity, thanks to the Combat Reflexes feat, should more than one opponent make the same mistake).

Arrow Evasion (Ex): A tall moulder's wild whirl of arms and its shifting central head make it hard to hit with normal missiles (but not magical ranged attacks, such as spell rays and magic arrows). Normal ranged attacks (such as from bows or thrown weapons) have a 20% chance of missing the moulder outright.

Skills: Tall moulders have a +4 racial bonus on Climb checks.

Tasloi

Tasloi, 1st-Level Warrior

Small Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1d8+1 (5 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.

Armor Class: 13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 small wooden shield), touch 12, flat-footed 12

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/−4

Attack: Short sword +2 melee (1d4−1) or javelin +3 ranged (1d4−1) or net +3 ranged

Full Attack: Short sword +2 melee (1d4−1) or javelin +3 ranged (1d4−1) or net +3 ranged

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: —

Special Qualities: Low-light vision, light sensitivity

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +1, Will −1

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +9, Hide +9, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Spot +3

Feats: Alertness

Environment: Warm forests



Tasloi

Organization: Gang (4–9), warband (10–24 plus 1–6 Medium dire rats), band (10–100 plus 100% noncombatants plus 1 3rd-level elite per 20 adults, 1 leader of 5th–7th level, and 4–24 dire rats), tribe (40–400 plus 1 3rd-level elite per 20 adults, 1 or 2 lieutenants of 4th or 5th level, 1 leader of 6th–8th level, 10–100 dire rats, and 2–8 spider eaters)

Challenge Rating: 1/3

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +0

This small, long-legged humanoid has a flat head and a green hide covered with black hair. It shuffles forward, dragging its knuckles as it moves.

Tasloi are jungle inhabitants whose race is thought to be thousands of years old. They are quick and nimble in the trees and prefer to spend their time among the branches.

A tasloi stands about 3 feet tall and weighs between 30 and 40 pounds. They walk in a crouching posture, dragging their knuckles at times. Their skin is green and thinly covered with coarse, black hair. Tasloi have gold, catlike eyes.

Tasloi speak their own language, but some clever individuals might speak Common or another human dialect.

combat

Tasloi normally attack from above, dropping from the surrounding treetops onto their unwary opponents. If they gain surprise, they use their nets to ensnare adversaries, otherwise attacking with their short swords and javelins. They use hit-and-run tactics to wear down tough foes, always avoiding a stand-up fight. If they manage to down an enemy, tasloi always try to abscond with the body—food for the group.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Tasloi are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Skills: Tasloi have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and use their Dexterity modifier rather than their Strength modifier when making such checks. A tasloi can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Tasloi have a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. *In thickly forested areas, the Hide bonus increases to +8. Tasloi cavalry (mounted on Medium dire rats) exchange Alertness for Mounted Combat and have a Ride bonus of +5, reducing Listen and Spot to +0 each.

The tasloi warrior presented here had the following ability scores before racial adjustments: Str 12, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Challenge Rating: Tasloi with levels in NPC classes have a CR equal to their character levels –2.

tasloi society

The tasloi live in loosely structured bands consisting of several families. Their lairs are usually a series of large trees interconnected by vines and ropes. Each tree sports platforms, 50–100 feet above the ground, upon which the tasloi live. Some tasloi work and live on the ground, along with the village's "livestock."

That livestock includes a number of dire rats and, occasionally, several spider eaters. The rats are kept as pets and used to aid in construction, maintenance, and protection of the community. Medium dire rats are used as mounts. If the village has any spider eaters, these beasts are reserved as steeds for the most powerful tasloi in the settlement.

tasloi as characters

Tasloi leaders tend to be rogues or fighter/rogues. Tasloi clerics worship an aspect of the goblin deity Maglubiyet and may choose to two of the following domains: Destruction, Evil, Planning, or Trickery. Most tasloi spellcasters are adepts.

Tasloi characters possess the following racial traits.

—2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, –2 Charisma.

—Small size: +1 bonus to Armor Class, +1 bonus on attack rolls, +4 bonus on Hide checks, –4 penalty on grapple checks, lifting and carrying limits 3/4 those of Medium characters.

—Tasloi base land speed is 30 feet.

—Tasloi have a climb speed of 20 feet.

—+4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. In thickly forested areas, the Hide bonus increases to +8. A tasloi uses its Dexterity modifier for Climb checks and has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A tasloi can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

—Low-light vision.

—Special Quality (see above): Light sensitivity.

—Automatic Languages: Tasloi. Bonus Languages: Common, Sylvan, regional dialects.

—Favored Class: Rogue.

Thri-kreen

Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Hit Dice: 2d8 (9 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armor Class: 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +2/+3

Attack: Claw +3 melee (1d4+1); or gythka +3 melee (1d10+1); or chatkcha +4 ranged (1d6+1)

Full Attack: 4 claws +3 melee (1d4+1) and bite –2 melee (1d4 plus poison); or gythka +3 melee (1d10+1) and 2 claws –2 melee (1d4) and bite –2 melee (1d4 plus poison); or gythka +1/+1 melee (1d10+1/1d10+1) and 2 claws –2 melee (1d4) and bite –2 melee (1d4 plus poison); or chatkcha +4 ranged (1d6+1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Poison, psi-like abilities

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to sleep effects, leap, naturally psionic

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +4

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 7

Skills: Balance +3, Climb +2, Hide +3*, Jump +35, Listen +2, Spot +2

Feats: Deflect Arrows^B, Multiweapon Fighting

Environment: Temperate or warm desert, warm plains

Organization: Solitary or pack (5–10)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +1 or +2 if psionic

This creature looks like a humanoid praying mantis, complete with an insectlike head sporting compound eyes and a complex jaw structure. A sand-colored exoskeleton covers its entire body, and six limbs—four of which are arms, the other two legs—protrude from its midsection. Its mandibles clack and antennae wave eagerly as it leaps forward, strange weapons at the ready.

Thri-kreen, often called mantis warriors, are intelligent humanoids who prefer to live in deserts and savannas, where they maintain a nomadic lifestyle as hunters. Alien and inscrutable, thri-kreen can seem bloodthirsty monsters to those who don't know them well.

A thri-kreen, when fully grown, averages about 6 feet tall and weighs about 200 pounds. The typical thri-kreen wears only what it needs for holding its equipment, but no clothing or armor. They create and wear no decoration.

Thri-kreen are at home in arid, open landscapes where they can easily blend in with the dry grass, windblown dunes, and bare rock. Permanent thri-kreen communities are just about nonexistent. Instead, packs of thri-kreen range widely over their own territories, foraging and hunting for daily sustenance. On rare occasions, two or more packs might come together to join their strength against especially dangerous foes.

Thri-kreen speak a language made up of clicks and snaps of their mandibles. Most thri-kreen whose packs roam near humanoid civilizations also speak Common.

combat

While hunting, thri-kreen use their natural camouflage to sneak up on potential prey. Thri-kreen close to combat (and flee from it) quickly due to their speed and leaping ability. They can use the gythka and chatkcha (exotic weapons that are unique to mantis warriors), but they prefer to attack with their claws and poisoned bites.

Poison (Ex): Injury (bite), Fortitude DC 11, initial damage 1d6 Dex, secondary damage paralysis for 2d6 minutes. A thri-kreen produces enough poison for one bite per day. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Psi-Like Abilities: When using the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, apply the following psi-like abilities to a thri-kreen. 3/day—*chameleon, know direction and location*; 1/day—*greater concealing amorphia, metaphysical claw*. Manifest level is equal to 1/2 the thri-kreen's Hit Dice (minimum 1st).

Leap (Ex): A thri-kreen is a natural jumper. It gains a +30 competence bonus on all Jump checks.

Naturally Psionic: When using the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, a thri-kreen gains 1 bonus power point at 1st level. This benefit does not grant the ability to manifest psionic powers unless such powers are gained through another source, such as levels in a psionic class.

Skills: *The exoskeleton of a thri-kreen blends in well with desert terrain, granting a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in sandy or arid settings (including the Shaar).

Thri-kreen as characters

Most thri-kreen leaders are rangers. Thri-kreen clerics usually venerate Tempus and can choose two of the following domains: Chaos, Protection, Strength, or War.

Thri-kreen characters possess the following racial traits.

—+2 Strength, +4 Dexterity, -2 Intelligence, +2 Wisdom, -4 Charisma.

—Medium size.

—Thri-kreen base land speed is 40 feet.

—Darkvision out to 60 feet.

—+3 natural armor bonus.

—Multiple Limbs: Thri-kreen have four arms and can take the Multiweapon Fighting and Multiattack feats (see page 304 of the *Monster Manual*).

—Natural Attacks:

Four claws (1d4) and a bite (1d4).

—Weapon Familiarity:

Thri-kreen treat the gythka and chatkcha (see page 16)

as martial weapons, rather than exotic weapons.

—Naturally Psionic: If you are using the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, thri-kreen gain 1 bonus power point at 1st level.

—Special Attacks (see above): Poison, psi-like abilities.

—Special Qualities (see above): Immunity to sleep effects, leap.

—Racial Hit Dice: A thri-kreen begins with two levels of monstrous humanoid, which provide 2d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +2, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3.

—Racial Skills: A thri-kreen's monstrous humanoid levels grant skill points equal to $5 \times (2 + \text{Int modifier})$. Class skills include Balance, Climb, Hide, Jump, Listen, and Spot. A thri-kreen has a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in sandy or arid settings, including the Shaar.

—Racial Feats: A thri-kreen gets Deflect Arrows as a bonus feat. In addition, a thri-kreen's monstrous humanoid levels grant it one feat.

—Automatic Languages: Thri-kreen. Bonus Languages: Common, Shaaran.

—Favored Class: Ranger.

—Level Adjustment: +1. If you are using the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, a thri-kreen has a level adjustment of +2 due to natural psionic abilities.



Thri-kreen



CAMPAIGNS

Dark things creep out of the hearts of gloomy forests, attacking caravans that roll past along trade roads. Strangers whisper of hidden tombs lying buried in the hills, the last resting places of long-lost kings. Sinister forces from the Underdark creep to the surface, and deadly beast-chieftains band together to harry the lands around their territories. Remnants of an ancient nation lie hidden within trap-filled towers in a land of wizards. Old *portals* disgorge travelers from far-away places. In the Shining South, adventurers can find plenty to keep them busy—and wealthy.

A campaign set in the Shining South offers a multitude of possibilities for adventure, intrigue, and treasure. The lands of Halruaa, the Shaar, and the Golden Water feature vastly divergent human cultures from those found elsewhere in Faerûn. Dambrath, Luiren, and the Great Rift are nations of other races entirely, places where half-drow, hin, and gold dwarves consider humans a minority. The land of Veldorn is ruled by terrible monsters altogether.

The following chapters detail nine different lands of the South, including information on major settlements and sites. Some cities have detailed statistics.

organizations of the south

The Shining South is a place far removed from western Faerûn, both in distance and in culture. Similarly, the subtle and secretive powers of other parts of the world hold no sway over the southern coast. Where the Zhentarim butt heads with the folk

of the Dalelands and beyond, and the Red Wizards torment the peoples of the East, the South has its own organizations. Certainly, agents from distant lands travel to the south (whether openly or incognito), but they are solitary figures far from their masters' spheres of influence.

The conclave

Within the Council of Elders in Halruaa is a smaller, hidden organization known only as the Conclave. Its membership is a secret, and all in Halruaa both respect and fear it. The Conclave is not an officially sanctioned political body, but rather a private and elite society of the most powerful—and power-hungry—of Halruaa's arcane spellcasters. Its members have taken it upon themselves to police the research, use, and abuse of magic in Halruaa. Though no one can say for sure, most believe the Conclave was founded shortly after the Netherese arrived in what would become Halruaa as a force to ensure no repeat of their peers' tragic mistakes in Netheril.

When a wizard's experiments or practices get out of control, the Conclave often steps in to correct the situation. Usually, a simple note is delivered, a warning against further misuse of the Art. If that doesn't work, the Conclave finds other means of persuading the offending wizard from continuing to step over the line. Of course, some practitioners are simply too pride-filled to acknowledge the power of the Conclave and ignore the warnings. When such hubris occurs, the Conclave simply eliminates the offending wizard. At least, that is what most presume happens—troublemakers who offend the Conclave tend to just disappear.

Of course, some see the Conclave as more than just a watchdog force, believing the organization is a far more ambitious entity, with designs on controlling the wizard-king and the elders outright. A few believe the Conclave already exerts this control. Still others insinuate connections between the Conclave and the rumored rise of shadow magic in Halruaa, a combination that is more than a little unsettling.

church of Loviatar

The worship of Loviatar is the official religion of Dambrath. Most of the leaders in the nation are high-ranking members of the temple's hierarchy, and the Maiden of Pain's tenets have influenced a substantial portion of the country's personality—its laws and punishments, its recreation and pastimes, and its relationships with other nations. It is small wonder that undercurrents of tension flow between the adherents of Loviatar and the drow of T'lindhet in the Underdark below.

Perhaps it is because the drow recognize the value of the alliance that was made so many centuries ago, or perhaps it is simply because the church of Loviatar has grown too powerful to oppose, but Dambrath has gradually but steadily begun to slip from the matron mothers' grips. The priestesses of the scourge grow ever more bold and independent with each passing decade. Some say it won't be long before those who worship Lolth find themselves unwelcome in Dambrath.

In the meantime, Loviatar's church continues to expand its influence, looking to establish proper temples in places in Faerûn that have never welcomed the Maiden of Pain before. Taking a cue from the Red Wizards of Thay, the high priestesses are considering establishing their own kind of enclaves in foreign cities where they trade heavily. Such an establishment would be an official Dambrathan trade center to all outward appearances, but it would also serve as a temple for those far from the comforts of home. Rumors of these plans have reached the ears of other nations, leaving fear in their wake.

house Jordain

The Jordaini are as integral a part of Halruaan society as the wizards themselves, and every one of them was trained at House Jordain. Sitting on the coast of Halruaa southwest of Khaerbaal, House Jordain is nominally answerable to Zalathorm and the Council of Elders in Halruaa, but in truth, it operates independently of all except the magehounds. The training grounds are responsible for producing the counselors who serve their wizard masters in a unique, magic-free manner.

But the wizards operating House Jordain, and the Jordaini themselves, have the ability to manipulate the endless political games that take place among the wizards. From everything as overt as allowing favored wizards to choose the best and brightest among the newly trained to the far more subtle workings of advice meant to steer policy, the ways in which the Jordaini can sway the outcome of Halruaan politics is immeasurable.

The Maquar

The noble warriors of Estagund live to serve the rajah of that nation in whatever capacity he requires. They have dedicated their lives to loyalty and obedience, and they are the rajah's bodyguards, couriers, public work force, and army. They are also the single most influential organization in Estagund, though few people realize it.

The rajah of Estagund relies heavily on the Maquar, and he values the leadership's insight into matters political and war-

related. He uses the crusaders not only as a peacekeeping force in his own nation, but also as a standing army. The rajah might also employ the Maquar to exert pressure on his political rivals, because he can assign units of Maquar crusaders to various landed nobles in Estagund to use as they see fit. What the rajah gives he can take away.

Although the Maquar are unquestioningly loyal to the rajah, most of the citizens mistakenly think that is based on tradition. The reality is, the Maquar choose to serve, but only so long as it benefits the Maquar. The crusaders have discovered just how much pull they have with the rajah, and they use it to their advantage. As a group, the Maquar are every bit as powerful as the rajah himself, and they are beginning to exploit this fact to mold Estagund to their liking.

quinix the glabrezu

Deep inside the heart of the Gate of Iron Fangs in the far southwestern tip of the Forest of Amtar, a fiend plots. Quinix, a glabrezu, accidentally stumbled through a partially functioning portal several years ago and found himself in the bowels of a ruined and crumbling city. A large tribe of gnolls camped in the surface ruins, and Quinix quickly brought them under his sway through intimidation and lies. They now believe the glabrezu to be a direct representative of their demon lord Yeenoghu, and they his privileged servants. For his part, Quinix has used the portal, which functions only erratically, to bring in two vrocks to serve as his bodyguards and lieutenants, and he has plans to add more fiends to his retinue. With these assets at his disposal, the glabrezu has grown ambitious.

For a demon, Quinix is surprisingly cautious. He has chosen to remain low-key initially, biding his time while his minions carefully reconnoiter the surrounding geography and political climate. He has instituted a policy of raids designed to maximize results while minimizing suspicion. His gnoll followers have struck at numerous caravans and small, isolated settlements, but they have managed to keep their true level of organization hidden. They capture everyone they don't kill and take them back to the ruins as slaves who are put to work rebuilding the ruined city.

As success builds, Quinix envisions expanding his territory, raiding farther afield for a broader range of resources—Halruaa is a prime target because of the rich magic the glabrezu believes is there for the taking. The demon also intends to recruit humans to serve as spies and soldiers (many in the Swagdar are suitable candidates). With such an army, Quinix expects to conquer some of the surrounding land outright.

shadow wizards

Hushed whispers in Halruaa claim that some among the elders have turned to Shar and the Shadow Weave. Of course, no one knows anything definite, but the suspicious suggest that these shadow wizards meet in secret, heavily warded against any sort of divination, and plan for the downfall of the current government in the nation. With their shadow magic, these criminals are slowly usurping the reins of power from Zalathorm and the Council

of Elders, ultimately planning to do away with the worship of Mystra and Azuth, and put Shar above all others.

Some propose that the Conclave and the shadow wizards are one and the same—that their various deeds only appear to be guided from different groups. Others counter that the Conclave tirelessly opposes the shadow wizards, and only the former's intervention has prevented the latter from gaining the upper hand. Most believe half of these rumors are propaganda perpetrated by both sides in their struggles against one another and the rest of the wizards of Halruaa.

others

Numerous other organizations and power groups find a home in the Shining South beyond those discussed above. Among them are:

Beholders of Veldorn: The beholder clans that originally conquered Assur in Durpar still operate from the wild hinterlands of Veldorn. Part of the league of beast-chieftains, the beholders have machinations much more ambitious than merely antagonizing the caravan traffic. They want their old city back, and more territory besides.

Kethid: The lizardfolk nation of Kethid in the Great Swamp of Rethild plays an active role in events all across Faerûn, due to the availability of units of their mercenary company, the Servants of the Royal Egg. For the right price, King Ghassiss is willing to have his troops do just about anything.

Nagas of Ilimar: The nagas of the ruined city of Ilimar are a powerful group that has yet to flex its muscle fully. They bide

their time, waiting for the moment when their ancient masters, the sarrukh, who lie entombed somewhere in the ruined city, emerge to lead them into battle. On that day, nagas, lizardfolk, and other, more frightening things will march out of the swamps. In the meantime, they have agents scouting the countryside of Dambrath and Halruaa, gathering intelligence and looking for possible weaknesses to exploit when the time comes.

Pirates of the Great Sea: The various corsairs and pirates that sail the coastal waters of the Great Sea are a constant source of either frustration or wealth for many in the Shining South. A number of them have begun to operate in concert lately, with agents in every major city procuring information on shipments, protection fees, and job offers from merchants who wish to see their rivals' ships sitting on the bottom of the ocean. From such a position of strength and organization, the pirates have become a true menace to every honest trading organization in the Shining South.

Red Wizards: The Red Wizards have only a tiny foothold in the Shining South, having enclaves in various cities of the Golden Water. They have designs on expanding their trade further. In fact, the Thayans would love to get their greedy hands on some Halruaan secrets.

Veldorni Freedom Fighters: Not everyone in the Land of Monsters is willing to submit to the iron rule of the beast-chieftains. Groups of resistance fighters have been organized within a number of monster-controlled settlements in the hopes of fomenting rebellion and eventually winning freedom. Several of these guerrilla groups are sponsored by other countries, churches, or by monstrous rivals of those currently in power.

Illustration by Mike Dubisch



Quinix the glabrezu lurks near the the Gate of Iron Fangs

Yuan-ti: The serpent folk are widespread and constantly look for ways to exploit local populations in their endless quest for power and wealth. A number of yuan-ti factions operate secretly in the Shining South, looking for buried riches, subjects for experimentation, or to expand their territory. These groups might work in concert with one another until power struggles break the alliance.

dungeons in the shining south

A “dungeon” is traditionally an underground chamber in which prisoners are incarcerated, but adventurers in Faerûn use the term more loosely. To them, just about anything underground is a dungeon, preferably populated with monsters rather than prisoners. Mines, ruins, caves, subterranean homes, and passages all qualify.

By the adventurer’s definition, there are dozens of dungeons across Faerûn, many of which were looted long ago, while others have lain undisturbed for centuries. When it comes to dungeons, the Shining South is no exception. The most notorious of these are described here.

Aerilpar Mound: Sitting in a clearing in the heart of the Aerilpar Forest in Veldorn, this mysterious mound radiates strong magic. No trees grow inside the perimeter of the mound’s surrounding wall, and the predators of the forest stay well clear. Its origins are unknown, but everyone who’s heard of it agrees something must be hidden there. Few adventurers have managed to fight their way through the dangerous woods to the mound, let alone spend any time searching for a way inside.

Akhlaur’s Tower: The wizard Akhlaur built his tower in the middle of the swamp that now bears his name. Finding the tower had been difficult, since it was mostly submerged beneath the surface of the growing swamp. Recently, however, the swamp has ceased its expansion and the tower once again sits above the water. For anyone lucky and resourceful enough to survive the dangers of the swamp itself, the tower still promises to be a storehouse of treasures that once belonged to one of the most powerful wizards in Halruaa.

Ammathtar: This city was founded as a trade center where humans and halflings could meet on neutral ground to do business. Built on the fringes of the Southern Lluirwood near the caravan road running along the eastern side of Dambrath, the city was mysteriously wiped out overnight by something living inside the woods. Though much of the city was razed, plenty of buildings still stand for the brave to explore. Of course, whatever destroyed the city initially is almost certainly still lurking nearby.

Azulduth: Known as the Lake of Salt, this shallow body of water is surrounded by ruins of an ancient sauroid civilization. Most of the ground-level structures have been picked clean by wizards from Mulhorand and elsewhere, but many unexplored levels reportedly lie below the surface. Of course, the local population—which includes some yuan-ti—is unlikely to welcome invasive explorers.

Castle of Al’hanar: Reputedly built during the time of the long-vanished kingdom of Eltabranar, this ancient ruined fortress

sits just south of the border of the Sharawood. The castle is the traditional home of the Knights of the Undying Dragon, an ancient order of crusaders who served as the sword arm of Myrkul. The Knights have stayed their post in the ensuing millennia, even in undeath. Once every century, the Knights ride forth from their castle to destroy the dracolich of the Sharawood, bringing its treasures back with them. The castle is rumored to contain more magic than has been seen in one place since the Imaskari ruled.

Chasolné: This strange temple sits high on the cliffs that face the Great Sea in the East Wall of Halruaa. Massive, stylized heads seem to watch the ocean, perhaps waiting the return of some lost civilization. An altar above and behind the great heads marks the opening of a cave that seems to hold the promise of greater secrets inside, though no one has admitted to discovering any passages leading deeper.

Council Hills: The ruined city of Shandaular sits in the middle of this cluster of barren hills where the Shaaryan tribes meet. Once the southern terminus of a two-way *portal* that connected Southern Shandaular with its northern sister city (on the coast of Lake Ashane, known as the City of Weeping Ghosts—see *Unapproachable East* for more information), these ruins are now nothing more than crumbling stones. Beneath the hills, however, much of the old city remains. The tribes of the Shaar bury many of their honored dead in tombs in the uppermost passages, but they rarely explore the deeper tunnels. Those same tribes don’t like to see the remains of their ancestors disturbed.

The Gate of Iron Fangs: This long-abandoned city sits in the extreme southwestern tip of the Forest of Amtar. Its architecture hints that it was built by a serpent race, but no one knows for certain. The forest has mingled with the tumbled ruins aboveground, but much of the subterranean city still lies intact. Unfortunately for any would-be explorers, the city is infested with gnolls who serve a glabrezu named Quinix. The demon makes his home deep in the heart of the city and has used the *portal* there to bring in other fiends.

Guilmari: Once a trade center for the Arkaiuns, this coastal city just east of Rethild was overrun by lizardfolk, who tired of the recurring incursions into their homeland. Now the adventurous search the remains of the city, hoping to find some of what must have been left behind or lost. Explorers must contend with an ancient fang dragon that has taken up residence in the heart of the ruins if they want to come away with anything of significant value.

Ilimar: This ruined city dates back to the earliest times, and its construction is attributed to the sarrukh, one of the creator races. Nestled in the foothills north of Rethild, Ilimar is considered a holy site by the lizardfolk, who venerate the resident nagas. The nagas themselves jealously guard Ilimar against any intruders, for they can sense the presence of powerful life forms hidden somewhere in the heart of the ruins.

Lhesper: On the shore of Lake Lhesper in the western Shaar sits a ruined town. Destroyed by rampaging gnolls during the 7th century DR, the place has continued to be a source of interest for treasure hunters. The ruins have become more dangerous in recent years as yuan-ti have arrived, searching for something they believe to be buried in the place.

Mortik City: Most locals who live near Mortik Swamp in Luiren dismiss the rumors of a ruined city in its heart, but that hasn't stopped an endless flow of adventurers from searching for it. Whatever might be submerged there is well protected, for the Bog King and his minions are not fond of visitors.

Narhtowers: This wizard's tower sits in the foothills of the North Wall of Halruaa, and its most recent owner, Thongameir "Stormspells" Halargoth, has been dead for a number of years. No one else has figured out a way to claim the tower as their own—Halargoth was famous for his love of collecting unusual flora, and his tower is said to be filled with killer varieties. If anyone can destroy the deadly plants, there's certain to be a trove of magic waiting as a reward.

Old Vaelen: Once the capital of Veldorn, the ruined city of Old Vaelen is nestled among a handful of hills northwest of the Golden Water, along the Liontongue River. Though the ground level of the destroyed city contains little, the vaults beneath the hills are substantial. They're also filled with undead and wercreatures who serve the king of the city, Saed the Vampire Lord. With all the raiding from Old Vaelen owing its source to Saed, his warrens must hold vast wealth.

Peleveran: This unusual city was built into the side of the Landrise, a little north of where the River Shaar emerges from the great cliff face. Peleveran was destroyed in the Year of Dracorage (1018 DR) by the Cult of the Dragon during a spectacular and cataclysmic battle against a rebelling faction of its own, who had turned to the service of the demon-god Gargauth. A hidden temple lies deep inside the ruins of the city, and it might include a *portal* to the Nine Hells.

Quarlin's Tomb: This burial vault is rumored to house the remains of a Halruaan wizard who specialized in creating magical staves. No one knows for sure where the tomb is located, though it is reputedly near Dapplegate, in the Border Kingdoms. Anyone who manages to find it may be able to recover a fortune in ancient magic, but not before fighting through the tomb's wards and guardians.

Shaareach Ruins: In the middle of the wooded section of the Channath Vale, where the River Shaar and the River Channath become the River Talar, the lush forest is slowly overgrowing and destroying the remnants of an ancient city. Mysterious structures from an unknown culture line the banks of the rivers here, the architecture hinting at a civilization of skilled craftsfolk. Some of the buildings have already been consumed by the river or become so vine-cloaked that they are barely recognizable. Reaching the ruins is a trick in and of itself, because many fell creatures inhabit both the woods and the rivers.

Starspires: This ruined keep sits on one side of Talath Pass in northwestern Halruaa. Once the home of Hansandrar Ilmeth, an archmage of Halruaa who created fabulous magical tomes and other items, it is now the lair of dangerous creatures native to the mountains. Old records indicate that Ilmeth tunneled extensively beneath and behind his keep, and he built warded vaults to store and protect his magical works of art.

Thruldar: Formerly the westernmost city of Estagund, Thruldar was demolished by an evil druid and a horde of dark trees. Ghostwise halflings managed to slay the druid and magically seal his ghost and minions inside the city, but the place is now

a deadly nest of fell plant creatures and undead things longing to get out. Since there were few survivors in the initial attack, most of the original inhabitants' wealth is still inside the city, but the ghostwise halflings are not eager to let anyone explore the place.

The Tombs of the Dead Kings: Scattered through the Hills of the Dead Kings, these various concealed tombs are the last resting sites of the old lords of Dambrath, when the Arkaiuns ruled before the coming of the drow. While Crinti explorers have already plundered some of these crypts, others were hidden well enough that no one has yet found them. Rumors claim that Malar himself granted the Arkaiuns treasures with which to guard their kings' tombs.

wilderness encounter tables

The Shining South is a vast region encompassing over 1.1 million square miles. Civilization resides in small pockets—cities along the coasts and trade routes—while most of the rest of the land is miles and miles of open plains, mysterious forest, or sheer-sided mountains.

encounter chance

As a party travels across the Shining South, there is a chance per hour of travel of a wilderness encounter, as set out in Table 6-1: Wilderness Encounter Chance. The first number in a column is for a single hour of travel in that type of terrain, while the second (in parentheses) is the chance of a single encounter in 8 hours of travel in that terrain. If the terrain does not change in the course of a day's travel, it's much easier to make a single check and then randomly determine when the encounter takes place.

TABLE 6-1:

WILDERNESS ENCOUNTER CHANCE

	Normal Travel	Open Camping/ Cautious Travel	Concealed Camping/ Hiding
Desolate	5% (33%)	2% (15%)	1% (8%)
Wilderness	8% (49%)	4% (28%)	2% (15%)
Frontier	10% (57%)	5% (33%)	2% (15%)
Settled	12% (64%)	6% (40%)	3% (20%)

Parties moving at half their best possible speed or slower are treated as using cautious travel, while open camping describes those that are stopped or camped normally. Parties camping in secret or hiding use the Concealed Camping/Hiding column. A party that lights a fire is never camping in secret unless it can somehow hide the light and smoke.

Desolate areas are not settled and do not support great numbers of wildlife or monsters.

Wilderness areas are not settled, but support significant wildlife or monsters.

Frontier areas are lightly settled, but communities are small and far apart.

Settled areas feature broad stretches of cleared land, small villages, and thorps no more than a day's travel from each other, and some patrols from nearby cities or fortresses.

The Shining South holds eighteen general adventuring areas, whose encounter chances are described in tables 7-2 through 7-19 below. These supplant the encounter tables in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Dungeon Master's Screen*, since they provide more localized encounter possibilities. Encounter areas are: The Channath Vale; Dambrath; Durpar, Estagund, and Var the Golden; Dust-wall and Giant's Belt Mountains; Forest of Amtar; Gnollwatch Mountains; the Great Rift; Great Sea Coastal Waters; Halruaa; Lake Halruaa; Lluirwood; Luiren; Rethild, the Great Swamp; The Shaar; Southern Lluirwood; Toadsquat Mountains; Veldorn; and the Walls.

how to use the encounter tables

Each encounter table includes the following information:

d%: The result on percentile dice that generates the encounter. Use the Day or Night column, as appropriate.

Encounter: The type of creature encountered. Some of these might be groups, such as an orc patrol or merchant caravan. If the indicated creature is a template, use the sample creature whose statistics appear in the template entry.

Notations that identify a monster's source follow some entries, as defined below. No note indicates the creature is described in the *Monster Manual*. If you don't have access to one of the supplements mentioned, roll again on the table or select a replacement.

MC: *Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn*

FR: *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*

RF: *Races of Faerûn*

SS: Chapter 5: Monsters of the South in this book

Number Encountered: The number of creatures encountered. If the term "see Groups" appears here, refer to the Group Descriptions section below to determine the exact composition of the encounter.

group descriptions

Groups mentioned in the tables are described here.

Aarakocra Patrol: 1d4+4 aarakocras and 1d2 aarakocra rangers (level 1d4+1).

Illustration by Rick Sardinia



A rattelyr dragon in pursuit of a fresh meal

Aquatic Elf Patrol: 1d10+10 aquatic elves, 1d2 fighters (level 1d2+1), and 1 leader (level 1d4+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-15, fighter 16-55, ranger 56-80, wizard 81-100.

Asabi Scouts: 1d3+1 asabis and 1d2 stingtails.

Azer Squad: 1d10+10 azers, 1d2 azer fighters (level 1d4+1), and 1 leader (level 1d4+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-30, fighter 31-90, wizard 91-100.

Bandits: 1d3+2 1st-level warriors and 1d2 leaders (level 1d3). To determine the leaders' class, roll d%: barbarian 01-10, fighter 11-60, rogue 61-100. For the race of the bandit group, roll d%: Human 01-70, half-orc 71-100. Bandits are usually chaotic evil.

Barghest Pack: 1d2 barghests and 1d4+4 goblins.

Bedine Band: The Bedine are encountered in scouting groups, mounted on camels. Bedine scouts include 1d3+1 1st-level human warriors, 1d2 human rangers (level 1d3+2), and 1 leader (level 1d3+3). For the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-05, ranger 06-25, fighter 26-90, sorcerer 91-95, wizard 96-100. Bedine humans are usually chaotic good.

Bugbear Band: 1d6+4 bugbears, 1d3 bugbear fighters and/or rogues (level 1d3), and 1 bugbear fighter/rogue (level 1d4+2).

Cloaker Lord Swarm: 1d6+1 cloakers and 1 cloaker lord.

Deepspawn Brood: 1 deepspawn and 2d4 spawn. For the race of the spawn, roll d%: chuul 01-10, cloaker 11-30, quaggoth 31-60, minotaur 61-80, umber hulk 81-100.

Dridr Troupe: 1d2 driders and 1d6+6 Medium monstrous spiders.

Drow Scouts: 1d4+2 2nd-level drow fighters, 1d2 drow rogues (level 1d3+2), and 1 drow cleric (level 1d3+3).

Elf Patrol: 1d6+6 1st-level wood elf warriors, 1d3 wood elf wizards (level 1d3+1), and 1 leader (level 1d4+1). To determine the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-20, druid 21-40, fighter 41-50, ranger 51-80, rogue 81-100.

Firenewt Marauders: 1d6+4 firenewts, 1d2 firenewt clerics (level 1d4), and 1 firenewt fighter (level 1d6+1), all mounted on giant striders.

Fungus Patch: 1d3+2 shriekers and 1d3+1 violet fungi.

Ghast Pack: 1d3+1 ghouls and 1d6+6 ghouls.

Ghostwise Halfling Scouts: 1d4+2 1st-level ghostwise halfling warriors, 1d2 ghostwise halfling rangers (level 1d3+1), and 1d2 ghostwise halfling druids (level 1d4+1). 50% chance they are mounted on giant owls.

Giant Ant Crew: 1d6+5 workers and 1 soldier.

Gnoll Hunters: 1d4+1 gnolls and 1d2 hyenas, led by 1 gnoll ranger (level 1d3+1).

Gnoll Warband: 1d6+2 gnolls and 1d4 hyenas, led by 1 gnoll ranger (level 1d6).

Goblin War Party: 1d8+4 goblins, 1d2+1 worgs, 1d2+1 goblin fighters (level 1d3), 1d2+1 goblin adepts (level 1d3+1), and 1 leader (level 1d4+2). To determine the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-20, rogue 21-80, sorcerer 81-100.

Gold Dwarf Patrol: 1d4+4 1st-level gold dwarf fighters, 1d4 gold dwarf clerics (level 1d4), 1d2 gold dwarf sorcerers (level 1d4), and 1 leader (level 1d4+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-20, fighter 21-65, paladin 66-75, sorcerer 76-100.

Hag Covey: 2 annises, 1 green hag, and 80% chance of 1d8 ogres and 1d4 evil giants.

Hill Giant Raiders: 1d4+5 hill giants and 1d3+1 dire wolves.

Hobgoblin Raiders: 1d6+3 hobgoblins, 1d2 hobgoblin fighters (level 1d2), and 1d2 dire wolves.

Hobgoblin War Party: 1d10+5 hobgoblins, 1d3+1 dire wolves, 1d2 hobgoblin fighters (level 1d3), and 1 leader (level 1d6+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-15, fighter 16-80, ranger 81-90, wizard 91-100.

Kobold Warband: 2d4+8 kobolds, 1d2 dire weasels, and 1 leader (level 1d4). For the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-20, fighter 21-45, rogue 46-65, sorcerer 66-100.

Lightfoot Halfling Scouts: 1d4+4 1st-level lightfoot halfling warriors, 1d3+1 dogs, and 1 leader (level 1d3+3). For the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-15, druid 16-20, fighter 21-60, ranger 61-70, rogue 71-90, sorcerer 91-100.

Lizardfolk Warband: 1d6+6 lizardfolk, 1d2 lizardfolk druids (level 1d3), and 1 lizardfolk leader (level 1d4+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: barbarian 01-15, druid 16-75, fighter 76-90, ranger 91-100.

Locathah Patrol: 1d6+6 locathah, 1d2 locathah barbarians (level 1d3), 1d2 sea cats, and 1 leader (level 1d4+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: adept 01-10, barbarian 11-85, fighter 86-95, ranger 91-100.

Merchants: 2d4 1st-level commoners, 2d4 1st-level warriors, and 1d2 leaders (level 1d6). To determine a leader's class, roll d%: expert 01-20, fighter 21-40, rogue 41-90, wizard 91-100. Merchants are usually neutral.

Merchant Ship: A sailing ship (see page 132 of the *Player's Handbook*) carrying 4d4 1st-level commoners, 1d3+1 experts (level 1d6), and a group of merchants as described above.

Merfolk Patrol: 1d10+10 merfolk, 2 3rd-level merfolk fighters, and 1 merfolk leader (level 1d4+2). To determine the leader's class, roll d%: adept 01-20, bard 21-90, cleric 91-100.

Militia: 1d6+2 1st-level warriors (the race is noted on the encounter table). Militias match the normal alignment for their race (usually neutral).

Naval Patrol: 1d3 sailing ships (see page 132 of the *Player's Handbook*), each carrying 4d4 1st-level commoners, 1d3+1 experts, 3d6+6 1st-level warriors, 1d4 2nd-level fighters, and 1d2 4th-level fighters. The race is noted on the encounter table.

Nomads: 1d4+2 1st-level human warriors and 1d2 leaders (level 1d4). For the leaders' classes, roll d%: barbarian 01-15, cleric or druid 16-30, fighter 31-45, ranger 46-90, rogue 91-95, sorcerer 96-100. Nomads might be Shaaryan humans (all mounted on light warhorses), loxo, or thri-kreen.

NPC Party: The party consists of 1d3+2 NPCs. To determine the level of the NPCs, roll d%: 01-50, 1d4 levels lower than the average PC level, 51-85, same level as the average PC level; 86-100, 1d4 levels higher than the average PC level. Determine the class, race, and alignment of each character by using the NPC Generation tables on the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Dungeon Master's Screen* (or the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Ogre Mage Raiders: 1d2 ogre mages and 1d3+1 ogres.

Orc Patrol: 1d4+4 orcs, 1d2 orc barbarians (level 1d3), and 1 leader (level 1d4+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: barbarian 01-30, cleric 31-45, fighter 46-85, rogue 86-90, sorcerer 91-100.

Orc Raiders: 1d10+5 orcs and 1d3+1 orc barbarians (level 1d3).

Orc Squad: 1d10+10 orcs, 1d3 orc fighters (level 1d4), and 1 orc leader (level 1d4+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: barbarian 01-30, cleric 31-45, fighter 46-80, ranger 81-85, rogue 86-90, sorcerer 91-100.

Patrol: 1d4+2 warriors (level 1d2) and 1 leader (level 1d6+1). The race of the patrol and class of the leader are noted on the encounter table. Patrols match the normal alignment for their race (usually neutral).

Pilgrims: 3d4 1st-level commoners, 2d4 1st-level warriors, and 1d2 leaders (level 1d3). For the leaders' classes, roll d%: Cleric 01-70, fighter 71-95, paladin 96-100. Pilgrims in the South are usually humans, half-elves, or half-orcs, and they are usually neutral.

Pirate Ship: A sailing ship (see page 132 of the *Player's Handbook*) carrying 1d10+10 1st-level commoners, 1d6+6 1st-level warriors, and 1d4+2 NPC leaders (level 1d6). Pirates are usually chaotic evil. To determine the classes of the leaders, roll d%: Barbarian 01-10, cleric 11-25, fighter 26-65, rogue 66-95, sorcerer 96-100. Pirates in the South are usually human or half-orc.

Rangers: 1d4 warriors (level 1d2), 1d2 rangers (level 1d4), and 1 leader (level 1d4+3). To determine the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-10, druid 11-40, fighter 41-50, ranger 51-100. In the Channath Vale, these characters are usually humans or wood elves. In the Forest of Amtar, they're usually humans, wild elves, or half-elves. In the Great Rift, the characters are dwarves or gnomes. In Halruaa, they're usually humans, elves, or half-elves. In the Lluirwood, Southern Lluirwood, and Luiren, they're usually halflings. In the Shaar, they're usually humans, loxo, or thri-kreen. In the Toadsquat Mountains, they're usually humans, halflings, or dwarves. The band is usually neutral good, although rangers encountered in the Channath Vale or Toadsquats may be neutral evil instead (50% chance).

River Bandits: 1d6+6 1st-level warriors and 1d3 leaders (level 1d4). For the leaders' classes, roll d%: barbarian 01-10, bard 11-15, cleric 16-40, fighter 41-55, rogue 56-80, sorcerer 81-85, wizard 86-100. All are aboard a keelboat (see page 132 of the *Player's Handbook*). River bandits are usually chaotic evil. For the race of the bandit group, roll d%: human 01-70, half-elf 71-100.

Sahuagin Patrol: 1d8+8 sahuagin, 1d2 Large sharks, and 1 3rd-level sahuagin lieutenant. For the lieutenant's class, roll d%: cleric 01-20, fighter 21-40, ranger 41-95, sorcerer 96-100.

Siv Squad: 1d6+6 sivs, 1d4+1 2nd-level siv monks, and 1 siv leader (level 1d3+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: cleric 01-10, fighter 11-20, monk 21-85, ranger 86-90, wizard 91-100.

Slavers: 1d4+3 1st-level warriors, 1d2 fighters (level 1d4), 1d2 rogues (level 1d4), and 2d8 captives, who are typically 1st-level human commoners. Slavers are usually neutral evil. For the race of the slavers, roll d%: gnoll 1-10, half-orc 11-25, human 26-85, wererats 86-100.

Stinger Hunters: 1d4+2 stingers and 1 stinger cleric (level 1d3+1).

Strongheart Halfling Patrol: 1d6+6 1st-level strongheart halfling warriors, 1d2 strongheart halfling clerics (level 1d3),

1d2 strongheart halfling fighters (level 1d3), and 1 leader (level 1d4+2). For the leader's class, roll d%: bard 01-05, cleric 06-25, fighter 26-45, ranger 46-70, rogue 71-95, wizard 96-100.

Tasloi Warband: 2d8+4 tasloi, 1d4+2 tasloi leaders (level 1d3+1), and the same number of dire rats. For the leaders' class, roll d%: adept 01-10, barbarian 11-20, cleric 21-40, fighter 41-60, rogue 61-100.

Triton Patrol: 1d6+5 tritons mounted on porpoises.

Vampire Troupe: 1d2 vampires and 1d4+1 vampire spawn.

Werebear Troupe: 1d3+1 werebears and 1d4 brown bears.

Wereboar Troupe: 1d3+1 wereboars and 1d4+1 boars.

Wererat Troupe: 1d4+1 wererats and 1d4+4 dire rats.

Werewolf Troupe: 1d4+1 werewolves and 1d4+4 wolves.

Wild Elf Hunters: 1d4+2 1st-level wild elf warriors and 1d3 wild elf rangers (level 1d6).

Yuan-ti Patrol: 1d3+1 purebloods, 1d2 halfbloods, and 1d2 abominations.

TABLE 6-2: THE CHANNATH VALE
(WARM HILLS, FRONTIER) (EL I-13)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	Number Encountered
—	01	Abishai, green (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
—	02-03	Allip	1
01	04	Ankheg	1
02	05	Aranea	1d3+3
03-05	—	Baboon (animal)	2d4+2
06-07	06-09	Bandits	See groups
08	10-11	Beguiler ^{SS}	1d4
09-10	12-14	Bugbear band	See groups
11	15	Bulette	1
12-14	16	Centaur	2d4
15	—	Chimera	1
—	17-18	Darkenbeast ^{MC}	1d2+2
16-17	19	Dire ape	1
18-19	20	Dire boar	1
20	21	Displacer beast	1d2
21	22	Doppelganger	1
22	23	Dragon, young adult bronze	1
23	24	Dragon, young green	1
24	25	Dragon, young adult rattelyr ^{SS}	1
25	26-27	Ettercap	1d2
26-27	28-29	Gargoyle	1d4
—	30	Ghast (ghoul)	1d2
—	31-33	Ghoul	1d3+1
28-30	—	Giant eagle	1d2
—	34-36	Giant owl	1d2
31-32	37	Girallon	2d3
33-35	38-40	Gnoll hunters	See groups
36-37	41-42	Gnoll warband	See groups
38	43	Green warder ^{MC}	1
39-40	—	Griffon	1d2
41	44-46	Hill giant	1d3+1
42-43	—	Hippogriff	1d4
44	47-48	Hobgoblin war party	See groups

45-46	49	Hybsil ^{MC}	2d3+10	26	30	Dragon, young adult blue	1
47-48	50-51	Hyena (animal)	2d8	27	31	Dragon, young adult rattely ^{SS}	1
49	52	Krenshar	1d2	28	32	Dragon, juvenile red	1
50	53-54	Leucrotta ^{MC}	1d4	—	33-34	Ghast (ghoul)	1d2
51-53	55	Lion (animal)	1 or 2d4	—	35	Ghost	1
54-59	56-58	Merchants	See groups	—	36-38	Ghoul	1d3+1
—	59	Mohrg	1	29-31	39-41	Giant fire beetle (vermin)	2d4
—	60-62	Night hunter (deep bat) ^{MC}	2d6	32-36	42-45	Gnoll hunters	See groups
60-63	63-65	NPC party	See groups	37-38	46	Gnoll warband	See groups
64-65	66-68	Nyth ^{MC}	1	39-40	47	Gorgon	1
66-67	69-71	Ogre	1d3+1	41-44	48	Hairy spider ^{MC}	2d10
68	72-74	Orc	2d4+2	45-46	49-50	Hill giant raiders	See groups
69-74	75-76	Patrol (Shaaryan and Tashalan humans led by a ranger)	See groups	47-50	51	Horse, light (animal)	4d6
75-77	—	Peryton ^{MC}	1d4	51-52	52-53	Hyena (animal)	2d8
78	77	Phase spider	1	53	54	Krenshar	1d2
79-82	78-79	Pilgrims	See groups	54	55	Lamia	1d2
83-84	—	Pterafolk ^{MC}	1d20+10	55-56	56	Lion (animal)	1 or 2d4
85-89	80-81	Rangers	See groups	57-58	57	Lizardfolk warband	See groups
90-91	82	Satyr	1	59-61	—	Mantimera ^{SS}	1
—	83-84	Shadow	1	—	58	Mohrg	1
—	85-86	Sinister (deep bat) ^{MC}	1d6+1	62-64	59-60	Monstrous spider, Med. (vermin)	1d4+1
—	87-88	Skeleton, 1 HD	2d4	65-66	61	Myrlochar ^{MC}	1
92-94	89	Slavers	See groups	—	62-64	Night hunter (deep bat) ^{MC}	2d6
—	90	Spectral panther ^{MC}	1	67	65	Nishruu ^{MC}	1
—	91	Spectre	1	68-70	66-67	NPC party	See groups
95-96	92	Tall moulder ^{SS}	1d3+2	71-73	68-69	Nyth ^{MC}	1
—	93	Vampire spawn	1d2	74-80	70-72	Patrol (half-drow led by a Crinti shadow marauder)	See groups
97-98	94	Wereboar (lycanthrope)	1	81-82	—	Peryton ^{MC}	1d4
99-100	95	Weretiger (lycanthrope)	1	83-85	73-74	Phase spider	1d4+1
—	96-97	Wight	1	86-87	75-76	Rat swarm	1
—	98	Wraith	1	—	77	Shadow	1
—	99-100	Zombie, 2 HD	1d4+2	—	78-79	Sinister (deep bat) ^{MC}	1d6+1

TABLE 6-3: DAMBRATH
(WARM PLAINS, FRONTIER) (EL I-15)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
—	01	Abishai, blue (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
—	02	Allip	1
01-03	03-04	Ankheg	1
04-05	05	Aranea	1d4+2
06-09	06-10	Bandits	See groups
—	11	Beast of Malar ^{MC}	1
10-12	12-13	Beguiler ^{SS}	1d4
13-14	14	Behir	1
15-17	15-16	Behir, Halruaan ^{SS}	1d2
—	17-19	Bonebat (deep bat) ^{MC}	2d4
18-19	20	Bulette	1
20-21	—	Criosphinx	1
22	21-22	Dark naga	1
—	23-25	Darkenbeast ^{MC}	1d2+2
—	26-27	Dire bat	1d2
23-24	28	Doppelganger	1
25	29	Draegloth (half-fiend) ^{MC}	1

TABLE 6-4:
DURPAR, ESTAGUND, AND VAR THE GOLDEN
(WARM PLAINS, SETTLED) (EL I/4-15)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
01-02	—	Aarakocra patrol ^{MC}	See groups
—	01	Abishai, blue (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
03	02	Air genasi (planetouched) ^{MC}	1
04	—	Androsphinx	1

05-06	—	Asabi scouts ^{MC}	See groups
07	03-04	Babau (demon)	1
08-09	—	Baboon (animal)	2d4+2
10-12	05-10	Bandits	See groups
13-14	11-12	Bedine band	See groups
15-16	13-14	Beguiler ^{SS}	1d4
17-18	15-16	Behir, Halruaan ^{SS}	1d2
19-21	17-18	Camel (animal)	2d3
22-23	—	Cheetah (animal)	1d3
24	19	Cockatrice	1d2
25	20-21	Cyclops (giant) ^{SS}	1d4+1
26-27	22-23	Dire rat	1d10+10
28	24	Displacer beast	1d2
29	25	Doppelganger	1
30	26	Dragon, young adult red	1
31	27	Dragon, juvenile gold	1
32	28	Dragon, young adult brown ^{MC}	1
—	29-31	Dretch (demon)	1d4
33	32	Earth genasi (planetouched) ^{MC}	1
34-35	33	Elephant (animal)	1d4+1
36	34	Fiendish dire rat	1
37	35	Firenewt marauders ^{MC}	See groups
38-39	36-37	Flying snake ^{RF}	2d4
40-41	38-40	Gargoyle	1d4
—	41	Ghost	1
42-43	42	Giant praying mantis (vermin)	1d3
44	43	Gorgon	1
45	44	Half-dragon creature	1
46	45	Half-fiend creature	1
47-48	46-47	Hill giant raiders	See groups
49-50	48-49	Hyena (animal)	2d8
51-52	50-51	Janni (genie)	1
53	52	Lammasu	1
54-55	53-54	Lion (animal)	1 or 2d4
56-57	55-56	Locust swarm	1
58-59	—	Mantimera ^{SS}	1
60-64	57-59	Merchants	See groups
65-68	60-62	Militia (human)	See groups
69-70	63	Monitor lizard (animal)	1
71	64	Monstrous scorpion, Small (vermin)	1d4+1
72-73	65	Nomads	See groups
74-77	66-68	NPC party	See groups
78-79	69-72	Orc	2d4+2
80-81	73-76	Orc raiders	See groups
82-85	77-79	Patrol (Durpari humans, gnomes, and dwarves led by a Maquar crusader)	See groups
86-88	80	Pilgrims	See groups
89	—	Pterafolk ^{MC}	1d20+10
90-91	81	Rhinoceros (animal)	1d4+1
92	—	Roc	1d2
—	82-85	Skeleton, 1 HD	2d4
93-94	86-88	Slavers	See groups
95-96	89	Starsnake ^{SS}	1
97	90	Stone giant	1d3+1
98	—	Tressym (animal) ^{FR}	1
—	91-92	Vampire spawn	1d2

—	93	Vampire troupe	See groups
99-100	94-95	Wererat (lycanthrope)	1d4+1
—	96	Wraith	1
—	97-100	Zombie, 2 HD	1d4+2

TABLE 6-5:

DUSTWALL AND GIANT'S BELT MOUNTAINS
(WARM HIGH MOUNTAINS, DESOLATE) (EL 2-19)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01-03	—	Aarakocra patrol ^{MC}	See groups
—	01-02	Abishai, blue (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
—	03-04	Abishai, red (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
04-06	05-06	Athach	2d4
07	07-09	Beholder	1
08-11	10-12	Bugbear	1d3+1
12-13	13-14	Bugbear band	See groups
14-15	15-16	Cloud giant	1d2
16-19	17-19	Cyclops (giant) ^{SS}	1d4+1
20	20-21	Death kiss (beholderkin) ^{MC}	1
21	22	Djinni (genie)	1
—	23	Dracolich ^{FR}	1
22	24	Dragon, adult red	1
23	25	Dragon, adult silver	1
24	26	Dragon, old deep ^{MC}	1
25	27	Dragon, old copper	1
26-28	28-30	Dragonkin ^{MC}	2d4
—	31	Dread wraith	1
29	32	Efreeti (genie)	1
30-32	33-35	Ettin	1d3+1
33-34	36-37	Fire giant	1d3+1
35-36	38	Firenewt marauders ^{MC}	See groups
37-39	39-43	Gargoyle	1d4
40	44-46	Ghour (demon) ^{MC}	1
41-43	—	Giant eagle	1d2
44-46	—	Girallon	2d3
47-48	47	Gold dwarf patrol	See groups
49-50	48-49	Gray render	1
51-54	50-53	Hill giant	1d3+1
55-57	54-56	Hill giant raiders	See groups
58-60	57-59	Hobgoblin raiders	See groups
61-62	60-61	Hobgoblin war party	See groups
63	62	Janni (genie)	1
64-65	63-64	NPC party	See groups
66-68	65-67	Ogre	1d3+1
69-70	68-69	Ogre mage	1d2
71-72	70-71	Ogre mage raiders	See groups
73-75	72-74	Orc	2d4+2
76-79	75-78	Orc patrol	See groups
80-83	79-82	Orc raiders	See groups
84-86	83-85	Orc squad	See groups
87-89	86	Peryton ^{MC}	1d4
90	87-88	Rakshasa	1
91-92	—	Roc	1d2
93-94	89-90	Stone giant	1d4+1

95	91	Storm giant	1d2	64	58	Monstrous centipede,	1
—	92	Vampire	1			Gargantuan (vermin)	
—	93-94	Vampire spawn	1d2	65	59	Monstrous spider, Large (vermin)	1d4+1
—	95	Vampire troupe	See groups	66-67	60	NPC party	See groups
—	96-97	Wraith	1	68	61	Nymph	1d2
96-98	98-99	Wyvern	1d2	69	62	Nyth ^{MC}	1
99-100	100	Yrthak	1 or 1d3+1	70-71	63-64	Ogre	1d3+1
				72	65	Ogre mage	1d2
				73	66	Ogre mage raiders	See groups
				74	67	Owlbear	1
				75	68	Pixie (sprite)	1d3+1
				76-77	69	Rangers	See groups
				78	70	Roper	1
				79	71	Satyr	1
				—	72-73	Shadow	1
				80	74	Shambling mound	1
				81	75	Shocker lizard	1d2
				—	76-77	Skeleton, 1 HD	2d4
				82	78	Snake, winged viper (animal) ^{FR}	1
				83	—	Spider eater	1
				84-85	79-80	Tall mouther ^{SS}	1d3+2
				86	81-82	Tasloi ^{SS}	1d6+3
				87	83	Tendriculos	1d3
				88-89	—	Tiger (animal)	1d3
				90	84	Treant	1
				91	85	Tressym (animal) ^{FR}	1
				92	86	Vrock (demon)	1
				93	87	Werebear (lycanthrope)	1
				94	88	Wereboar (lycanthrope)	1
				95	89	Weretiger (lycanthrope)	1
				—	90-91	Wight	1
				96-97	92	Wild elf hunters	See groups
				—	93	Will-o'-wisp	1d2+2
				98-99	94-95	Wolf (animal)	2d4
				—	96-97	Wraith	1
				100	98	Yuan-ti patrol	See groups
				—	99-100	Zombie, 2 HD	1d4+2

TABLE 6-6: FOREST OF AMTAR
(WARM FOREST, WILDERNESS) (EL 1/4-15)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
—	01	Abishai, green (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
01-02	—	Ape (animal)	2d4
03-04	02-03	Assassin vine	1d2
05-06	—	Baboon (animal)	2d4+2
07-08	—	Badger (animal)	1d2+3
09-10	04-06	Bandits	See groups
11	07	Belker	1
12-13	—	Black bear (animal)	1d3
14-15	08	Boar (animal)	2d3
16-17	09	Centaur	2d4
18	10-11	Chaos beast	1
19-20	12	Constrictor snake (animal)	1d2
21-22	13-14	Dark tree ^{SS}	1
23	15	Deepspawn brood ^{MC}	See groups
24	16	Destrachan	1
25	17	Dire ape	1
26	18	Dire badger	1d2
27	19	Dire bear	1
28	20	Dire boar	1
29	21	Dire tiger	1
30	22	Dragon, adult green	1
31	23	Dragon, adult silver	1
—	24-25	Drow scouts	See groups
32	26	Dryad	1
33	27	Eyeball (beholderkin) ^{MC}	1d4
34-35	28	Flying snake ^{RF}	2d4
36	29	Fungus patch	See groups
37-38	30-31	Giant bombardier beetle (vermin)	1d4+2
39-40	32-33	Giant constrictor snake (animal)	1d2
—	34-35	Giant owl	1d2
41-42	36-37	Giant stag beetle (vermin)	1d4+1
43-45	38-39	Girallon	2d3
46-48	40-43	Gnoll	2d4+2
49-50	44-46	Gnoll hunters	See groups
51-52	47-48	Gnoll warband	See groups
53	49	Gold dwarf patrol	See groups
54	50	Green warder ^{MC}	1
55	51	Grig (sprite)	1d3+1
56-57	52-54	Hill giant raiders	See groups
58	55	Hybsil ^{MC}	2d3+10
59	—	Ibrandlin ^{MC}	1
60-61	—	Leopard (animal)	1d3+1
62-63	56-57	Monitor lizard (animal)	1

TABLE 6-7: GNOLLWATCH MOUNTAINS
(WARM LOW MOUNTAINS, FRONTIER) (EL 2-15)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
—	01	Abishai, red (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
01-02	02-03	Aranea	1d3+3
03-06	04-07	Bandits	See groups
07-08	08	Behir	1
—	09-10	Dark naga	1
09	11	Deepspawn brood ^{MC}	See groups
10	12	Dire bear	1
11	13-15	Draegloth (half-fiend) ^{MC}	1
12	16	Dragon, adult blue	1
13	17	Dragon, adult rattelyr ^{SS}	1
14	18	Dragon, young adult red	1
15	19	Dragon, adult bronze	1
16	20	Dragonkin ^{MC}	2d4

CAMPAIGNS

—	21-23	Dread Wraith	1
—	24-26	Drider	1
—	27-28	Drider troupe	See groups
—	29-31	Drow scouts	See groups
17	32	Ettin	1d3+1
18-21	—	Giant eagle	1d2
22-26	33-37	Gnoll	2d4+2
27-32	38-43	Gnoll hunters	See groups
33-41	44-52	Gnoll warband	See groups
42	53	Gray render	1
—	54-56	Greater shadow	1
43-45	—	Griffon	1d2
46-49	57-61	Hill giant	1d3+1
50-52	62-65	Hill giant raiders	See groups
53-54	66-67	Hyena (animal)	2d8
55-57	68-69	Lightfoot halfling scouts	See groups
58-60	—	Mantimera ^{SS}	1
61-63	70-72	Monstrous spider, Large (vermin)	1d4+1
64-65	73-75	Myrlochar ^{MC}	1
66-69	76-77	NPC party	See groups
70-71	78-79	Ogre	1d2+2
72-77	80-82	Patrol (gnolls and half-drow led by a ranger)	See groups
78-79	83-84	Phase spider	1d4+1
80-82	—	Roc	1d2
83-85	85	Slavers	See groups
—	86-88	Spectre	1
86	89	Stone giant	1d4+1
87-88	90-91	Storm giant	1d2
89-92	92-93	Wyvern	1d2
93-94	94-95	Xorn, average	1
95	96	Xorn, elder	1
96-97	97-99	Yochlol (demon) ^{MC}	1
98-100	100	Yrthak	1 or 1d3+1

TABLE 6-8: THE GREAT RIFT
(WARM HILLS, FRONTIER) (EL I/2-19)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01-04	—	Aarakocra patrol ^{MC}	See groups
05-07	01	Baboon (animal)	2d4+2
08-10	02	Badger (animal)	1d2+2
—	03-14	Bat swarm	1
11	15	Beguiler ^{SS}	1d4
12-19	16-22	Bison (animal)	5d6
20-21	23	Black bear (animal)	1d3
22-24	24-25	Boar (animal)	2d3
25-26	26	Brown bear (animal)	1d3
27-28	27	Cheetah (animal)	1d3
—	28-32	Darkenbeast ^{MC}	1d2
29	33	Dragon, very old blue	1
30-31	34-37	Flying snake ^{RF}	2d4
32	38	Giant ant crew	See groups
33-35	—	Giant eagle	1d2
36-37	39-40	Giant fire beetle (vermin)	1d6+5

38-39	41-42	Giant praying mantis (vermin)	1d3
40-41	43-44	Giant stag beetle (vermin)	1d4+1
42-43	—	Giant wasp (vermin)	2d4
44-49	45-49	Gold dwarf patrol	See groups
50-54	50-52	Griffon	1d2
55-57	53-54	Hippogriff	1d4
58-59	55	Horses, light (animal)	4d6
60-64	56-59	Hyena (animal)	2d8
65-66	60	Leopard (animal)	1d3+1
67-69	61-62	Lion (animal)	1 or 2d4
70-73	63-65	Lynx (animal) ^{RF}	1d2
74-75	66-67	Monitor lizard (animal)	1
76	68	Monstrous scorpion, Med. (vermin)	1d2
—	69-73	Night hunter (deep bat) ^{MC}	2d6
77-79	74-76	NPC party	See groups
80-81	77-78	Nyth ^{MC}	1
82-88	79-84	Patrol (gold dwarf griffon riders led by a fighter)	See groups
89	—	Peryton ^{MC}	1d4
90-93	85-90	Rangers	See groups
94-96	91	Rhinoceros (animal)	1d4+1
—	92-96	Sinister (deep bat) ^{MC}	1d6+1
97-98	97-98	Snake, Large viper (animal)	1
99-100	99-100	Wyvern	1d2

TABLE 6-9: GREAT SEA COASTAL WATERS
(WARM AQUATIC [OCEAN], FRONTIER) (EL I-15)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01-02	01-02	Aquatic elf patrol	See groups
03-06	03-06	Baleen whale (animal)	1d3
07-09	07-09	Cachalot whale (animal)	1d2
10	10	Dire shark	1
11	11	Dragon, adult bronze	1
12-14	12-14	Dragon turtle	1
15	15	Giant octopus (animal)	1
16	16	Giant squid (animal)	1
17-18	17-18	Kapoacanth (gargoyle)	1d4
19	19	Kraken	1
20-22	20-22	Kuo-toa	2d3+1
23-24	23-24	Lacedon (ghoul)	1d4+1
25-26	25-26	Locathah patrol	See groups
27-30	27-30	Manta ray (animal)	1d3
31-39	31-37	Merchant ship	See groups
40-43	38-39	Merfolk patrol	See groups
44-45	40-42	Merrow (ogre)	1d3+1
46-52	43-46	Naval patrol*	See groups
53	47	Nixie (sprite)	1d3
54-57	48-49	NPC party	See groups
58-60	50-52	Octopus (animal)	1
61-66	53-60	Pirate ship	See groups
67-70	61-63	Porpoise (animal)	2d4+2
71-72	64-65	Sahuagin patrol	See groups
73-76	66-67	Sea cat	1d8+4
77	68-70	Sea hag	1

78-79	71-73	Shark, Huge (animal)	1d4	58-59	—	Lynx (animal) ^{RF}	1d2
80-82	74-78	Shark, Large (animal)	1d8	60	—	Mantimera ^{SS}	1
83-86	79-85	Shark, Medium (animal)	2d4+4	61-68	63-65	Merchants	See groups
87-90	86-89	Squid (animal)	1d6+5	69-74	66-69	Militia (human)	See groups
91	90	Storm giant	1	75	70	Monitor lizard (animal)	1
92	91	Tojanida, adult	1	—	71-72	Night hunter (deep bat) ^{MC}	2d6
93	92	Tojanida, elder	1	—	73	Nishruu ^{MC}	1
94	93	Tojanida, juvenile	1	76-77	74-75	NPC party	See groups
95-98	94-95	Triton patrol	See groups	78-83	76-78	Patrol (Halruaan humans led by a wizard)	See groups
99	96-98	Water naga	1				
100	99-100	Wereshark (lycanthrope) ^{MC}	1	84	79	Pseudodragon	1

*Humans (ethnicity of nearest coast) led by a fighter.

TABLE 6-IO: HALRUA

(WARM PLAINS, SETTLED) (EL 1/4-12)

d%	d%		Number
Day	Night	Encounter	Encountered
—	01	Allip	1
01	02	Ankheg	1
02	03	Assassin vine	1d2
03-05	04-08	Bandits	See groups
06	09	Barghest	1
—	10-15	Bat swarm	1
07-08	16-17	Beguiler ^{SS}	1d4
09	18	Behir	1
10-12	19-21	Behir, Halruaan ^{SS}	1d2
13-15	—	Bison (animal)	5d6
16-17	22-23	Black bear (animal)	1d3
18-19	24-25	Boar (animal)	2d3
20	—	Cheetah (animal)	1d3
—	26	Cloaker lord swarm ^{MC}	See groups
21-22	27-28	Constrictor snake (animal)	1d2
23-25	29-31	Dog (animal)	2d3+2
26	32	Doppelganger	1
27	33	Doppelganger, greater ^{MC}	1
28	34	Dragon, juvenile brass	1
29	35	Dragon, young adult brown ^{MC}	1
30	36	Dragonne	1
31-32	—	Elephant (animal)	1d4+1
33-35	37-39	Flying snake ^{RF}	2d4
36-37	40-41	Gargoyle	1d4
—	42	Ghost (ghoul)	1d2
—	43	Ghost	1
—	44-45	Ghoul	1d3+1
38-41	46-49	Giant ant crew	See groups
42-44	—	Giant bee (vermin)	2d4+2
45	50	Giant constrictor snake (animal)	1d2
46	—	Giant eagle	1d2
—	51-53	Giant owl	1d2
47	54	Homunculus	1
48-50	55-57	Hound, mastiff (animal) ^{RF}	2d4
51	58	Ibrandlin ^{MC}	1
52	59	Invisible stalker	1
53-54	—	Leopard (animal)	1d3+1
55-57	60-62	Locust swarm	1

TABLE 6-II: LAKE HALRUA

(WARM AQUATIC [RIVER/LAKE], FRONTIER) (EL 1-14)

d%	d%		Number
Day	Night	Encounter	Encountered
01	—	Aarakocra patrol ^{MC}	See groups
02	—	Chimera	1
03-04	01-02	Crocodile (animal)	1 or 2d4
—	03-05	Dire bat	1d2
05	06	Dragon, adult black	1
06	07	Dragon turtle	1
07-08	08	Flying snake ^{RF}	2d4
—	09-10	Ghost	1
09	11	Giant bee (vermin)	2d4+2
10	12	Giant crocodile (animal)	1 or 2d4
11-12	—	Giant eagle	1d2
13	13-14	Harpy	2d3+2
14-15	—	Hippogriff	1d4
16-17	15-17	Kapoacanth (gargoyle)	1d4
18	18-20	Kir-lanan (gargoyle) ^{FR}	1d4+1
—	21-22	Lacedon (ghoul)	1d4+1
19-20	—	Manticore	1
21-22	—	Mantimera ^{SS}	1
23-28	23-25	Merchant ship	See groups
29-30	26-28	Marrow (ogre)	1d3+1
31-36	29-31	Naval patrol*	See groups
—	32-34	Night hunter (deep bat) ^{MC}	2d6
37-38	35	Nixie (sprite)	1d3
39-42	36-38	NPC party	See groups
43-44	39-40	Nyth ^{MC}	1
45-47	41-43	River bandits	See groups

48-50	44-45	Shocker lizard	2d6
—	46-47	Sinister (deep bat) ^{MC}	1d6+1
51-52	48-49	Snake, Medium viper (animal)	1
53	50	Snake, Large viper (animal)	1
54-55	51-52	Starsnake ^{SS}	1
56-58	53-55	Stirge	2d4+2
59	56	Tojanida, adult	1
60	57	Tojanida, elder	1
61	58	Tojanida, juvenile	1
62-63	59	Water naga	1
—	60-61	Will-o'-wisp	1d2+2
—	62-63	Wraith	1
64-100	64-100	Roll on Table 6-10: Halruaa	

*Halruaan humans in a skyship, led by a wizard.

TABLE 6-12: LLUIRWOOD

(WARM FOREST, FRONTIER) (EL I/4-19)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01-02	01-02	Assassin vine	1d2
03-04	03-04	Athach	2d4
05-08	05-06	Bandits	See groups
09-10	—	Black bear (animal)	1d3
11-12	07-08	Blink dog	2d4+2
13-14	09	Boar (animal)	2d3
15-16	10-12	Bugbear band	See groups
17-18	13	Centaur	2d4
19	14	Choker	1
20	15-17	Dark naga	1
21-22	18-19	Dark tree ^{SS}	1
23-24	20-21	Digester	1d4+2
25	22	Dragon, adult black	1
26	23	Dragon, old copper	1
27	24	Dryad	1
28-30	25-26	Elf patrol	See groups
31-32	27-28	Ettercap	1d2
—	29	Ghost	1
33-37	30-33	Ghostwise halfling scouts	See groups
38-39	34-35	Giant bombardier beetle (vermin)	1d4+2
—	36-39	Giant owl	1d2
40	40	Gray render	1
—	41-42	Grimlock	1d3+1
41	43-45	Hag covey	See groups
42-43	46-47	Harpy	2d3+2
44-47	48-51	Hobgoblin raiders	See groups
48-50	52-54	Hobgoblin war party	See groups
51-53	55-56	Hybsil ^{MC}	2d3+10
54-56	57	Lynx (animal) ^{RF}	1d2
57	58	Monstrous spider, Large (vermin)	1d4+1
58-62	59-62	NPC party	See groups
63-66	63-66	Ogre	1d3+1
67-68	67-68	Ogre mage	1d2
69	69	Ogre mage raiders	See groups
70-75	70-73	Patrol (strongheart and lightfoot halflings led by a druid)	See groups

76-77	74	Pegasus	1d2
78	75	Pixie (sprite)	1d2
79-82	76-78	Rangers	See groups
83	79	Spider eater	1
84-85	80-81	Stirge	2d4+2
86-87	82-83	Tiger (animal)	1q
88-92	84-88	Tall mouther ^{SS}	1d3+2
93	89-90	Tasloi ^{SS}	1d6+3
94	91	Treant	1
95-96	92-93	Tressym (animal) ^{FR}	1
97-98	94	Unicorn	1
—	95	Vampire spawn	1d2
99-100	96	Weretiger (lycanthrope)	1
—	97	Wight	1
—	98	Wraith	1
—	99-100	Zombie, 2 HD	1d4+2

TABLE 6-13: LUIREN

(WARM PLAINS, SETTLED) (EL I/4-II)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01	01	Ankheg	1
02	02	Assassin vine	1d2
03-04	03-06	Bandits	See groups
—	07-11	Bat swarm	1
05	12	Black bear (animal)	1d3
06-08	13	Blink dog	2d4+2
09-10	14-15	Centipede swarm	1
11-12	16-18	Dire rat	1d0+10
13	19	Dire weasel	1d2
14-18	20-21	Dog (animal)	2d3+2
19	22	Dragon, juvenile green	1
20	23	Dragon, young adult copper	1
21-22	24	Elf patrol	See groups
23-25	25-27	Flying snake ^{RF}	2d4
26-27	28-29	Gargoyle	1d4
—	30	Ghost	1
28-30	31-33	Ghostwise halfling scouts	See groups
—	34	Ghoul	1d3+1
31-34	35-37	Giant ant crew	See groups
35-36	38-39	Giant fire beetle (vermin)	2d4
37-38	—	Giant wasp (vermin)	2d4
39-41	40	Hound, mastiff (animal) ^{RF}	2d4
42-43	41-43	Kobold	4d4+4
44	44	Kobold warband	See groups
45-47	45-47	Locust swarm	1
48	—	Mantimera ^{SS}	1
49-53	48-50	Merchants	See groups
54-58	51-55	Militia (halfling)	See groups
59	56	Monstrous scorpion, Sm. (vermin)	1d3+1
—	57-59	Night hunter (deep bat) ^{MC}	2d6
60-64	60-62	NPC party	See groups
65-66	63-64	Nyth ^{MC}	1
67-68	65-67	Ogre	1d3+1

69-75	68-73	Patrol (strongheart halfings led by a Luiren marchwarden)	See groups	55-56	51-52	Marrow (ogre)	1d3+1
76-77	74-75	Phase spider	1d4+1	57-58	53-54	Monstrous spider, Large (vermin)	1d4+2
78-81	76	Pilgrims	See groups	59-60	55	NPC party	See groups
82-86	77-80	Rangers	See groups	61-63	56-57	Nyth ^{MC}	1
87-89	81-83	Rat swarm	1	64-65	58-59	Ochre jelly	1
—	84-85	Skeleton, 1 HD	2d4	66	60	Pyrohydra	1
90-91	86-88	Slavers	See groups	67	61	Salt mephit	1
92-94	89-91	Tall moulder ^{SS}	1d3+2	68-69	62	Shambling mound	1d3
95	92	Tiger (animal)	1	70-72	63-64	Shocker lizard	2d6
96	93	Tressym (animal) ^{FR}	1	—	65-66	Sinister (deep bat) ^{MC}	1d6+1
97	94-95	Wereboar (lycanthrope)	1	73-75	67-68	Siv squad ^{MC}	See groups
98	96-97	Wererat (lycanthrope)	1d4+1	—	69-70	Skeleton, 1 HD	2d4
99	98-99	Wyvern	1d2	76-79	71	Snake, Huge viper (animal)	1
100	100	Yuan-ti patrol	See groups	80-81	72-73	Spider eater	1
				82-83	74-75	Spirit naga	1
				84	76	Steam mephit	1
				85-87	77	Stirge	2d4+2
				88-92	78-84	Tasloi ^{SS}	1d6+3
				93-94	85-87	Tasloi warband ^{SS}	See groups
				95	88	Water mephit	1
				96-97	89-90	Water naga	1
				98	91	Werecocodile (lycanthrope) ^{MC}	1d3
				—	92-93	Wight	1
				—	94-95	Will-o'-wisp	1d2+2
				—	96	Wraith	1
				99-100	97-98	Yuan-ti patrol	See groups
				—	99-100	Zombie, 2 HD	1d4+2

TABLE 6-14:

RETHILD, THE GREAT SWAMP

(WARM MARSH, WILDERNESS) (EL I-14)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01	01	Aballin ^{MC}	1
—	02	Abishai, black (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
—	03	Abishai, green (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
02-03	04-05	Assassin vine	1d2
04	—	Avoral (guardinal)	1
05	06	Behir	1
06-07	07-08	Behir, Halruaan ^{SS}	1d2
08-11	09-10	Bullywug ^{MC}	2d4
12	11-12	Chuul	1d2
13	13	Crawling claw ^{MC}	4d6
14-16	14	Crocodile (animal)	1 or 2d4
17-18	15-17	Dark naga	1
19-20	18-19	Dark tree ^{SS}	1
—	20-21	Darkenbeast ^{MC}	1d2+2
—	22-23	Deathfang ^{RF}	1
21	24	Deepspawn brood ^{MC}	See groups
—	25-26	Dire bat	1d2
22	27	Dragon, mature adult black	1
23	28	Dragon, young adult black	1
24	29	Dragon, young adult green	1
25-27	30	Flying snake ^{RF}	2d4
28	31	Fog giant ^{MC}	1d4+1
—	32-33	Ghast pack	See groups
29-30	34	Giant crocodile (animal)	1 or 2d4
31	35	Gibbering moulder	1
32-33	36-37	Guardian naga	1
34	38	Gulguthydra ^{MC}	1
35	39-40	Hag covey	See groups
36-37	41	Harpy	2d3+2
38-39	42-43	Kapoacanth (gargoyle)	1d4
—	44-45	Lacedon (ghoul)	1d4+1
40-47	46-48	Lizardfolk	1d2+1
48-52	49-50	Lizardfolk warband	See groups
53-54	—	Manticore	1

TABLE 6-15: THE SHAAR

(WARM PLAINS, WILDERNESS) (EL 1/2-15)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01	01	Aballin ^{MC}	1
—	02	Abishai, blue (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
—	03	Allip	1
02	04	Androsphinx	1
03	05	Ankheg	1
04	06	Asabi scouts ^{MC}	See groups
05-06	07-10	Bandits	See groups
07	11	Barghest pack	See groups
08	12	Basilisk	1
—	13-14	Bat swarm	1
—	15	Beast of Malar ^{MC}	1
09	16	Beguiler ^{SS}	1d4
10	17	Behir	1
11	18	Behir, Halruaan ^{SS}	1d2
12-13	—	Bison (animal)	5d6
14	19	Blink dog	2d4+2
15	20	Bulette	1
16-18	21	Centaur	2d4
19	—	Cheetah (animal)	1d3
20	—	Chimera	1
21	22	Criosphinx	1
—	23	Darkenbeast ^{MC}	1d2+2
—	24	Dire bat	1d2

CAMPAIGNS

22	25	Dire lion	1
23	26	Dire rat	1d10+10
24	27	Displacer beast	1d2
—	28	Dracolich ^{FR}	1
25	29	Dragon, very young blue	1
26	30	Dragon, juvenile brass	1
27	31	Dragon, young brown ^{MC}	1
28	32	Dragon, juvenile rattelyr ^{SS}	1
29	—	Dragonne	1
30	—	Elephant (animal)	1d4+1
—	33	Ghast (ghoul)	1d2
—	34	Ghast pack	See groups
—	35	Ghoul	1d3+1
31	36	Giant ant crew	See groups
32	—	Giant eagle	1d2
33	37	Gnoll	2d4+2
34	38	Gnoll hunters	See groups
35	39	Gnoll warband	See groups
36	40	Gold dwarf patrol	See groups
37	41	Gorgon	1
38	—	Griffon	1d2
39	42	Gynosphinx	1
40	43	Hell hound	1d2
41	44	Hieracosphinx	1
42	—	Hippogriff	1d4
43-46	45	Horse, light (animal)	4d6
47	46	Hound archon (archon)	1
48	47	Hound, mastiff (animal) ^{RF}	2d4
49	48	Hyena (animal)	2d8
50	49	Lamia	1d2
51	—	Lammasu	1
52	50	Leonal (guardinal)	1
53	51	Leucrotta ^{MC}	1d4
54-55	52	Lion (animal)	1d2+1
56	53	Locust swarm	1
57-58	54	Loxo ^{SS}	1d3+2
59	55	Lynx (animal) ^{RF}	1d2
60	—	Mantimera ^{SS}	1
61-65	56-58	Merchants	See groups
66-67	59	Militia (human)	See groups
68	60	Monstrous scorpion, Med. (vermin)	1d2
69-74	61-64	Nomads	See groups
75-77	65-67	NPC party	See groups
78	68	Ogre	1d3+1
79-81	69-70	Patrol (Shaaryan humans led by a ranger)	See groups
82-84	71-72	Pilgrims	See groups
85-86	73-75	Rangers	See groups
87	—	Rhinoceros (animal)	1d4+1
88	—	Roc	1d2
89	76	Rust monster	1d2
—	77	Shadow	1
—	78-79	Skeleton, 1 HD	2d4
90-92	80-83	Slavers	See groups
—	84	Spectral panther ^{MC}	1
93	85-86	Strongheart halfling patrol	See groups
94-95	87-88	Thri-kreen ^{SS}	1d6+4

89	Vampire spawn	1d2
96	90 Wemic ^{MC}	2d8
97	91-92 Wererat (lycanthrope)	1d4+1
98	93 Wererat troupe	See groups
—	94 Wight	1
—	95 Wraith	1
99	96-97 Wyvern	1
100	98 Yuan-ti patrol	See groups
—	99-100 Zombie, 2 HD	1d4+2

TABLE 6-I6: SOUTHERN LLUIRWOOD
(WARM FOREST, WILDERNESS) (EL 1/4-13)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01	01	Aballin ^{MC}	1
02-05	—	Ape (animal)	2d4
06-07	02-03	Assassin vine	1d2
08-09	04	Bandits	See groups
10-15	05-12	Beholder	1
16-18	—	Black bear (animal)	1d3
19-21	—	Boar (animal)	2d3
22-24	13-15	Constrictor snake (animal)	1d2
25-27	16-17	Crocodile (animal)	1 or 2d4
28	18-20	Dark naga	1
29-30	21-22	Dark tree ^{SS}	1
31-34	23-28	Death tyrant (beholder) ^{FR}	1
35-36	29-30	Digester	1d4+2
37-38	31-33	Ettercap	1d2
39-41	34-36	Flying snake ^{RF}	2d4
42-43	37-38	Giant bombardier beetle (vermin)	1d4+2
44-47	39-42	Giant constrictor snake (animal)	1d2
48-49	43	Giant crocodile (animal)	1 or 2d4
—	44-47	Giant owl	1d2
50	48-50	Guardian naga	1
51-53	51-53	Hairy spider ^{MC}	2d10
54-56	—	Leopard (animal)	1d3+1
57-60	54	Lynx (animal) ^{RF}	1d2
61-63	55-56	Monitor lizard (animal)	1
64-65	57-58	Monstrous spider, Large (vermin)	1d4+1
66-67	59	NPC party	See groups
68	60	Rangers	See groups
—	61-62	Shadow	1
69-70	63-64	Skeleton, 1 HD	2d4
71-74	65-68	Snake, winged viper (animal) ^{FR}	1
75	69	Spider eater	1
76	70-72	Spirit naga	1
77-78	73-74	Steam mephitis	1
79-81	75-77	Stirge	2d4+2
82-83	78-79	Tall mouther ^{SS}	1d3+2
84	80-81	Tasloi ^{SS}	1d6+3
85-86	82-83	Tendriculos	1d3
87-89	—	Tiger (animal)	1d3
90	84	Tressym (animal) ^{FR}	1
—	85-86	Vampire spawn	1d2
91	—	Weretiger (lycanthrope)	1

—	87	Wight	1
—	88	Will-o'-wisp	1d2+2
—	89	Wraith	1
92-93	90-91	Yuan-ti abomination	1d2
94-95	92-93	Yuan-ti halfblood	1d2
96-98	94-96	Yuan-ti patrol	See groups
99-100	97-98	Yuan-ti pureblood	1d2+2
—	99-100	Zombie, 2 HD	1d4+2

TABLE 6-17: TOADSQUAT MOUNTAINS
(WARM LOW MOUNTAINS, WILDERNESS) (EL 2-15)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01-03	01-03	Assassin vine	1d2
04-05	04	Athach	2d4
06-07	05-06	Azer squad	See groups
08-11	07-09	Bandits	See groups
12-13	10	Black bear (animal)	1d3
14-15	11-14	Bugbear band	See groups
16	15	Criosphinx	1
17-18	16-17	Dark tree ^{SS}	1
—	18-20	Darkenbeast ^{MC}	1d2+2
19-20	21	Dire ape	1
21	22	Dire bear	1
22-23	23	Dire tiger	1
24-26	24	Dire wolf	1
—	25	Dracolich ^{FR}	1
27	26	Dragon, adult green	1
28	27	Dragon, adult fang ^{MC}	1
29	28	Dragon, adult song ^{MC}	1
30	29	Dryad	1
31-32	30-33	Ettercap	1d2
33-34	34-36	Ettin	1d3+1
—	37-38	Ghost	1
35-37	39-41	Ghostwise halfling scouts	See groups
—	42-45	Giant owl	1d2
38-40	46	Girallon	2d3
41-42	47-49	Goblin war party	See groups
43-48	50-54	Gold dwarf patrol	See groups
49-52	55-58	Hill giant	1d3+1
53-56	59-62	Hobgoblin raiders	See groups
57-59	63-65	Hobgoblin war party	See groups
60-61	66	Lammasu	1
62-64	—	Mantimera ^{SS}	1
65-69	67-68	NPC party	See groups
70-76	69-76	Ogre	1d3+1
77-82	77-83	Ogre mage	1d2
83-86	84-88	Ogre mage raiders	See groups
87-88	89-91	Owlbear	1
89-93	92-93	Rangers	See groups
94	94	Stone giant	1d3+1
95-96	95-96	Sword spider ^{MC}	1
97	97	Troll	1d3+1
98-99	98	Wolf (animal)	2d4

—	99	Wraith	1
100	100	Worg	1d6+5

TABLE 6-18: VELDORN
(WARM PLAINS, FRONTIER) (EL 1-17)

d%	d%	Encounter	Number Encountered
Day	Night		
01	01	Aballin ^{MC}	1
02	02	Abishai, blue (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
03	03	Abishai, green (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
04	04	Abishai, red (devil) ^{MC}	1d2
—	05	Allip	1
05-07	06-07	Ankheg	1
08	08	Babau (demon)	1
09-13	09-10	Bandits	See groups
14-15	11-12	Barghest pack	See groups
16-17	13-14	Basilisk	1
18	15	Bebilith (demon)	1
19	16	Beholder	1
—	17-18	Bonebat (deep bat) ^{MC}	2d4
20-22	19	Bugbear band	See groups
—	20	Cauchemar (nightmare)	1
23-25	21-22	Cyclops (giant) ^{SS}	1d4+1
26	23	Dark naga	1
27-28	24-25	Dark tree ^{SS}	1
—	26	Darkenbeast ^{MC}	1d2+2
29	27	Death kiss (beholderkin) ^{MC}	1
—	28	Death tyrant (beholder) ^{FR}	1
—	29-30	Deathfang ^{RF}	1
—	31	Devourer	1
30-33	32-33	Dire rat	1d10+10
—	34	Dracolich ^{FR}	1
34	35	Dragon, adult blue	1
35	36	Dragon, adult red	1
36	37	Dragon, old fang ^{MC}	1
37	38	Dragon, old rattelyr ^{SS}	1
38	39	Dragon, very old brown ^{MC}	1
39-40	40-41	Dragonkin ^{MC}	2d4
—	42-43	Dretch (demon)	1d4
41-42	44	Ettin	1d3+1
43	45	Gauth (beholder)	1d2
—	46-47	Ghast pack	See groups
—	48	Ghost	1
44-46	49-50	Gnoll warband	See groups
47-50	51-52	Goblin raiders	See groups
51-52	53	Goblin war party	See groups
—	54	Greater shadow	1
53	55	Guardian naga	1
54-55	56-57	Hell hound	1d2
56	58-59	Hezrou (demon)	1
57-58	60-61	Hill giant raiders	See groups
59-61	62-63	Hobgoblin raiders	See groups
62-63	64-65	Kir-lanan (gargoyle) ^{FR}	1d4+1
64-67	66	Merchants	See groups

68-69	67-68	Minotaur	1	44-46	—	Giant eagle	1d2
—	69	Mohrg	1	—	43-45	Giant owl	1d2
70	70-71	Nightmare	1	47-49	46	Griffon	1d2
71-75	72-73	NPC party	See groups	50	47	Gynosphinx	1
76-78	74-75	Ogre mage raiders	See groups	51	48-50	Hell hound	1d2
79-80	76-77	Orc raiders	See groups	52-54	51	Hippogriff	1d4
—	78	Shadow	1	55-56	52-54	Hobgoblin raiders	See groups
—	79-80	Sinister (deep bat) ^{MC}	1d6+1	57	55-56	Howler	1d2
81-82	81-82	Skeleton, 1 HD	2d4	58	57-59	Ibrandlin ^{MC}	1
83-89	83-84	Slavers	See groups	59	60	Leucrotta ^{MC}	1d4
—	85	Spectre	1	60-62	61	Mantimera ^{SS}	1
90-91	86	Stinger hunters ^{MC}	See groups	63	62	Nishruu ^{MC}	1
92	87	Succubus (demon)	1	64-68	63-64	NPC party	See groups
93	88	Troll hunter	1	69-70	65-66	Nyth ^{MC}	1
—	89	Vampire troupe	See groups	71-72	67-69	Ogre mage	1d2
94	90	Vrock (demon)	1	73-75	70	Peryton ^{MC}	1d4
95	91	Werebear troupe	See groups	76-78	—	Roc	1d2
96	92	Wereboar troupe	See groups	—	71-72	Shadow	1
97	93-94	Wererat troupe	See groups	79	73	Stone giant	1d3+1
98	95	Werewolf troupe	See groups	80-81	74-75	Storm giant	1d2
—	96-97	Wight	1	82-84	76	Tall mouther ^{SS}	1d3+2
—	98	Wraith	1	—	77-78	Vampire	1
99-100	99-100	Zombie, 2 HD	1d4+2	—	79-80	Vampire spawn	1d2
				—	81	Vampire troupe	See groups
				—	82	Vrock (demon)	1
				85-86	83-84	Werebear (lycanthrope)	1
				87-89	85-87	Werewolf (lycanthrope)	1d3
				90-93	88-91	Wolf (animal)	2d4
				—	92-93	Wraith	1
				94-96	94-96	Wyvern	1d2
				97-98	97-98	Xorn, average	1
				99	99	Xorn, elder	1
				00	00	Yrthak	1 or 1d3+1

TABLE 6-19: THE WALLS

(WARM HIGH MOUNTAINS, FRONTIER) (EL 2-19)

d%	d%		Number
Day	Night	Encounter	Encountered
01-04	—	Aarakocra patrol ^{MC}	See groups
05	01	Air mephit	1
06-07	02	Androsphinx	1
08-10	03-05	Assassin vine	1d2
11-12	06-07	Athach	2d4
13-17	08-10	Bandits	See groups
18	11-13	Barghest pack	See groups
19-20	14-15	Behir	1
21-23	16-18	Behir, Halruaan ^{SS}	1d2
24-27	19	Black bear (animal)	1d3
28-29	—	Chimera	1
30	20	Cloud giant	1d2
31-32	21-22	Cyclops (giant) ^{SS}	1d4+1
33	23-24	Dark naga	1
—	25-26	Darkenbeast ^{MC}	1d2+2
—	27-29	Deathfang ^{RF}	1
34	30	Dire bear	1
35-36	31-33	Dire wolf	1
—	34	Dracolich ^{FR}	1
37	35	Dragon, adult gold	1
38	36	Dragon, old copper	1
39	37	Dragon, old fang ^{MC}	1
40	38	Dragon, adult red	1
41-42	39-40	Dragonkin ^{MC}	2d4
43	41	Earth mephit	1
—	42	Ghost	1

Natural Hazards

Although monsters and heartless bandits pose the most obvious threats to travelers in the Shining South, subtler dangers abound. The lands along the southern coast of Faerûn have as many perils as the harsh climes in the far north. Only the foolish travel the South ill-prepared.

HOT WEATHER

In this part of Faerûn, the heat is extreme and can be deadly when coupled with high humidity. The local folk have learned to stay indoors during the hottest part of the day, seeking shelter in the shade. Those thoughtless enough to ignore the warnings of the wise might find themselves suffering heat exhaustion or worse. Characters traveling without taking precautions against exposure to the broiling sun are subject to the effects detailed under Heat Dangers, page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The temperature ranges included in the random weather tables below correspond to the definitions of heat levels given in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Random weather

Though weather patterns are complex and different seasons bring changes, the major factors influencing the weather along Faerûn's southern coast are the latitude of the region and the winds blowing in from the Great Sea. When the warm, humid air flows in off the ocean and is then lifted up along the flanks of the various mountain ranges that stretch along the coast, the result is frequent and often violent thunderstorms.

Any particular day's weather consists of three components: the temperature, the wind strength, and the precipitation. Tables 6-20 through 6-23 provide random weather combinations based on each season, weighted toward more likely results. A freak cold snap is possible in summer, but it is not as probable as long stretches of broiling heat and oppressive humidity.

USING THE TABLES

The weather tables are organized into four basic locations: clear coastline, forest and swamp, plains, and mountains. Roll d% and apply the same result to all four regions. This makes weather more realistic, with slightly milder conditions more likely along coasts and colder conditions at higher elevations. Any given weather condition lasts for 1d6 days before a new pattern sets in, so it's only necessary to roll for new weather when the previous pattern ends, not every day.

Clear/Coast: Any stretch of clear land or coastal waters that sits south of the various mountains or forests falls into this category, including Halruaa, Dambrath, Luiren, and the area around the Golden Water.

Forest/Marsh: This includes any of the wooded regions anywhere in the Shining South, as well as the swamps of the region, including Akhlaur, Mortik, and Rethild.

Plains: All of the Shaar, the Great Rift, and Veldorn fall into this category.

Mountains: Any of the mountain ranges, from The Walls in the west to the Dustwall in the east, are included here.

TABLE 6-20: WINTER

(NIGHTAL II-HAMMER 20)

Clear/ Coast	Forest/ Marsh	Plains	Mtns	Temp.	Wind	Precip.
01-07	01-03	01-09	—	Hot	Fair	Clear
08-10	04-10	10-15	—	Hot	Fair	Humid
11-16	11-13	16-17	01	Warm	Fair	Clear
17-19	14-19	18	02	Warm	Fair	Humid
20-26	20-25	19-23	03	Warm	Varies	Clear
27-31	26-31	24-26	04	Warm	Varies	Rain
32-34	32-34	27-28	05	Warm	Varies	Downpour
35-40	35-39	29-32	06	Warm	Storm	Clear
41-45	40-45	33-35	07-08	Warm	Storm	Rain
46-47	46-48	36-38	09	Warm	Storm	Downpour
48-50	49-50	39-40	10	Warm	Storm	T.Storm
51-57	51-56	41-48	11-16	Mod.	Fair	Clear
58-70	57-65	49-60	17-29	Mod.	Varies	Clear
71-76	66-74	61-69	30-44	Mod.	Varies	Rain

77-80	75-80	70-75	45-50	Mod.	Varies	Downpour
81-84	81-84	76-83	51-58	Cold	Fair	Clear
85-92	85-92	84-90	59-70	Cold	Varies	Rain
93-100	93-100	91-96	71-85	Cold	Varies	Downpour
—	—	97-100	86-100	Cold	Storm	Snow

TABLE 6-21: SPRING

(HAMMER 21-TARSAKH 15)

Clear/ Coast	Forest/ Marsh	Plains	Mtns	Temp.	Wind	Precip.
01-05	01-10	01-10	—	Severe	Fair	Clear
06-09	11-14	11-13	01-02	Hot	Fair	Clear
10-17	15-22	14-20	03	Hot	Fair	Humid
18-22	23-27	21-24	04-06	Hot	Varies	Clear
23-28	28-33	25-29	07-08	Hot	Varies	Rain
29-35	34-40	30-35	09-10	Hot	Varies	Downpour
36	41	36	11-12	Warm	Fair	Clear
37-38	42-43	37-38	13	Warm	Fair	Humid
39-41	44-46	39-41	14-16	Warm	Varies	Clear
42-43	47-48	42-43	17-19	Warm	Varies	Rain
44-46	49-51	44-46	20-22	Warm	Varies	Downpour
47-50	52-55	47-50	23-25	Warm	Storm	Clear
51-54	56-59	51-54	26-30	Warm	Storm	Rain
55-59	60-64	55-59	31-34	Warm	Storm	Downpour
60-65	65-70	60-65	35	Warm	Storm	T.Storm
66-68	71-73	66-68	36-42	Mod.	Fair	Clear
69-73	74-78	69-73	43-52	Mod.	Varies	Clear
74-79	79-84	74-79	53-62	Mod.	Varies	Rain
80-85	85-90	80-85	63-70	Mod.	Varies	Downpour
86-88	91-92	86-88	71-74	Cold	Fair	Clear
89-95	93-95	89-93	75-80	Cold	Varies	Rain
96-100	96-100	94-97	81-90	Cold	Varies	Downpour
—	—	98-100	91-100	Cold	Storm	Snow

TABLE 6-22: SUMMER

(TARSAKH 16-ELIENT 15)

Clear/ Coast	Forest/ Marsh	Plains	Mtns	Temp.	Wind	Precip.
01-05	01-07	01-20	01-03	Severe	Fair	Clear
06-15	08-20	21-30	04-05	Severe	Fair	Humid
16-20	21-30	31-45	06-07	Hot	Fair	Clear
21-40	31-45	46-55	08-10	Hot	Fair	Humid
41-55	46-50	56-60	11-14	Hot	Fair	Rain
56-60	51-65	61-80	15-19	Hot	Varies	Clear
61-70	66-74	81-83	20-23	Hot	Varies	Rain
71-75	75-80	84-85	24-25	Hot	Varies	Downpour
76-77	81	86	26-29	Warm	Fair	Clear
78-81	82-84	87	30-32	Warm	Fair	Humid
82-84	85-86	88-89	33-38	Warm	Varies	Clear
85-86	87-88	90	39-42	Warm	Varies	Rain
87	89-90	91	43-45	Warm	Varies	Downpour
88-90	91	92	46-52	Warm	Storm	Clear
91-92	92-93	93	53-58	Warm	Storm	Rain
93-94	94	94	59-63	Warm	Storm	Downpour

95	95	95	64-65	Warm	Storm	T.Storm
96	96	96	66-72	Mod.	Fair	Clear
97-98	97-98	97-98	73-82	Mod.	Varies	Clear
99	99	99	83-92	Mod.	Varies	Rain
100	100	100	93-100	Mod.	Varies	Downpour

TABLE 6-23: FALL (ELIENT 16-NIGHTAL 10)

Clear/ Coast	Forest/ Marsh	Plains	Mtns	Temp.	Wind	Precip.
01-05	01-10	01-10	—	Severe	Fair	Clear
06-09	11-14	11-13	01-02	Hot	Fair	Clear
10-17	15-22	14-20	03	Hot	Fair	Humid
18-22	23-27	21-24	04-06	Hot	Varies	Clear
23-29	28-34	25-30	07-09	Hot	Varies	Rain
30-36	35-41	31-36	10-11	Hot	Varies	Downpour
37	42	37	12-13	Warm	Fair	Clear
38-39	43-44	38-39	14	Warm	Fair	Humid
40-42	45-47	40-42	15-17	Warm	Varies	Clear
43-45	48-50	43-45	18-21	Warm	Varies	Rain
46-48	51-53	46-48	22-24	Warm	Varies	Downpour
49-51	54-56	49-51	25-26	Warm	Storm	Clear
52-54	57-59	52-54	27-30	Warm	Storm	Rain
55-58	60-63	55-58	31-33	Warm	Storm	Downpour
59-63	64-68	59-63	34	Warm	Storm	T.Storm
64-66	69-71	64-66	35-41	Mod.	Fair	Clear
67-71	72-76	67-71	42-51	Mod.	Varies	Clear
72-78	77-83	72-78	52-61	Mod.	Varies	Rain
79-84	84-89	79-84	62-69	Mod.	Varies	Downpour
85-87	90-91	85-87	70-73	Cold	Fair	Clear
88-95	92-95	88-93	74-80	Cold	Varies	Rain
96-100	96-100	94-97	81-90	Cold	Varies	Downpour
—	—	98-100	91-100	Cold	Storm	Snow

Definitions

Results from Tables 6-20 through 6-23 are described below.

Temp.: Temperature results fall into the following broad categories. Nighttime temperatures are generally 10 to 20 degrees colder and might actually fall into the next colder category (50% chance).

Severe: Above 110° F. (At night, temperatures always fall into the Hot category.)

Hot: Between 86° and 110° F.

Warm: Temperatures between 61° and 85° F.

Mod.: Temperatures from 41° to 60° F.

Cold: Temperatures between 0° and 40° F.

Wind: The strength of the prevailing wind. Periods of calm or sudden stronger gusts are possible. Wind strength decreases one category at night (severe to strong, for example). The three results on the Random Weather tables are fair, varies, and storm. Roll d% and consult Table 6-24 for specific conditions.

TABLE 6-24: WIND STRENGTH

Fair	Varies	Storm	Strength
01-70	01-40	—	Light/moderate
71-95	41-70	01-10	Strong
96-100	71-90	11-50	Severe
—	91-100	51-89	Windstorm
—	—	90-92	Hurricane
—	—	93-100	Tornado

Wind effects are summarized on Table 3-24: Wind Effects, page 95 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Precip.: The type of precipitation that falls during the day. A solid day of rain is pretty rare—even during heavy downpours and thunderstorms, clear spells hours long usually appear.

Clear: No precipitation of note.

Downpour: 1d3 downpours lasting 1d4 hours each occur during the day. Otherwise, the day consists of rain.

Humid: No precipitation of note, but characters suffering the effects of exposure to Hot or Severe temperatures take an additional -2 penalty on their Fortitude saves to avoid nonlethal heat damage each hour.

Snow: Snow falls steadily, but 1d4-1 clear breaks of 1d4 hours each interrupt the snowfall.

T. Storm: 1d3 thunderstorms lasting 2d6×10 minutes each occur during the day. Otherwise the day is clear (50% chance) or rainy (50% chance).

Illustration by Chris Hawkes



Halflings of Luiren lure a tall mouter into an ambush

DAMBRATH

To outsiders, Dambrath seems a land of contrasts. Its people dwell in open grasslands under a sweltering sun and an endless blue sky, but they owe fealty to the drow, who shun the light. Though the majority of its population is human, Dambrath is ruled by the Crinti—people of mixed human, drow, and elf heritage. The nation draws its most lucrative trade commodities from both the land and the sea. Because of its leaders' surprisingly nonaggressive policies toward their neighbors and their aversion to allowing outsiders too far inside the nation's borders, Dambrath has remained a land of mystery to most of Faerûn's folk. That situation suits its noble class just fine.

geographic overview

Stretching between the East Wall, which serves as its border with Halruaa to the west, and the Southern Lluirwood to the east, the nation of Dambrath measures more than 700 miles across. Its coastline is nearly twice that long because of the way the Bay of Dancing Dolphins doubles back inland. From the coast, the land stretches about 300 miles north to the Forest of Amtar. Most of Dambrath's inhabited land, however, lies south of the Gnollwatch Mountains and the Hills of the Dead Kings, which divide the nation into northern and southern regions. Dambrath also claims some additional land east of the Forest of Amtar, along the trade road toward Delzimmer. Rethild, also known as the Great Swamp, is ostensibly part of Dambrath, though its rulers claim that area in name only, since the lizardfolk and nagas that live there deter any thoughts of true control.

Dambrath's climate is oppressively hot except during the rainy season, which begins in mid-Uktar and lasts two to three months. South of the Gnollwatch range, the days are sweltering, but the nights are pleasant because the breezes blowing in off

the Great Sea cool the air quickly. North of the mountains, the temperatures are even hotter, and the air is stiflingly sticky. Rain comes much more frequently there, making the Forest of Amtar a humid zone every bit as muggy as the jungle regions of the Chultan Peninsula. Most people dwelling in the countryside have never seen snow, and morning frosts are almost nonexistent except in the mountains.

Most of Dambrath's land consists of open plains covered with tall grasses particularly suited for the breeding of horses. This veritable sea of rolling plains stretches as far as the eye can see in every direction. Horse ranches—tiny, self-sufficient communities dedicated to breeding the finest mounts in Faerûn—dot the countryside every few miles. Most of the urban population dwells in trading cities on the coast, particularly along the shores of the Bay of Dancing Dolphins. The crystal-clear waters of the bay keep Dambrath's fishing and pearl-diving industries lucrative year-round.

major geographic features

Dambrath has two distinct geographies: the coastline around the Bay of Dancing Dolphins and the inland plains north of the Gnollwatch Mountains. The inhabitants perceive every other major geographic feature as little more than inconvenient wasteland bordering on the inhabited areas. "Stay out of the wilderness's way, and the wilderness will stay out of your way," as the Dambrathans are fond of saying.

the bay of dancing dolphins

The sheltered body of water known as the Bay of Dancing Dolphins is more than 300 miles long. It stretches across most of Dambrath's central coastline, shielding the nation's interior from the harsher weather of the Great Sea. The bay is a key factor in the Dambrathan economy because it teems with both pearl-bearing oysters and a wide variety of fish. Fishermen all along the



coast fill their nets each day with swordfish, snapper, sea bass, and other fish, most of which are sold locally to stock the larders of Dambrath's citizens. All along the shoals near the coast, the pearl divers work oyster beds that are visible dozens of feet below the surface because of the clarity of the water. Merchant vessels sailing to and from the harbors of Dambrath's various port cities form a steady stream of traffic on the bay—and make choice targets for the noble-financed corsairs who frequent these waters.

The waters of the bay are almost unnaturally calm, giving rise to rumors that some kind of subtle magic protects it from storms. Indeed, no storm has churned its waters for at least the last 500 years, though many stretches of coastline nearby have been repeatedly battered by winds and rain. Indeed, the captains of the many ships that frequent the bay have learned not to venture out beyond its mouth when the dolphin population grows noticeably more crowded. The creatures seem to sense when a storm is imminent and gather in the bay a day or two beforehand for shelter.

Even during calm weather, the many schools of dolphins that call the bay home are by far its most prominent, visible, and impressive features. Each day at dusk, thousands of dolphins all along the bay engage in a playful, apparently coordinated "dance" or game. Locals often come down to the shores or board open-decked vessels and venture out onto the waters to watch the dancing dolphins.

In addition to their entertainment value and their beauty, these dolphins are valued as a defense against aquatic hazards. In addition to predicting foul weather by their behavior, they have eliminated almost all predatory creatures—including sharks, giant squids, and sahuagin—from the bay. They have also aided drowning swimmers (including a queen who ruled Dambrath more than 300 years ago) on numerous occasions. Because of their uncanny ability to protect the bay, dolphins are revered and protected in Dambrath. Anyone caught harming one suffers extraordinarily painful punishment at the hands of Loviatar's priestesses.

Various sages have attempted to study the dolphins and to discover what, if any, weather-controlling dweomer protects the bay. A few have discerned a faint and scattered emanation of magic, but no one has thus far determined its origins or effects. Several sages have theorized that the source of the bay's protective magic is some greater intelligence that dwells beneath the surface of the water, and that this being has also somehow organized and trained the dolphins.

Indeed, legends have persisted for many years about a sunken city in the middle of the bay. Many sailors have reported seeing the tops of spires in the water when the sun shines down from directly overhead, illuminating the crystal-clear depths. But such claims never indicate the same location twice, and follow-up visits to search for the fabled city invariably turn up nothing. Some believe that the city is a remnant of a long-forgotten empire that once sat on dry land, and that magic gone awry submerged the city, creating the bay in the process. Others argue that the sunken city is the home of a sinister seafaring race whose members are biding their time until they can attack the shores of Dambrath. In this version of the tale, the dolphins are allies of the undersea dwellers, performing their dance and saving drowning swimmers just to lull the surface dwellers into a false sense of security.

The truth is somewhere in between. A hidden city does exist at the bottom of the Bay of Dancing Dolphins, and its inhabitants are tritons. These outsiders were quite friendly with the Arkaian tribes that once occupied the coast of Dambrath, and the two races traded occasionally. Even then, however, the tritons kept the existence of their city a secret, preferring to venture close to the shore in small groups to deal with the humans. Several centuries ago, a dispute over the value of pearls caused the tritons to withdraw, and the human tribes eventually forgot about them. By the time the drow overran the surface and conquered the Arkaians, the tritons were no longer even a legend.

The tritons keep the existence of their city secret through potent magic worked by a circle of powerful clerics dedicated to their own deity. The magic hides the walls and spires of their city by simple displacement—that is, the structures appear to be at various other spots in the depths of the bay. The triton clerics are also responsible for the perpetually calm weather in the bay, and the dolphins are indeed their friends and allies. A *portal* in the heart of the triton city leads to the Elemental Plane of Water.

The forest of Amtar

The Forest of Amtar is a lush, humid, near-tropical woodland. Dense tangles of suthwood stretch for miles, forming natural barriers at various locations throughout the forest. Vast stretches of shadowtops and slightly shorter pines fill the gaps between the suth tangles, and thick vines, ivy, and brambles form the understory, sometimes even climbing the trunks of the trees. Though little direct sunlight reaches beneath the boughs that form the forest canopy, the rainy climate and tropical location keep the interior damp and hot, making the Amtar a perfect haven for endless swarms of crawling and flying insects.

The Amtar is also home to many kinds of wild animals. Parrots, macaws, and other tropical birds nest in its trees, and lizards and snakes of all sorts slither through the undergrowth. Mammals native to the forest include wild boars and dangerous predators such as tigers and leopards. Families of monkeys and gorillas roam the woodland, but their populations are more concentrated in the northern half. Travelers must be wary of more than just the normal animals, however. Giant snakes, lizards, and beetles also prowl the deepest sections of the forest, and a few girallons and dire apes lead wandering packs.

A tribe of wild elves known as the Trunadar, or "star people," calls the southern half of the Amtar home. The tribe, which numbers no more than five hundred adults, takes advantage of the relative protection offered by the Gnollwatch Mountains to the south, which serve as an additional screen against the predations of the Dambrathans. The Trunadar roam the central part of the southern forest, steering clear of both the community of Elveswatch on the east side and the ruin known as the Gate of Iron Fangs on the west. The tribe's nominal leader, Ferla Treerunner (CG male wild elf barbarian 8/sorcerer 6), occasionally sends a raiding party to disrupt logging on the edge of the forest near the community of Elveswatch. Just as occasionally, the Crinti rulers of Dambrath send a force of soldiers into the forest to scare the wild elves away. Neither side, however, is willing to engage in any true warfare on the other's home turf.

Several small bandit groups use the concealing growth to hide from pursuit, and some have staked out areas along the edges of the forest as temporary bases. These latter groups usually hide out along the northern boundary of the woods, preying on the caravan traffic that moves along the road between Rethmar and Delzimmer. A few take refuge in the eastern stretches of the Amtar and range out toward the Trader's Way. The thick, tangled woods make pursuit difficult at best, since the bandits always know the paths through the endless stretches of suthwood much better than their pursuers do.

Tandith Tornears (LE male ogre mage barbarian 5) leads one such group of raiders—a motley collection of humans and half-orcs augmented by a couple of ogres. Tandith and his minions prowl the stretch of woods along the road between Channathgate and the Landrise. There the forest's edge comes right up to the route, making ambushes easier. Folk from Three Swords have tried in vain for several years to catch Tandith's band, but they have never succeeded. They have recently petitioned the Great Rift for aid, since a substantial portion of the goods stolen in these raids was either heading toward or coming from the gold dwarves. The leaders there are presently considering a course of action.

THE GATE OF IRON FANGS

An ancient city, its origins lost in the mists of time, stands at the southwestern tip of the Forest of Amtar. Only a few of its stones still stand, and creepers and vines have wormed their way over and through every remnant of the city's previous glory.

Named for the oddly curved and menacing towers that flank what is left of the main gate, the Gate of Iron Fangs was already a crumbling ruin by the time the Arkaiuns migrated to this region. Those few who have studied the city's remains in detail speculate that it was founded by the same culture that constructed Ilimar to the south, based on the similarity of the architecture and the gate's resemblance to a pair of serpentine fangs. Whatever its origins, however, most sensible folk avoid the place because of the dangerous creatures that call it home.

A large tribe of gnolls has claimed the site as its own and now uses it as a base from which to raid south and east into the ranch country of Dambrath, and north toward Channathgate and Rethmar. These gnolls are much better organized than others of their kind, somehow managing to strike key locations and particularly wealthy caravans each time they raid. Most victims of their predations believe that the gnolls are working in concert with the outlaws of the Swagdar (see below), but the truth is far more sinister.

Several years ago, a glabrezu tanar'ri named Quinix found his way through a partially functioning *portal* from the Abyss into the subterranean levels of the city. The demon quickly gained the loyalty of the gnolls via a complex web of lies liberally spiced with bribery. As a result, the gnolls now believe that Quinix is a direct representative of Yeenoghu, and that his presence is proof that they are the deity's favored servants. Quinix has since used the erratically functioning *portal* to bring in a pair of vrocks, which serve as his assistants and bodyguards. The glabrezu now sits deep within the bowels of the ruined city, plotting ways to bring chaos and evil upon the surrounding lands.

The gnollwatch mountains

The Gnollwatch Mountains run east and west for about 275 miles in the northern half of Dambrath, eventually giving way to the Hills of the Dead Kings to the east. The Gnollwatches are not particularly tall—most peaks barely reach 9,000 feet, and Mount Hazail, the highest point in the range, tops out at 11,512 feet. Still, since the majority of Dambrath is so close to sea level, the range presents a striking contrast to the rolling plains just south of it.

The Gnollwatch Mountains wear a mantle of light snow for about five months out of the year, most of it falling during the winter rainy season. The rest of the time, the copses of pine, shadowtop, and suthwood that dot the slopes appear as spots of dark green against the tan mountain meadows, which are dominated by short, coarse grasses similar to those on the plains below. Above the timberline, more of this brown grass covers the mountains' smooth, rounded domes. Unlike some of the more craggy ranges in other parts of Faerûn, the Gnollwatch Mountains have been worn down over millennia by the daily rainstorms that build along the slopes and the incessant sea breezes that blow from the south.

True to their name, the Gnollwatches are home to numerous tribes of gnolls that dwell in cave complexes scattered along their wooded slopes. For the most part, the Dambrathans living near the foothills consider the gnolls an aggravation because they are aggressive, hostile, and a drain on the area's resources. However, the few gnoll tribes that have consolidated under Grubash Blacksnout (LE male gnoll fighter 6), a particularly disciplined leader, have actually managed to maintain cordial relations with their human and Crinti counterparts. Grubash coordinates hunting territories to minimize conflicts, and he has arranged for gnolls to serve as mercenaries for the Dambrathan nobility. In exchange for generous supplies of meat and silver trinkets, gnoll mercenaries battle other gnoll tribes on behalf of powerful ranch owners and occasionally attack ranches owned by their employers' rivals.

A handful of hill giants roams some of the higher slopes of the Gnollwatches, competing with the gnoll tribes for hunting grounds. These giants occasionally stray into the Hills of the Dead Kings, and sometimes into the grasslands to poach food from the human ranches. (They are fond of horseflesh and consider it a delicacy.)

A single family of storm giants maintains a well-hidden castle in a particularly remote and sheltered crag near the highest peaks of the Gnollwatches. Abinor Lashingwind (CG male storm giant sorcerer 7), the head of the family, takes great pains to keep his household hidden from the prying eyes of both the Dambrathans in the plains and the drow below them. The hill giants know about their rivals but leave them alone, seeing no good reason to incur the larger giants' wrath. To warn off unwanted intruders of other races, Abinor has taken to creating "evidence" of an immense, cranky silver dragon that dwells high in the peaks, and rumors of this fictitious beast have spread all the way to the coast and into neighboring Luiren.

A number of rich silver deposits snake through the Gnollwatch Mountains, and miners discover more new lodes every year. The

Dambrathans have made themselves wealthy digging the ore from the earth, and they have actively prospected all through the mountains, despite the danger from monsters and outlaws. Some of the larger mining consortiums hire competing mining operations—and even less friendly gnoll tribes—to work their claims, thus ensuring maximum yield with minimum danger.

The drow city of T'lindhet sits squarely beneath the Gnollwatch Mountains, several miles below the surface. Unlike most connections between the Underdark and the world above, the road from Dambrath into the bowels of the earth is an open trade route, since the drow have laid at least a nominal claim to the lands of their surface counterparts. The main road connecting the two regions winds out of Herath into the southern foothills along the far western end of the range, where it enters a broad cave. From there, the path descends through worked tunnels to the drow community. Numerous smaller roads join the route from other surface entrances, but since the drow do not use these secondary paths as regular thoroughfares, they make no effort to keep them predator-free.

The hills of the dead kings

This region of gently sloping, grass-covered knolls was once known simply as the Hills of the Kings. Its name changed when the Arkaiuns were conquered by the drow and their unexpected allies, the priestesses of Loviatar (see History of Dambrath, below). Despite their somewhat moribund name, the hills are pleasant and relatively danger-free, except when the hill giants from the mountains to the west wander this way. Scattered copses of pines and the occasional shadowtop dot the grassy rises here and there, but trees are rare in these hills. Numerous streams meander through the meadows toward the flatter plains to the south and east.

A number of halflings dwell at the eastern end of the Hills of the Dead Kings. Most of these hin are stronghearts who migrated west from the Southern Lluirwood and eventually found themselves beyond the borders of their native Luiren (see Chapter 10 of this book). The halflings keep to themselves, living in small hamlets and villages throughout the hilly region. The hin rarely leave their domain, though they do maintain trade relations with the Dambrathans to the southwest. They are also more than willing to trade with any merchants who deem it worth their while to detour off the route between Cathyr and Delzimmer.

The hills got their name because the old Arkaiun tribe that had settled the region (see History of Dambrath, below) preferred to bury its kings in remote tombs. Of the nine Arkaiun monarchs who reigned in Dambrath, seven are reputedly entombed in secret vaults deep in these hills. Only Reinhar I, who died in battle in Halruaa, and Reinhar IX, who was slain during the battle with the drow of T'lindhet, did not receive such honorable resting places. Even so, at the command of Malar the Beastlord, the Arkaiuns constructed an empty burial chamber in honor of Reinhar I, filling it with treasures and setting numerous guards and wards to protect it. According to legend, Malar also presented the Arkaiuns with two magic constructs—a stone lion and an iron tiger—to serve as guardians inside this tomb.

The Arkaiun people of Dambrath (now called Shebali by their Crinti rulers) proudly claim that the tombs of their dead forebears have never been found or plundered. In truth, however, Crinti adventurers have sacked several of them. The Crinti wisely keep this tidbit of information to themselves, for fear of causing an uprising among the Shebali. The tomb robbers have carefully smuggled whatever wonders they have found to other parts of the world, where they could reap tidy profits from them. Still, several of the tombs lie undiscovered—no doubt protected by the ancient magic of the Arkaiun builders.

Rethild, the great swamp

The Great Swamp of Rethild pools around the base of Halruaa's East Wall, which marks the western border of Dambrath. The southern edge of the swamp gradually grows wetter and the ground less firm as it fades into the ocean. The swamp is a sweltering place filled with moss-covered cypress and zalantar trees, as well as countless horrors waiting to prey on the unwary. Few choose to venture into it, and fewer still return from its murky interior.

The air in the Great Swamp is hot, sticky, and foul-smelling. Most of the year, the combination of high temperatures, wretched humidity, and endless clouds of swarming, biting insects creates an oppressive environment that few creatures not native to the place can tolerate for more than a couple of hours. Even during the rainy season, when the temperature cools a few degrees, the place is still a bug-infested, sweltering steam bath. Deaths result as often from exhaustion, sickness, and overheating as from the dangerous creatures that abound here.

The noxious vapors that bubble up through the water are the products of decomposing matter, monstrous exudations, and residual magic left here long ago. These odious fumes form steaming clouds of pale yellow, brown, or green gas that hug the ground and drift slowly along through the trees, driven by the sluggish breezes. Some of these clouds are deadly, carrying poisons such as burnt othur fumes or diseases such as cackle fever and mindfire through the swamp.

The Great Swamp is home to numerous unusual creatures, including giant versions of leeches, toads, and snakes, tribes of bullywugs and tasloi (see page 71), and the occasional shambling mound. In addition, rumors abound of yet another inhabitant—a black dragon named Valraxaxath that dwells in a ruined city at the heart of the swamp. These rumors are true, but the dragon hasn't been seen in almost sixty years, since it prefers to hunt far afield by means of a *portal* network. The name of the lost city where it lairs is unknown, but legend holds that it was constructed by the same race that built Ilimar (see below), and possibly Chasolné (see page 134) as well.

By far the most numerous denizens of the swamp are the lizardfolk tribes, which have united into the kingdom of Kethid under Ghassis (CE male half-fiend lizardfolk sorcerer 15). Not content simply to rule his kingdom, King Ghassis has taken an interest in both the wonders and the politics of the world beyond the Great Swamp. Under the leadership of his field commander Sladdis (CE male lizardfolk fighter 12), Ghassis dispatches companies of lizardfolk mercenaries, known collectively as the

Servants of the Royal Egg, to fight in distant wars. Members of this company exhibit plenty of single-minded determination and an intense sense of group identity, so they are valued for their prowess in head-to-head combat. Their lack of initiative and poor tactical sense, however, means that strong leadership and explicit instructions are vital in achieving the desired results.

For the most part, Ghassis is indifferent to the fate of these mercenaries. The king of the lizardfolk is far more interested in the wealth he can accumulate from potential employers than in seeing his subjects return safely home after an engagement. He has no qualms about sending the Servants of the Royal Egg on dangerous assignments from which they are unlikely to return, though he does expect an especially lucrative deal for committing them to their deaths. In recent years, he has dedicated several companies of the Servants of the Royal Egg to Tethyr's War of Reclamation, and a few to limited fighting in the Jungles of Chult. Despite the popularity of lizardfolk mercenaries elsewhere, the folk of Dambrath rarely call upon them to serve in battle against their enemies. Because most of the nation's strife is internal, foes have plenty of opportunity to offer Ghassis a better deal—and the Dambrathans know that he might order his minions to change sides during a fight for enough cash.

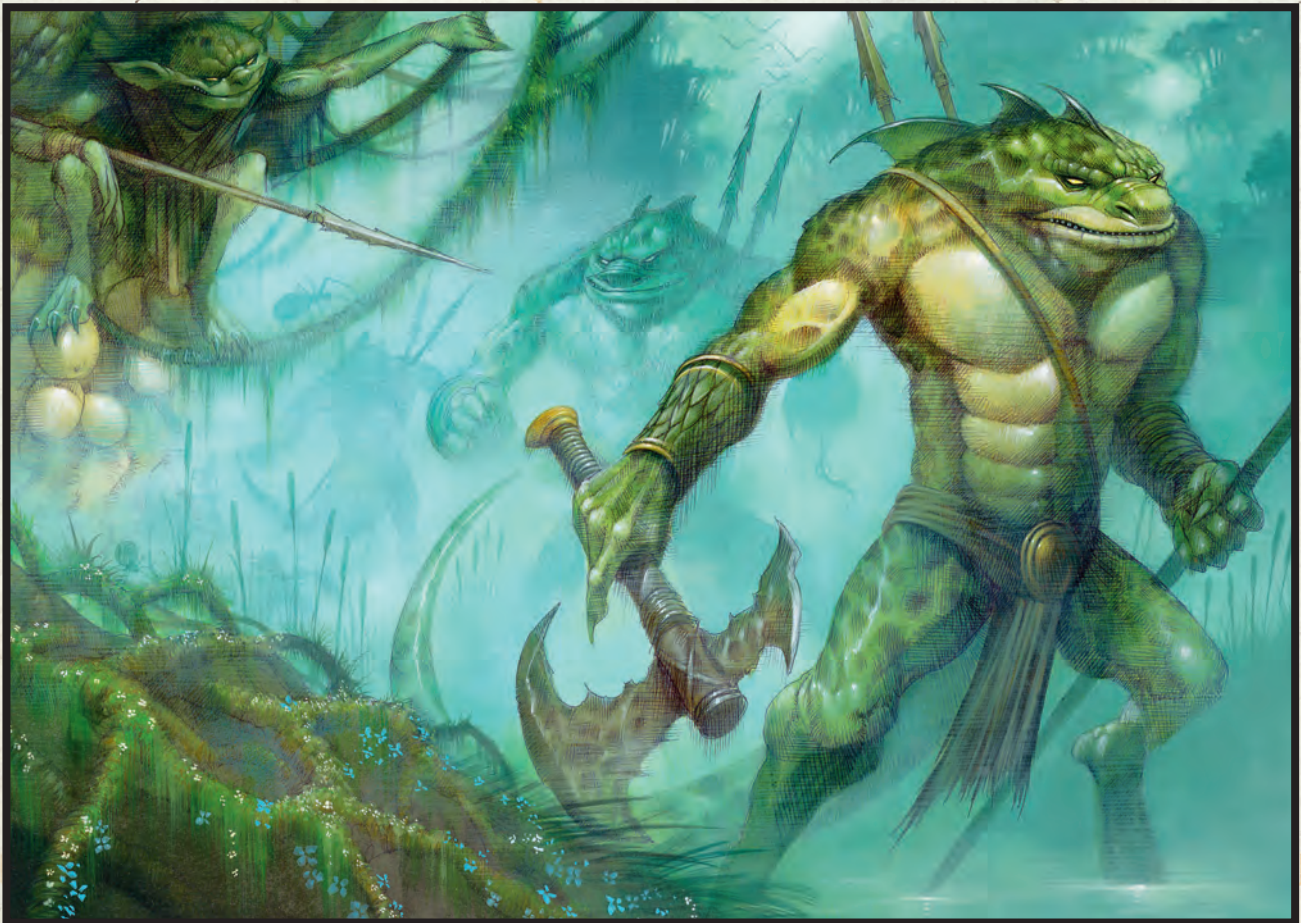
Possibly as payment for the services of the Servants of the Royal Egg, or perhaps simply through trickery or cunning,

Ghassis has acquired three Halruaan skyships. Though his own subjects know about the flying vessels, the king tries to keep their existence a secret from the rest of the world. Most of the time, they are hidden deep inside the swamp under camouflage. However, King Ghassis uses them to travel the length and breadth of his kingdom from time to time, or to deliver mercenaries to the battlefield on rare occasions. Now and then, folk beyond the borders of the swamp see the lights of the skyships as they rise into the night. Such sightings have sparked rumors about lights dancing in the skies over the Great Swamp, though speculation about their origins is as wild and as varied as the people who have seen them. Few guesses have actually come close to the truth.

ILIMAR

Ilimar is a split city, divided between the two ends of a *portal*. Now crumbling ruins, these two sites are all that remains of a city founded millennia ago by the sarrukh, the progenitor race that created most of Faerûn's intelligent lizard and serpent creatures, including nagas, yuan-ti, and lizardfolk. The southern half of Ilimar lies nestled in the hills, near the headwaters of one of the streams that feeds the Great Swamp from the north. The northern half lies in the western reaches of the Gulthmere Forest, near the southern shore of the Lake of the Long Arm.

Illustration by Wayne England



The Great Swamp of Rethild is home to many creatures

A sacred site to the lizardfolk of Rethild, the southern portion of Ilimar is ruled by a circle of spirit nagas, whom the lizardfolk worship as deities. These nagas know that three sarrukh lie in hibernation somewhere beneath the center of southern Ilimar. The sarrukh took great pains to ensure that they were well hidden from potential threats, so the nagas don't know precisely where they are. However, they can sense the presence of their creators, and they plan to be ready when their masters emerge from the depths of the ruins.

The spirit nagas use the lizardfolk as a labor force to hunt for other lost sites from the time of the sarrukh. Upon finding such a ruin, they excavate it for valuable artifacts that once belonged to their creators, hoping to offer these baubles as tokens of their continued fealty when their masters return. The nagas have already discovered a few such sites, including the ruins of Chasolné (see Chapter 9) throughout the East Wall and the swamp.

The swagdar (outlaw waste)

The wasteland known as the Swagdar stretches from the foothills of the East Wall to the fringes of the territory patrolled by Herath's military, and from the northern edge of the Great Swamp to the southern boundary of the Forest of Amtar. For decades, the Swagdar has been a haven for anyone who refused to bow down to the Crinti who rule Dambrath. Bandits, thieves, and Shebali who escaped the rule of the Crinti roam this wide-open countryside, embracing an almost nomadic lifestyle. With no single charismatic leader to unite them, the various tribes scuffle among themselves almost as much as they do with the Dambrathans. For the people of this lawless region, however, the sort of dangerous freedom the Swagdar offers is better than a life of subjugation.

Many of those who come to the Swagdar are criminals fleeing their pasts—or seeking a place where they can continue their depredations outside the watchful eye of the law. Others are loners who prefer the solitary nature of the countryside to the more heavily settled plains of Dambrath proper. Still others, claiming to be descendants of the original Arkaiuns, come here to defy the overbearing Crinti and return to their ancestors' way of life. These wanderers typically worship the Beastlord, as their forebears did centuries ago.

When the bandit raids grow intolerable, the Crinti send expeditionary forces into the Swagdar to conquer or drive off the occupants. Thus far, their successes have been marginal at best, since the nomadic people of the Swagdar can scatter at a moment's notice and hide in the hills, forest, or swamp. Once the Crinti tire of chasing dust trails and return to their civilized lands, the tribes drift back and take up where they left off.

Though the tribes of the Swagdar range freely over the wasteland's open ground, they make a point of avoiding ruins such as Ilimar and the Gate of Iron Fangs. More than a few bandits whose curiosity got the better of them have disappeared in those places, and the locals share cautionary tales over communal campfires with all new residents and travelers. However, they gleefully urge any self-assured adventurers passing through the area to seek their fortunes in such places.

people of dambrath

The female Crinti nobles who serve as the stewards of Dambrath make this nation a true rarity in Faerûn. The Crinti, all of whom are of racially mixed heritage, not only hold the highest social positions within Dambrathan society, but also consider themselves above the "lesser" races that dwell within the country's borders.

Races and cultures

About fifteen percent of Dambrath's people are of mixed human, drow, and elf heritage. Most of them have at least partial drow blood, but generations of interbreeding among drow, half-drow, humans, and half-elves have made it more pronounced in some individuals than in others. Regardless of their precise heritage, these racially mixed people are called half-drow or Crinti, and they constitute the aristocracy of Dambrath.

Most of the humans (Shebali) are descended from the Arkaiuns who lived here before the coming of the drow and their half-elf allies. Though humans make up seventy percent of the population, they are considered second-class citizens throughout the nation. However, this distinction is more clearly delineated in the urban centers than in the countryside, where ranch work demands more pragmatism and greater tolerance.

The rest of Dambrath's population consists of halflings, gnolls, and a smattering of other humanoids. These individuals have no higher status than humans.

Elves other than drow are not welcome in Dambrath, and locals turn them away at the borders. Any such elves caught deeper in Dambrathan territory are usually captured and turned over to the temples of Loviatar for entertainment purposes. Dwarves, while not denied entry, are not truly accepted either. Most of those who do visit Dambrath are traders coming south down the Trader's Way, and they do not stay long.

ARKAIUNS

Though they are predominantly Nar, the Arkaiuns also have a bit of Illuskan blood, thanks to an extraordinary *portal* (see History of Dambrath, below, and Chapter 11) that brought their parent tribes together in the Council Hills region of the Eastern Shaar. They migrated from that area to Dambrath more than a millennium ago.

The typical Arkaiun is short and stocky, with dusky, tanned skin and raven-black hair. Occasionally, however, a child is born who grows regally tall, or sports a mane of golden-blond or red hair, like his Illuskan forebears.

Except for those Arkaiuns who were born and raised in the heart of the coastal cities, every human in Dambrath learns to ride a horse by the time he is five years old. In urban areas, most Arkaiuns are laborers, craftsfolk, and artisans. In the countryside to the north, they serve as ranch hands on the great ranches of the Crinti landowners.

The Crinti do not permit humans to own land. Some few Shebali claim their own land in the plains, but such homesteads are always in the Swagdar or elsewhere on the outskirts of the country, where the law exists in name only.

Most outsiders still look upon the Arkaiuns as little more than barbarians, and indeed, because of their lower-class standing in Dambrathan society, they seem to be a rough and barbaric people. Nonetheless, the Arkaiuns fiercely cling to a national identity, despite (or perhaps because of) the way they have been subjugated by the Crinti.

CRINTI (HALF-DROW)

The Crinti of Dambrath come from widely varied bloodlines. Nine in ten are descended from unions between the drow of T'lindhet (see below) and their human slaves or paramours. The rest can actually trace their bloodlines to one of the First—the 112 half-elf priestesses of Loviatar who brokered the deal to rule Dambrath on behalf of the drow. Known as Children of the First, these Crinti have the highest status in Dambrathan society, though their ancestry might include more human than elf or drow blood.

The typical present-day Crinti has a convoluted lineage that incorporates several different drow Houses, plus humans, half-drow, and occasionally a half-elf priestess of Loviatar. The Crinti constitute Dambrath's nobility—the ruling class that owns the property, runs the government, and enjoys the fruits of the land—or rather, they do so on behalf of their full-blooded drow patrons.

Crinti enjoy positions of authority in Dambrath that they could never attain anywhere else in Faerûn. But while they have risen to the top of the social ladder on the surface world, they are still little more than half-breed bumpkins in the eyes of their drow patrons beneath the Gnollwatch Mountains. Because of this double standard, most Crinti spend their lives striving to outdo one another and to prove their worth—both to the drow they serve and to themselves.

A typical Crinti has dark gray or black skin, with silver or white hair and eyes of almost any color known among humans or elves. Some Children of the First, however, are pale-skinned, like their human and half-elf ancestors.

DROW OF T'LINDHET

The drow of T'lindhet, the subterranean city located several miles below Dambrath, rarely visit the surface lands to which they lay claim. Members of T'lindhet's various great Houses prefer to scheme and plot against one another as they always have, leaving the less appealing task of managing their surface holdings to their Crinti governors. Despite their dislike of the other races involved in this strange relationship, the drow have found it advantageous to let the Crinti control their interests on the surface and rule over the human laborers. In this way, the dark elves gain the advantage of surface-world trade without the distasteful necessity of actually interacting with the plebeian creatures that make it possible. Because of this arrangement, the road between the plains of Dambrath and the caverns of T'lindhet remains open to trade, rather than serving as a battlefield between surface dwellers and the denizens of the Underdark.

The drow of T'lindhet have yet to acknowledge the Silence of Lolth to their surface-dwelling kin, but maintaining that secret has forced them to cede even more control of Dambrath to the Crinti. Moreover, whispers have begun to spread among the Crinti that the surface-dwelling followers of Lolth have lost the favor

of the Spider Queen. So far, however, they do not suspect how widespread the problem really is.

Life and society

The social divisions within Dambrath segregate the population not only by race but also by gender. The loftiest positions in both government and culture are reserved for female Crinti; all others are viewed as inferior in some capacity. The combined influence of the drow overlords and the Church of Loviatar established this unusual political and social division some five hundred years ago, and it has remained in place ever since.

The mixed-heritage Crinti rule the land on behalf of the drow who claim it from below. The Shebali—the human descendants of the Arkaiun horsepeople who originally roamed the land—constitute the vast majority of the citizens. In Dambrathan society, the Crinti enjoy the privileges, and the Shebali serve at their pleasure.

But the racial separation of the citizenry is only half the story—Dambrath is also a true matriarchal society. As in the drow civilization and the church of Loviatar, females hold the reins of power in Dambrath. Though this social order is more pronounced in the noble court than among the common folk, females maintain a position of superiority over males in most aspects of Dambrathan culture. The fact that both the priestesses of the Maiden of Pain and the drow embraced this precept permitted the two groups to find a common ground on which to build their unusual relationship five centuries ago. Without it, the drow claims to the surface might not have survived against even weakened humans for long.

In the cities and at the higher levels of society, the matriarchal social structure is much more pronounced than it is in the countryside. Females attain positions of power within the government more frequently than males, and female Crinti are the only citizens permitted to function as honglath, or judges (see Law and Order, below). Females expect males to show them every courtesy, to walk behind them in the street, and to defer to them in all matters relating to intellect. Both females and males serve in the military, though women hold most of the officer positions. In fact, noble families consider it a great honor for their offspring to serve in some branch of Dambrath's military as officers.

ECONOMY

Despite its isolationist policies (see Politics and Power, below), Dambrath trades briskly with the rest of Faerûn, and even beyond. The nation has three major exports: horses, silver, and pearls. Its other export commodities include finished wooden goods (cabinets, chairs, tables, and other furniture, as well as finely crafted arrow shafts) made of lumber cut from the Amtar, plus fruit harvested from orchards in the Hills of the Dead Kings and fish caught in the Bay of Dancing Dolphins. Because so much of the country's population is clustered in the port towns and cities along the coast, shipping traffic is vigorous, bringing a steady stream of goods from other lands to citizens eager to trade.

So much of the plains country north of the coast is devoted to horse ranches that horseflesh provides the majority of the country's income. Owning a ranch on the open plains is both lucrative and

prestigious, since the horses bred by the Crinti landowners are prized all along the coast of the Great Sea, as well as in other parts of the world, such as Zakhara. Unsurprisingly, Dambrathan horse merchants are said to be among the shrewdest in Faerûn.

Those few landed gentry who have not invested in the horse trade usually put their money into mining silver from the Gnollwatches. Mine owners often form consortiums to enhance their profitability and ensure maximum exploitation of the veins located.

The pearl trade provides a good living for divers all along the coast. Because of the bay's sheltered nature and the clarity of its waters, oyster beds are both plentiful and easy to find. Thus, a diver's daily take is often valued at several hundred gold pieces. Pearl traders sell many of these pearls to wealthy Crinti, who are constantly working to outshine their political and social rivals through displays of conspicuous consumption, but plenty remain for export.

Occasionally, a diver might be fortunate enough to haul in a special Dambrathan pearl. Found only in the waters of the Bay of Dancing Dolphins—and then only rarely—these pearls have an oddly rich, blue-green hue. A Dambrathan pearl fetches five times a normal pearl's value in Dambrath, or seven to ten times normal value in other trading centers.

Though the majority of Dambrath's trade is sea-based, a steady flow of caravans visits the nation from the north, arriving via the Trader's Way from Delzimmer. The Queen of Dambrath, in keeping with her isolationism, maintains a policy forbidding caravans from coming any farther into the country than Cathyr, and every single train is inspected thoroughly in Dunfeld before it can proceed farther south. This high level of security slightly depresses prices for most goods, since everything must be sold in Cathyr and then borne to other Dambrathan markets by local merchants. Still, the business is lucrative enough that the caravan masters are more than willing to put up with the inconvenience. Even as part of a caravan, however, elves other than drow may not enter the country. Any caught attempting entry are taken into custody and sent to the temples of Loviatar.

LAW AND ORDER

For legal purposes, an individual must be able to prove that he has at least 1/32 drow or First blood to be classified as Crinti. In practice, Crinti who have the look of drow or elves (dusky skin or pointed ears) receive more favorable treatment than those who appear more human.

The laws of Dambrath are structured, and justice is swift and often harsh. Judges known as honglath preside over trials and make all decisions regarding legal issues. Only Crinti females may become honglath, and they guard their power as judges fiercely.

Typically, punishments for crimes committed by Crinti consist of fines (except in extreme circumstances), while Shebali suffer harsher penalties, such as torture at the hands of the Maiden of Pain's priestesses. In both cases, males typically receive more severe penalties than their female counterparts. The sentence for the most heinous crimes—horse theft, teaching a male any sort of magic, or overstepping the jurisdiction of a honglath—is death by slow torture in the temples. In the case of teaching magic to a male, the perpetrator is stripped of titles and lands, then sent to the temples. The male who received the instruction is either

executed or subjected to a feeblemind spell and sent to work in the silver mines.

Only Crinti may own land in Dambrath, and inheritance is passed down via the female line—though not necessarily to the oldest. The local honglath, rather than the Crinti matron herself, decides who inherits property. Often, the daughter who demonstrates the most initiative, good sense, and general aptitude for managing assets earns the inheritance. Occasionally, a honglath divides a Crinti matron's wealth up among all her daughters. If the matron has no daughters or granddaughters, a male child may inherit the property, provided that he is married. In such a case, his wife immediately assumes control of the estate. If the male inheritor is not married, he must take a wife so that the property can be properly passed down. A honglath often arranges the marriage if the matron was unable to do so before her death. More than a few Crinti males have discovered a newfound popularity among eligible females when such a situation occurs.

DEFENSE AND WARCRAFT

The Crinti value a strong military presence for many reasons—to deter Shebali uprisings, to enforce Dambrath's isolationist policies, and because their heritage and relationship with the drow earn them varying degrees of enmity from other lands. Thus, Dambrath's leaders maintain standing military forces in every major city.

The typical community's land-based military presence consists of one-third infantry and two-thirds cavalry. The infantry is typically composed of light foot soldiers trained for quick movement over long distances rather than for heavy fighting. The amount of ground they must cover and the extremely hot and unpleasant conditions prohibit wearing heavy armor and lugging a great deal of equipment about. The cavalry usually consists of two-thirds heavy and one-third light (skirmishers), and the riders' tactics reflect the need to outdistance and surround enemies in the open plains.

Every port larger than a village maintains a fleet of one to six fast-moving frigates. These warships are staffed with a number of spellcasters to aid in tracking down and destroying pirates and smugglers who try to slip into the Bay of Dancing Dolphins and disrupt the trade. Some of the wealthier Crinti also fund their own merchant fleets and retain privateers to escort them, so that they can transport their own goods to market. Predictably, rival private fleets frequently employ terror tactics—including piracy—on one another. Depending on the politics of the moment, the Dambrathan port's fleet might turn a blind eye to such acts, or it may mete out swift and harsh justice.

RELIGION

The official religion of Dambrath is the worship of Loviatar, since her priestesses provided considerable aid to the drow during their conquest of the Arkaiuns. Every large community has a major temple dedicated to the Maiden of Pain, complete with a full complement of priestesses and torture facilities. Aspects of her faith pervade many elements of Dambrathan society—particularly entertainment for the masses and punishment of crimes (including all capital punishments).

Not everyone in Dambrath chooses to observe the state religion. Some Arkaiuns still secretly revere Malar, as their ancestors did

before the coming of the drow, and more than a few displaced folk in the Swagdar still acknowledge the Beastlord as a necessary element of the hunt. The majority of the full-blooded drow who have chosen to dwell on the surface venerate Lolth, but a very small minority of both drow and Crinti choose to pay homage to Eilistraee. Loviatar's clerics are willing to look the other way regarding Malar's and Lolth's influence because of those deities' relationships with theirs, but they are less pleased with the foothold that the Lady of the Dance has established in Dambrathan society.

Adventurers

Beyond the fact that some races are simply not welcome in the country, Dambrath's leaders frown mightily on outsiders traipsing around on their lands, and they have enacted laws to prevent it. Groups that appear to be from somewhere else draw the suspicion of the Crinti, who consider them trespassing merchants at best and spies or horse thieves at worst.

Despite this lack of hospitality, more than a few adventurers have risked capture to explore the ruins on the fringes of the civilized lands. The most brazen of these adventurers regularly attempt to reach the Great Swamp and Ilimar, and more than a few target the Gate of Iron Fangs, Guilmarl, and Ammathtar in their search for wealth and secrets. The Dambrathans give a token show of patrolling some of these areas to dissuade such intrusions, but the expense is prohibitive and the results generally unsatisfying.

politics and power

Hasifir, the current Queen of Dambrath, can trace her bloodline directly to the original queen, who took control with the blessing of the drow shortly after the defeat of Reinhar IX and his Arkaiun forces. Though the history of Dambrath's Crinti royalty is full of intrigue and betrayal, the same family has managed to maintain firm control of the throne for five centuries. Such stability does not ensure the current queen's safety, however. Many of Hasifir's cousins hold seats of power throughout Dambrath, and more than a few of them scheme to unseat her and rule in her place.

Despite its relatively threatening posture, Dambrath is decidedly standoffish with respect to other nations. The Crinti aren't interested in conquering anyone else—they enjoy the creature comforts of home too much to go off to war. But they recognize all too well that other nations might not be convinced of their disinterest, particularly because of Dambrath's relationship with the drow of T'lindhet. Thus, they find it necessary to maintain a reasonable military force to dissuade those nations from acting on their fears.

For their part, the drow of T'lindhet feel the same way. They have more than enough business to occupy their energies in the Underdark without worrying about the goings-on above, much less the happenings beyond Dambrath's borders. As long as the Crinti continue to manage Dambrath's affairs effectively and keep a steady flow of goods passing between the surface and the Underdark, the dark elves are happy.

Queen Hasifir realizes that the Crinti are not the sole bastion of power in Dambrath, and she would like very much to

change that situation. But she is wise enough to know that there is little to be gained and much to be lost by confronting Ferla Treerunner in the Forest of Amtar or King Ghassis in the Great Swamp. Even chasing down the rebels hiding out in the Swagdar would probably put enough strain on her forces and weaken the country against invasion from the outside. Thus, she presents a remarkably disinterested face regarding these issues, believing that she can reduce their significance accordingly.

history of dambrath

The history of Dambrath is a brief one. Despite its advantageous geography and relatively favorable climate, settlers took a long time to arrive here from other parts of Faerûn. The nation's short history can be broken into two main periods: the time of the humans, and the time of the Crinti.

TIMELINE

Year	Event
–946	The Nar people of Shandaular flee the northern terminus of a two-way <i>portal</i> in Ashanath before the nentyarch's armies, leaving their king, Arkaius, behind to seal the <i>portal</i> . The tribes, now in the Council Hills area of the Shaar, adopt the name Arkaiuns in honor of their fallen monarch.
211	Year of Spoiled Splendors: Arkaiun tribes flee the Council Hills region ahead of invading Untheric and Mulhorandi armies and migrate southwest. They roam the grasslands along the southern coast of Faerûn, eventually settling along the coast of the Bay of Dancing Dolphins.
314	Year of the Stammering Apprentice: The trade city of Shantil (present-day Cathyr) is founded.
385	Year of the Lady's Gaze: Hazuth is founded.
423	Year of the Velvet Night: Several tribes of Arkaiuns skirmish over territorial rights in the Wandering War.
467	Year of Four Winds: A hill giant dire wereape named Dermos the Proud emerges from the wilderness, claiming to be a manifestation of Malar. Dermos develops a fanatical following and orders the slaughter of all Arkaiuns who oppose him.
469	Year of the Dusty Library: Dermos the Proud and all the members of his beast cult are slain at the Ambush of Blackrock Ridge.
545	Year of the Pernicon: A warchief named Reinhar unites the various Arkaiun tribes into a single nation, thereby founding the kingdom of Dambrath. Reinhar names himself King Reinhar I.
546	Year of the Rusted Sabre: Dambrath invades and conquers Luiren and subjugates its halfling population.
551	Year of the Barren Chamber: Reinhar I conquers Estagund.
552	Year of the Dead: Dambrath conquers Var the Golden.
553	Year of the Gnashing Tooth: Dambrath invades Durpar and sacks several coastal cities, then invades Halruaa and occupies several Halruaan cities.
554	Year of Waving Wheat: King Reinhar I is defeated and slain in battle by the Halruaan wizard Mycontil at

- Sulaziir. The old king's son, Reinhar II, leads the army in retreat to Dambrath.
- 600 Year of Fire and Frost: Reinhar III and his two sons are slain by giants while hunting in the Gnollwatches. After a brief succession war, Reinhar III's nephew is crowned King Reinhar IV.
- 617 Year of the Needless Slaughter: A mysterious bloating sickness kills one in ten Arkaiuns, including Reinhar IV.
- 647 Year of the Wayward Heart: Reinhar VI ascends the throne of Dambrath.
- 716 Year of Reaching Regret: Silver is discovered in the Gnollwatch Mountains. The population of Herath triples in a year's time.
- 802 Year of the Patchworked Peace: Miners digging for silver in the Gnollwatches just north of Herath break through into the Underdark and discover the drow city of T'lindhet. The drow, angered at this perceived invasion, kill the miners and begin raiding the towns and villages around the mine entrance.
- 803 Year of the Reaching Hand: King Reinhar IX orders an expeditionary force into the mines to take the battle to the drow homeland. The attack is a disaster, and the humans are quickly driven back to the surface.
- 808 Year of the Crescent Moon: T'lindhet drow kill nearly five thousand human troops in the Battle of the Shadowed Vale, just north of Herath.
- 817 Year of the Deadly Torch: More than fifteen hundred drow are slain by wild elves in the southern fringes of the Forest of Amtar after retreating there from a larger force of human cavalry.
- 819 Year of the Mendacious Page: Drow overrun the city of Herath.
- 822 Year of the Wizard's Chalice: Prastuil falls to the drow.
- 825 Year of the Silver Flagon: The drow take the cities of Luenath and Maarlith.
- 830 Year of the Ambitious Proposal: The drow besiege the city of Shantil, trapping King Reinhar and his army on the peninsula to the south of the city.
- 831 Year of the Deceptive Tongue: Betrayed by their allies, the half-elf priestesses of Loviatar, the Arkaiun people are defeated at the Battle of Crimar. Cathyr, the High Priestess of Loviatar, slays Reinhar IX. The priestesses agree to rule Dambrath on behalf of the drow. Cathyr renames the capital city in her own honor and becomes the first Queen of Dambrath.
- 973 Year of the Emptied Lair: A horde of Crinti shadow marauders rides through the Nath Pass to raid towns in Halruaa, sparking a series of skirmishes between the two countries that lasts four years.
- 1023 Year of the Wandering Wyvern: Raiders from Estagund attempt an invasion, landing near Darmesh and marching west along the peninsula. Dambrathan forces defeat them easily near Hethar.
- 1035 Year of Falling Stars: Filina, the queen's daughter, slays Cathyr in her sleep and assumes the throne of Dambrath.
- 1040 Year of the Lion's Heart: Cathakay, Filina's daughter, bribes her mother's newest paramour to murder the queen, then takes her place on the throne.
- 1094 Year of the Crested Thrush: Cathakay engages a gold wyrm in battle above the Hills of Dead Kings and the two slay one another. The queen's niece, Melinith, takes the crown.
- 1116 Year of the Empty Scabbard: The Dambrathan navy corners and defeats a large fleet of pirates off the coast of Timarl. Thirteen ships filled with stolen goods go down in waters more than 200 feet deep.
- 1174 Year of the Agate Hammer: Dambrath conducts a series of raids along the coast of the Great Sea, attacking and plundering the coastal cities of Estagund, Durpar, and Veldorn.
- 1213 Year of the Night's Peace: After a series of mishaps results in numerous defeats at sea, Queen Melinith recalls her navy and institutes a policy of isolationism for Dambrath that continues today.
- 1215 Year of Starlight: Queen Melinith dies of old age, and her daughter Ausitil assumes the throne. This event marks the first peaceful succession in the history of the Crinti.
- 1275 Year of the Blade: Queen Ausitil dies in her sleep. The country is without a queen for thirteen days while Yenandra, the recognized heir to the throne, is magically unreachable at sea. Upon her return, Yenandra slays two cousins who are also active contenders for the throne and is immediately crowned queen.
- 1313 Year of the Shattered Oak: Valraxaxath, a black dragon dwelling in the Great Swamp, rises and terrorizes the countryside for four days and nights before vanishing again.
- 1356 Year of the Worm: Queen Yenandra, suffering the ravages of old age and disease, is willingly transformed into a spectral guardian by her wizard daughter Hasifir and several drow sorcerers. Hasifir assumes the throne.
- 1373 Year of Rogue Dragons (current year).

Government

Dambrath is a matriarchal society ruled by a queen who also serves as the High Priestess of the Temple of Loviatar. The queen selects Crinti nobles to fill the other posts within the national government, including but not limited to the honglath (judges), the commanders of the military, and the senior priestesses of Loviatar's temples in other cities.

The current Queen of Dambrath is Hasifir Hazm'cri (LE female half-drow wizard 12/cleric 4 of Loviatar), who—in defiance of custom—was a powerful wizard rather than a high cleric of Loviatar when she took the throne. Her selection came as a surprise to her subjects, who fully expected her mother Yenandra (LE female half-drow rogue 3/cleric 10 of Loviatar/scourge maiden 3), the so-called “Pirate Queen,” to name one of Hasifir's sisters as successor, since both were clerics who shared their mother's taste for sailing and pillage. But Yenandra was visibly failing from both old age and a wasting disease that baffled Dambrath's clerics. In exchange for the throne, Hasifir offered her mother a spell

that would allow her to choose the manner and time of her own death, bind her to the land she had ruled for so long, and weave her name into undying legend.

With the help of a circle of drow sorcerers and the blessing of Loviatar, Hasifir transformed Yenandra and her favorite horse into a spectral guardian and a nightmare, respectively. Now, during the dark of the moon, the people of Dambrath often report seeing a beautiful Crinti rider and her horse, their eyes glowing with red light, moving soundlessly across the countryside. Now called the Nightmare Queen, Yenandra is both loved and feared, as she was during life, and the red lights of her eyes have become a common sight in Dambrath.

Upon taking the throne, Hasifir was forced to accept the role of High Priestess of Loviatar as well as the crown. Thus, she began clerical training and has proven an apt enough student, though she has to rely heavily on advisors within Loviatar's church to perform the more important ceremonies until she is proficient enough to do them herself. Thus, her clerical advisors wield considerably more political power than Loviatar's secondary priestesses normally would.

Crinti duchesses and baronesses hold traditional and hereditary seats of power in Dambrath's various cities, ruling the urban centers and the lands around them with the support of the honglath and the local temple of Loviatar. Though the honglath hold trials and pass judgment on criminals, the duchesses and the temple are responsible for enforcing those rulings and meting out the punishments. In Dambrath, governmental processes are tightly intertwined with the tenets of the Maiden of Pain's faith—each compliments and supports the other across many facets of daily life. The three components of the political structure—the nobility, the honglath, and the temples—function as a set of checks and balances for one another. Because the queen derives her power from the support of these groups, she takes care to ensure that she has the full backing of at least two of them on any given issue.

enemies

From the Crinti's point of view, just about every other government or power center in southern Faerûn is a potential enemy—if for no other reason than the general hatred of drow and their kin that pervades most of Faerûn. However, this xenophobia has waned to some degree with Dambrath's emergence as a valued trade partner in both sea and land commerce. Because of this commercial potential and the fact that Dambrath has shown no signs of hostility in a number of decades, a cautious peace reigns between Dambrath and its neighbors. Still, the chance of sudden conflict keeps the leaders of each country eying the others nervously.

HALRUA

Of all the nations with which Dambrath has engaged in armed conflict in the past, its neighbor to the west is perhaps the least willing to believe that the Crinti desire peace. The Halruaan wizards are suspicious already because of their keen fear of invasion by nations greedy for their magic, but they particularly distrust Dambrath, since both the Crinti and the Arkaiuns before them have given the wizards good reason to doubt that peace can hold. Even today, despite Queen Hasifir's

official stance of neutrality, Dambrathan privateers sometimes prey on Halruaan merchant ships, and Crinti shadow marauders regularly ride into the Nath to harass and raid Halruaan citizens there. Yenandra sent emissaries to Halarahh on more than occasion to assuage the wizards' concerns, but she secretly enjoyed watching them bristle and bluster about her lack of control over her own people.

Since Queen Hasifir's ascension to the throne, the Halruaan wizards have grown more concerned about invasion because of her intense interest in magic. Rumors suggest that she plans to unleash new spells upon her western neighbor, including some acquired from drow sorcerers, to gain access to the fabled Halruaan magic. Worse still, some of the more ambitious and unscrupulous members of Halruaa's growing cult of Shar have begun to wonder whether Crinti magic might speed their ascent to power. Though all Halruaans are insular and somewhat xenophobic, the corrupting influence of the Shadow Weave might sway the emerging sorcerers in their midst to seek dangerous new alliances with their Crinti neighbors.

WILD ELVES

The wild elves living in the Forest of Amtar constitute Dambrath's only stable elf population. The Trunadar are dedicated to battling the drow of T'lindhet to ensure that the forest never falls to the dark elves the way the rest of Dambrath has.

Though few other elves have any interest in setting foot inside the country's borders, they would not be sorry to see its Crinti power structure crumble into ruin. But the elves returning from the Retreat have little interest in moving against Dambrath directly, since they have far too many other crises to contend with (such as the drow invasion of Cormanthor). However, if the Arkaiuns were to rise up against their oppressors, more than a few elf adventurers might be willing to aid the cause of freedom.

cities and sites

Most of Dambrath's population lives in the various cities, towns, and villages along the coast. Almost every community of any size on the Bay of Dancing Dolphins is a port, and more traffic occurs by boat than on foot among these settlements. Every harbor is filled with fishing boats, and substantial markets on shore handle the incoming and outgoing trade goods. Each of the larger port cities features a sizable stockyard, where the prized horses from the ranches await their sale to merchants, who in turn ship them to far-off ports.

The rest of Dambrath's citizens reside on the ranches scattered across the plains or in the mining camps nestled along the south side of the Gnollwatch range. Each ranch is a sprawling, self-sufficient community that includes a main manor house for the Crinti owners, barracks for the ranch hands, a smithy/armory for ironworking, numerous barns and grain storage buildings, and several corrals. These buildings are surrounded by thousands and thousands of acres of open grassland, where herds of horses run. The proprietor of the smallest such ranch might own a herd numbering close to a hundred, while the wealthiest Crinti rancher might own a dozen or more separate ranches, each with several thousand horses.

Cathyr (metropolis)

Somewhat surprisingly, the capital city of Dambrath does not sit on the Bay of Dancing Dolphins, but rather just east of its mouth, on the shore of a smaller bay along the coast. Cathyr marks the southern end of the Trader's Way, which runs almost due north up the eastern side of the country toward Delzimmer. Formerly known as Shantil, Cathyr is perhaps the most cosmopolitan city in Dambrath. Indeed, the right amount of coin can buy almost anything here.

Thick, solid stone walls surround Cathyr, but the gates are seldom closed. The marketplace actually sits outside the walls to the north of the city, since the stockyards where horse trading occurs take up far too much space to be contained inside. In fact, caravans arriving from the Trader's Way must stop in the marketplace, and their wagons may not enter the city proper, though caravan personnel who are not elves can do so—for a fee.

The queen's palace sits near the center of the city, surrounded on all sides by broad green parks. On one side of the palace is the nation's largest temple to Loviatar; on the other is a slightly less august temple dedicated to Lolth. This latter temple sports flying buttresses shaped to resemble spider legs, and its main entrance is carved to resemble a spider's head and mouth.

The inner city is a crowded, bustling, aromatic place. The smells of hay and horse manure permeate the air, since the nobles maintain several hundred stabled horses here. The wealthy live in roomy townhomes that rise two to three stories up from the wide streets of their neighborhoods, most of which are located on the west side of the city. Most of Cathyr's poor crowd together in the eastern section of town, closer to the docks. Some, however, dwell outside the city walls in hovels that stretch southward along the coast in a wide band. In this area, sharecropping farmers who work land owned by the Crinti provide much of the food for the folk living inside the city walls. Legally speaking, these human and humanoid workers are indentured, debtors and minor criminals who can earn their own freedom with years of hard labor in the fields of their Crinti mistresses, but in practice they are little more than slaves.

Cathyr maintains a garrison of 2,000 troops to keep order in the city, battle invaders, or overcome monsters that threaten the populace. This military force is roughly two-thirds cavalry and one-third foot soldiers. The garrison is commanded by Rimala Grevos (LN female half-drow fighter 6/evoker 7), a competent leader who also happens to be a Daughter of the First, though she has little political ambition.

In addition to this land force, Cathyr maintains a fleet of twelve warships. Half of these vessels are out patrolling the waters near the city at any given time, while the rest are positioned to defend the port.

Cathyr (Metropolis): Conventional; AL LE; 100,000 gp limit; Assets 211,870,000 gp; Population 42,374; Mixed (human 74%, Crinti 15%, drow 5%, halfling 3%, gnoll 2%, half-orc 1%).

Authority Figures: Hasifir Hazm'cri, LE female half-drow wizard 12/cleric 4 of Loviatar (Queen of Dambrath and High Priestess of Loviatar).

Important Characters: Chaladra Sse'blis, CE female drow cleric 14 of Lolth (High Priestess of the Temple of Lolth); Nuriel

Limbiya, NG female half-drow cleric 9 of Eilistraee (leading priestess of Eilistraee's followers within the city); Rimala Grevos, LN female half-drow fighter 6/evoker 7 (commander of the city garrison).

City Garrison: Fighter 9, fighter 8 (2), fighter 7, fighter 6 (5), fighter 5 (13), fighter 4 (21), fighter 3 (122), fighter 2 (312), fighter 1 (457), fighter 3/evoker 3, fighter 5/wizard 5, fighter 2/wizard 1 (8), fighter 1/wizard 1 (7), warrior 7 (3), warrior 6 (7), warrior 5 (19), warrior 4 (32), warrior 3 (217), warrior 2 (316), warrior 1 (382), wizard 8 (3), wizard 5 (4), wizard 4 (11), wizard 3 (24), wizard 2 (36).

Herath (large city)

Located at the headwaters of the River Dambron, Herath boasts a population of nearly 18,000, making it the third-largest city in Dambrath. The city's economy centers around the silver mined in the mountains just to the north, as well as a lively smithing trade. Most of the nation's dwarves reside in Herath, where they earn top coin for their smithing work. A number of human smiths have also made names for themselves here. So good are the smiths of Herath that they equip most of Dambrath's armed forces.

Selanith L'baros (LE female half-drow aristocrat 13), the baroness of Herath, is a cruel woman with a fondness for games and contests that end in death. The city arena offers regular events designed to sate the baroness's unusual tastes. Selanith is Queen Hasifir's third cousin, and like many Crinti related to royalty, she hopes that someone in her family (preferably herself) will one day sit on the throne. But although she is ambitious, she is also realistic; she has only 1/32 drow blood, and her features resemble those of a human far more than a dark elf. Still, she was shrewd enough to take a male drow as her consort, so her daughters should all be quite eligible for the crown should the opportunity ever arise.

Maarlith (metropolis)

Like its sister city Cathyr to the east, Maarlith is one of the busiest trade ports in Dambrath, though its population is only a bit more than three-quarters that of the capital. Since foreign trade caravans can't venture any deeper into Dambrath than Cathyr, Maarlith has become the dispersal point for most of the trade goods destined for the interior of the country, almost all of which arrive here by ship. Much of the city's business district is occupied by Crinti trading costers whose sole business is transporting needed goods and luxury items inland to the other towns, villages, and ranches. In addition to the ships carrying goods from elsewhere along the coast, the city's docks are crowded with oceangoing vessels bringing trade items from other lands and loading up with goods for export. Like Cathyr, Maarlith maintains huge stockyards just outside its walls, where many of the ranchers house the horses they intend to sell.

The baroness of Maarlith, Jofine Dulare (LE female half-drow fighter 7/Crinti shadow marauder 5), spent much of her pampered youth becoming an expert horsewoman, and she rode about the countryside with a small following of friends whenever

*The Temple of Lolth in Cathyr*

she pleased. She even ventured into the Nath region of Halruaa several times to raid the villages there, just for the fun of it. Joffine inherited the rulership of Maarlith after she and several of her friends bribed the house guard, kidnapped her mother while she was vacationing at one of her numerous ranches, and then hunted her down for sport.

purl (village)

The name of this pirate haven on the coast of the Great Sea is a bastardization of “pearl,” the gem that many of its visitors use to pay their expenses. Nestled among the hills, the village is half hidden from both the sea to the south and the rest of the country to the north. In reality, Purl is little more than a shanty town—a fetid collection of brothels, beer halls, flophouses, and gambling dens. Its merchants cater to the less savory types who make their livings aboard the corsairs’ ships and privateers’ vessels that sail the high seas around Dambrath.

Most of Purl’s visitors are grizzled veterans of the sea, though not all are independent fortune-hunters. In fact, at least half the sailors in port at any one time are in the service of one or another of the Crinti nobles, though the seadogs themselves might not even realize that they work for someone other than their captains.

With a population just a little above 400, Purl is large enough to cater to every visitor’s tastes, yet small enough to be beneath most folks’ notice. In fact, were it not for the ships that anchor in

its small, sheltered harbor and the orange glow of its nighttime fires, no one would know the town existed, since its buildings are hidden from sight.

Though Purl is nominally under the jurisdiction of Dambrath’s matriarchy, the Crinti completely ignore it. The village has no laws—only the understanding that no one rules anyone else. Fights are not just common, they are part of the attraction, and more than a few unlucky souls wind up dead each night when the carousing gets too rowdy.

T’lindheth (small city)

The drow living below the Gnollwatch Mountains might have a valid claim to the lands of Dambrath, but few of them ever venture forth from the more pleasant, shadowy confines of their home city. With a population of slightly more than 9,000 drow and slaves, T’lindheth is somewhat small compared to many of its sister cities in the Underdark. Still, it can be a formidable opponent, as the Arkaiuns discovered half a millennium ago.

The city proper is situated atop an immense plateau inside an elongated cavern about 3 miles below the surface. A great underground river flows through the cavern, parting at the base of the plateau into two streams that skirt the sides of the rise before rejoining on the opposite end. On the cavern floor, beyond the protection of the plateau, the drow have established a separate market village right at the end of the trade route that emerges

near Herath. Within this area, merchants from the surface and elsewhere in the Underdark congregate to ply their trade. As a result of this unusual proximity to a permanent commercial site, the drow of T'lindhet enjoy a variety of goods from all over Faerûn at better than reasonable prices.

T'lindhet boasts fourteen great drow Houses, which languidly vie for control of both the city and the lands above. Since their conquest of Dambrath, the drow of T'lindhet have fallen into a rather placid state of comfort. Seemingly content to enjoy their accumulated wealth, they display little of the ambition that drives other drow. Perhaps the drow of T'lindhet have grown soft, but with the increased creature comforts that their trading acumen has bought, they see little reason to play such destructive games of maneuver and countermove. They have not completely abandoned their drow ways—certainly the members of every House enjoy the spectacle of rival siblings struggling for control of the estate, and occasionally an opportunity for one House to bring another low is too ripe to pass up. All in all, however, the citizens of T'lindhet would rather partake of the fruits of the lesser races' labors than struggle to advance themselves.

Heroes and Monsters

Despite its busy commerce and growing population, Dambrath produces surprisingly few adventurers. Those rare characters who

do take up the adventuring life are mostly humans or Crinti. Human adventurers are either Arkaiuns seeking a better life outside the oppression of their Crinti mistresses, or the offspring of outlaws from the Swagdar. Most of the Crinti who choose this path are simply dissatisfied with their lives as pampered nobles, but a few take up adventuring because they feel that their more humanlike visages prevent them from gaining prestige within the ranks of the nobility. Regardless of their race, males often have a strong desire to escape the oppression they face in Dambrath. Lizardfolk characters might leave the Great Swamp and strike out on their own, and occasionally a half-orc or gnoll who has grown tired of life as a bodyguard or sellsword might be ready to leave Dambrath in search of something more.

The regions from Chapter 1 suitable for Dambrathan characters include the Forest of Amtar region and the Rethild region. Of the prestige classes in Chapter 2, the Crinti shadow marauder, the scourge maiden, and the Great Sea corsair are all designed for characters originating from Dambrath.

The monsters from Chapter 5 frequently found in Dambrath include the beguiler, the dark tree, the mantimera, the tall moulder, and the tasloi. Other creatures commonly found in the country include gnolls, various giants, lizardfolk, nagas, and drow.

Illustration by Carl Frank



A typical night in Purl



ESTAGUND AND THE SHINING LANDS

Durpar, Estagund, and Var the Golden, the three trading nations collectively known as the Shining Lands, sprawl around the large bay known as the Golden Water, just off the Great Sea. These balmy countries soak up the warmth of the southern sun at what most folk consider to be the extreme southeastern end of Faerûn. Many assume that the Shining Lands mark the end of the civilized world, since all that lies beyond the bay is the Utter East—a collection of lands known to most of Faerûn only through legends too fantastic to be believed. Some claim that the Shining Lands have taken on many of the strange characteristics of their more bizarre eastern neighbors and as such are hardly recognizable as part of Faerûn at all.

Though Durpar, Estagund, and Var the Golden differ in their forms of government and internal operations, all three champion trade as a way of life. Merchant consortiums known as chakas provide products and services, and their leaders, known as nawabs, hold both political and economic power. All three nations also embrace the Adama, a combination of a religious belief and a code of conduct that guides citizens in their daily lives.

geographic overview

The Shining Lands stretch for nearly 500 miles, from the very end of the Toadsquat Mountains and the Lluirwood eastward to the nation of Ulgarth. From the Great Sea, which marks the southern boundaries of Estagund and Var the Golden, the territory rises gently until it reaches the southern slopes of the Dustwall, covering a distance of nearly 250 miles. Estagund occupies the western part of the plains, while Var the Golden extends out onto the peninsula on the south side of the Golden Water. Durpar hugs the bay along its southwestern, western, and northern sides, occupying a narrow, horseshoe-shaped strip of land between the water and two mountain ranges. Though technically not considered part of the Shining Lands, Veldorn (which is known as the Land of Monsters) sits closer to those three countries than perhaps any other region. It occupies the grassy stretch of land just north of Estagund, wedged between the eastern limit of the Shaar and the Giant's Belt Mountains.

Flat, sun-baked plains suitable for growing crops such as wheat, coffee, and warm-weather vegetables dominate the Shining Lands. Where the land hasn't been tamed, the countryside consists of endless miles of gently undulating ground covered with coarse grass, cactus, and the occasional copse of squat, thorny trees. Dry gullies break up the terrain from time to time, but otherwise, the only limit to line of sight in this part of the world is the next distant rise.

Civilization in the Shining Lands clusters around the available water. Towns and cities hug the coast of the bay and the banks of any rivers large enough to continue flowing in the hottest, driest part of the summer. The areas farther inland are much more thinly populated, despite the generally pleasant conditions. Few humanoids live in any of the mountain ranges in and around the Shining Lands, since the monsters that claim the slopes fight fiercely for the limited food supplies there.

The weather in the Shining Lands is hot almost all year. The area gets plenty of sunshine and most of the country (with the exception of the Great Sea's coastline) experiences a mild rainy season. On most days, steady breezes blowing off the ocean cool the land along the coast, making the temperature bearable once the sun slips low in the west. Inland, the breezes gently billow through the waving wheat, making the land seem like a great, dun-colored ocean. During droughts, the winds in the plain occasionally stir up great dust clouds that hamper travel.

major geographic features

Because most of the region consists of flat, grain-covered plains, the unusual physical features of the Shining Lands stand out all the more prominently. Some of these features serve as barriers

along the borders, while others simply rise up from the midst of the land like beacons.

The Aerilpar forest

Known also as the Wood of Dark Trees, this small but dense tropical forest is a gloomy, dangerous blight on an already monster-infested region—the far eastern section of Veldorn. The wood fits well with the rest of the Land of Monsters, since few who enter its steamy depths ever return. Despite the Aerilpar's reputation, more than a few brave explorers have attempted to navigate it, seeking the many treasures hinted at by rumors that circulate in other lands.

The two biggest threats within the Aerilpar Forest are the flying snakes and the dark trees (see page 62). Both of these creatures abound within the woods, somehow coexisting while making the area extremely dangerous for other creatures. In addition, a mated pair of chimeras has established a comfortable nest near the middle of the forest. Each has a black dragon head, and the two have trained a few of the native acid snakes to serve as guard pets near the handful of eggs the female has laid.

In the very center of the forest, a 40-foot-diameter, 4-foot-high, circular stone wall sits in a clearing, with tree branches growing right up to it, but not over the top. Inside the wall, a steep, grass-covered hill rises to a central peak more than 30 feet high. A *hallow* spell and a permanent *Mordenkainen's private sanctum* spell protect the entire area inside the wall. Needless to say, the creatures of the forest stay clear of this mysterious mound.

The curna mountains

This rather small range is sometimes known as the Bluetips or the Mountains of Wisdom. These mountains stretch along the northern coast of eastern Estagund and western Var, forming a barrier between those two nations and the Golden Water to the north. As mountains go, the Bluetips are short and well worn, with far more gentle, grassy meadows and slopes than jagged outcroppings of rock. The tangled copses of suth trees that dot the slopes of the mountains occasionally make travel quite difficult.

Despite their unimposing appearance, few venture into the Curna Mountains because the range has always been home to a number of fell beasts. In fact, when the Durpari barbarians first began to settle the Shining Lands, they referred to the northwestern end of the range as the Beastlands because of the surprising number of deadly creatures that swarmed down out of the lowest passes to harass them. Later, after the Durpari had developed a more sedentary lifestyle, the creatures of the mountains preyed upon their trading caravans.

Modern-day sages have speculated that some unnatural feature hidden within the mountains (a *portal*, perhaps, or some magical monster-generating horror) must have caused this unusual concentration of monsters. The tales and stories, along with the few sketchy records that exist, seem to indicate a far greater rate of population growth than normal, given the types of creatures present and the available food. Regardless of the speculation, no one has ever discovered any anomaly hidden in the mountains

Illustration by Jason Engle



The Aerilpar Forest isn't a safe place for travelers



that could possibly bring about such a situation, and the influx of new monsters has dropped considerably from what it was centuries ago. Currently, a number of leucrottas roam the lower slopes of the Curnas, occasionally wandering down toward human settlements to prey on shepherds and travelers who stray too far from safety. A mated pair of rocs that lives among the highest peaks feasts primarily on the leucrottas, though the two occasionally soar out over the bay to fish for sharks, dolphins, or marlins.

A true menace dwells in a cave complex high in the eastern end of the range, just southeast of Ormpé. Zesilias (LE medusa sorcerer ♀), who has a thirst for magic, hides in the mountains with her mantichore companion. The two work together to gain treasures and magic items to feed Zesilias's habit. The mantichore wears an *amulet of proof against petrification* (see page 55) that allows it to remain with the medusa without risking the effects of her gaze. Zesilias and her pet prey on the citizens of the coastal communities just north of the mountains, often venturing forth in disguises (magical and otherwise) in search of more magic.

Despite the dangers of the mountains, some dwarves recently formed a merchant house (the Gemstone Chaka) in Ormpé after discovering a motherlode of emeralds there. Known as Curna emeralds, these stones have an unusual mineral property that causes their centers to give off a turquoise glow when cut properly. The chaka jealously guards the location of its mine, but rumors around Ormpé have hinted that the dwarves discovered an ancient map in the city's great library that led them to the emerald veins. The discovery of the Curna emeralds has made the Gemstone Chaka quite wealthy in a short period of time, and its members have gained considerable political clout. In fact, the head of the Gemstone Chaka now holds a seat on the Nawab Council of Durpar and was instrumental in the decision to relocate the capital from Heldapan to Vaelan (see Politics and Power).

The dustwall

The mountain range known as the Dustwall has many names, including the Mountains of War, the Mountains of Adama, and the Gryphon Mountains. Among the tallest mountain ranges in Faerûn, the Dustwall forms a high, forbidding barrier that separates Durpar from the Raurin Desert. Unlike the Curnas, these mountains are raw, rough, and towering. Most peaks along the highest central ridge easily reach 15,000 feet, and Adama's Wrath, the highest point, tops 22,000 feet.

These harsh, treacherous mountains form an effective barrier against the raging dust storms that pervade the Raurin on the far side of the range. Legend has it that the Dustwall rose during the cataclysm that destroyed the ancient Raurin Empire, and anyone who views the range harbors little doubt as to the authenticity of that tale. The Dustwall is rocky and steep, etched with gorges and deadfalls all across its length. The hills that abut the mountains are jagged, scree-covered ridges, the intervening valleys choked with rocky outcroppings and thorny brush. Little vegetation grows in the Dustwall range, except for the hardest scrub growth.

Despite its forbidding nature, the Dustwall swarms with gray orcs. Some say that the total number of these creatures exceeds the population of the Shining Lands as a whole, though others reject such a claim, pointing to the lack of available food to

support such numbers. Still, when a gray orc horde descends upon the plains of Durpar to raid, its numbers sometimes equal the population of a small town. Folk living near the gray orcs' hunting range are ever watchful for attacks. Recent reports have indicated that a few rakshasas might be settling in among the gray orcs, planning to bring them to heel and forge an empire in the lowlands after the humans have been vanquished.

In addition to the gray orcs, the Dustwall range supports wyverns and various kinds of giantkin, including ogres, cyclopes (see page 64), stone giants, and hill giants, as well as a few storm giants. Also, rumor has it that a frost giant clan dwells high among the peaks, where the snows last year-round. No one is certain how the frost giants could have gotten there when the climate in the lowlands around the mountains is so hot, but the rumors persist nonetheless.

THE GIANT'S BELT

Like the Dustwall, the Giant's Belt range forms an impressive and desolate barrier between the lowland plains of the Shining South and Raurin. Actually a continuation of the Dustwall, the Giant's Belt range is nearly as high, and just as rocky and crag-filled. The Giant's Belt juts up suddenly and steeply from the grasslands of Veldorn, looking all the more forbidding because of the drastic change in elevation.

The Giant's Belt is aptly named because the rubble-strewn slopes of its mountains support a large and well-organized clan of hill giants led by a particularly crafty and disagreeable specimen named Gruzog Granitejaw (CN male hill giant druid ♀/runecaster ♀). Gruzog has recently joined with the other beast-chieftains of Veldorn in a mutual assistance pact. His clan skirmishes occasionally with the stone giants that live in the far northern end of the range.

The golden water

This tranquil bay forms the coastline for the majority of the Shining Lands. Protected from the harsher ravages of the sea by both land and barrier reef, the waters of this sheltered inlet are unusually calm and clear. The fishing in the Golden Water is sublime, and the daily catch keeps almost every table in the coastal settlements supplied with fresh seafood. At any given moment, scores of trading ships and naval vessels are visible from any point along the surface of the bay. Some of these ships carry cargo to the various ports along the shore; others keep watch for creatures that could menace the shipping.

The Golden Water contains certain minerals that give off a warm, golden hue when struck by the light of the rising or setting sun. This phenomenon is what originally gave both the bay and the Shining Lands their names, though now, most Faerûnians associate these monikers with the locals' love of trade and the gold it brings them.

Most of the sea creatures that dwell in the Golden Water are peaceful, though schools of sharks sometimes disrupt the pearl-diving and coral-gathering operations. The aquatic elf city called Nemilar sits at the bottom of the bay in the middle of its expanse, just northeast of Ormpé. Several years ago, a fanatical aquatic elf druid named Di'lishae Lheilos (N male aquatic elf

druid 12 of Deep Sashelas), used the *awaken* spell to give a giant octopus sentience. He hoped to gain the creature's aid in stopping the destruction of the coral reefs by nearby humans, who regularly harvested chunks of the coral to make jewelry. The octopus, who took the name Slulushtup, gladly provided the aid requested, but it was not enough to stop the humans' depredations. Afterward, the octopus studied Di'lishae's ways and eventually embraced the druidic path himself. Now Slulushtup (N male awakened giant octopus druid 9 of Deep Sashelas) has taken up residence near the chain of islands that divides the eastern half of the bay from the western half. He has begun using his own awaken spells to create a cadre of intelligent sharks and dire sharks, which he has convinced to patrol the reefs and attack coral harvesters.

Raurin, the Dust Desert

Sometime before the founding of Mulhorand and Unther, an empire of wizards rose up in the eastern lands of Faerûn. Known as Imaskar, this nation was a place of mighty magic, strange technologies, and terrible hubris, even in the face of the deities themselves. When the Imaskari brought a whole horde of slaves through a *portal* and then sealed it to trap them in Imaskar forever, no one dreamed that the deities of those slaves would come to Toril and wreak their vengeance upon the prideful wizards.

The wasteland now known as the Dust Desert of Raurin is the result of those deities' dreadful vengeance.

Terrible sandstorms ravage the blasted land where Imaskar once stood, tearing at the ground, the foothills, and the few creatures bold enough to make their homes here. Lightning and thunder rage back and forth across the featureless flatlands, but no rain ever falls. Clouds of dust swirl and buffet everything in their path, preventing even small piles of stones from remaining intact for long.

A scant few creatures find the lashing wind and tearing, blowing sand to their liking. Both blue and brown dragons are fond of the Dust Desert, though their battles with one another sometimes rumble so loudly that they drown out the buffeting winds howling around them. In addition, a few genies occasionally gather here for private discussions or to battle one another. Djinn visit most often, since the interminable winds are similar to those characteristic of their home plane, but efreet also drop in from time to time to enjoy the scorching air and bone-dry conditions.

Little remains of Imaskar's great cities, and the few partial structures that do exist are often buried in the shifting sands. Legends speak of vast ruins filled with wondrous and powerful artifacts, as well as long-lost secrets of magic coveted by modern-day wizards. Rumors also persist of a great underground temple to Set hidden somewhere in the center of one of those ruined cities.

Illustration by Vince Locke



The Golden Water

people of the shining lands

For the most part, the people of the Shining Lands devote their time and energy to furthering trade, accumulating creature comforts, and strengthening their bonds of mutual respect. Where these fundamental aspects of civilization are lacking or the people are oppressed (in Veldorn, for example), the residents struggle to improve their lives, striving to emulate the shining example set by Durpar, Estagund, and Var the Golden.

Races and cultures

Though the dominant ethnic group of the Shining Lands is the Durpari, the open, welcoming nature of the natives has ensured that every recognizable race and ethnic group is represented here. Traders and merchants who come from distant lands often choose to spend extra time in one or more of the three countries to enjoy the favorable climate and the hospitality. Some settle down and intermarry with the natives; others simply visit for a short time and take their leave.

Other than humans, halflings are the most prevalent humanoid in the Shining Lands, and they have established sizable populations in both Estagund and Durpar. Most of these have migrated from Luiren, either to establish trade or simply to partake of the delights offered by another culture. Dwarves congregate in both the Dustwall and the Curna Mountains, and many have established powerful chakas, or merchant houses, based on the mining of gold and gemstones. More than a few half-elves live in the urban centers of the Shining Lands because they are accepted and valued as individuals. Few elves live in or visit these countries, however, since most of them find the strong focus on trade and wealth distasteful. In recent years, more and more gnomes have begun to settle in the region, because their talents as craftsfolk (particularly gemcutters) are in great demand.

DURPARI

The Durpari people have lived along the shores of the Golden Water since before the rise of the Imaskari Empire. They never really established a national identity in their formative years as a people, since they were regularly enslaved, slaughtered, or abandoned to barbarism by various other groups around them—most notably the Mulan of Mulhorand. Thereafter, except for a brief period of conflict in which the Arkaiuns of Dambrath invaded and sacked much of the Shining Lands, the Durpari have been free and independent people. Out of their relative isolation, the Durpari have at last developed a national identity based on trade, respect, and structured law.

The average Durpari stands only 5-1/2 feet tall and has dark, almost ebony-colored skin and black or gray eyes. Her hair is usually dark and thick, though once in a while, a child with deep reddish-gold hair is born.

Folk in the Shining Lands speak Durpari, which has its roots in Draconic, Mulhorandi, and Rauric. They employ the Thorass alphabet, which was imported from the west.

MONSTERS (VELDORN)

The lands north of Estagund and northwest of Durpar are infested with powerful and well-organized monsters, each of which controls a portion of present-day Veldorn. Through sheer force of personality and more than a little special power, the leaders of these various organizations, who are known outside Veldorn as beast-chieftains, have managed to form an alliance whereby they protect one another from the “depredations” of armies from other lands to the south, west, and north. Beyond this mutual defense pact, the various kinds of monsters leave one another alone.

Veldorn began as a number of small Durpari settlements along the western shore of the Golden Water, between the bay and the Curna Mountains. Over time, creatures such as vampires, beholders, wererats, and beings from the lower planes began to seep down out of the mountains—mostly from the northwest region known as the Beastlands. These evil creatures either overran the human settlements outright or subtly insinuated themselves into their power structures. Other sorts of monsters also shared space with these creatures, either acting as servant races to more powerful creatures or cohabitating for mutual benefit.

Gradually, all the centers of civilization in the Veldorn region fell under the sway of fell beasts, and the country became known as the Land of Monsters. Other creatures, including a dragon or two and the hill giants of the Giant's Belt range, have since joined the alliance, staking their own territorial claims. Through the centuries, the humans of Durpar and Estagund have managed to drive some of Veldorn's creatures away from the coast of the Golden Water and reclaim that area as their own, but the beast-tribes have simply migrated to other areas still held by their compatriots, causing Veldorn's borders to shift north and west.

Life and society

Life in the Shining Lands is surprisingly free, with none of the heavy-handed interference from the power structure so common in neighboring lands. As long as the citizens follow the way of the Adama (see Law and Order and Religion, below), they can generally pursue their business affairs as they see fit. Because it pervades so many of the day-to-day activities in the Shining Lands, the Adama allows the people to govern themselves, effectively negating the need for a central authority. Durpar, where society revolves around business, serves as the best model of this arrangement. In Estagund, much the same situation prevails, though the ruler still makes the major decisions and commands a high level of respect and service from the people. In Var the Golden, the lifestyle of the average merchant or laborer is the same in most ways as it would be in the other two states, but life at the top is decidedly more political, with three factions constantly struggling for political power. Such posturing tends to draw attention away from business and force the citizens to take sides in debates whether they want to or not. But the fact that commerce remains the driving force behind the struggle ties Var the Golden tightly to the other two nations of the Shining Lands.

ECONOMY

The business of the Shining Lands is business, or so the popular saying goes. The Durpari people have long practiced trade as

a way of life, and they have become exceptionally good at it. Durpari like to claim that their focus on commerce came about as a more peaceful means of competition than warring with one another—a practice that long held the various nomadic tribes back from advancement as a people. With the recognition of the Adama, the Durpari turned from killing one another to trying to outdo one another in the marketplace. The resulting devotion to material gain spawned a people so skilled in bargaining that they rival even the people of Amn.

Since trade is the center of life in the Shining Lands, the chaka (trading house) is the most prominent kind of organization in the region. Most Durpari identify a citizen by his chaka before even his family, though in most cases, family and chaka are one and the same. A small chaka might operate only a single business, such as a laundry or a cheese shop, while the most powerful might actually have a number of smaller chakas under its wing. These larger chakas are usually diversified and self-supporting, managing a number of businesses and trade routes. Often, they set up shops in other lands to sell the same goods they export from their own countries.

Unlike many countries, the nations of the Shining Lands welcome any kind of coinage minted elsewhere. A Durpari merchant doesn't care whether a gold coin came from Cormyr or Calimshan, as long as it is gold. Though they examine coins carefully to ensure that they are legitimate, they happily accept them at face value.

The countries of the Shining Lands export a number of natural products, the most important of which is grain. Durpari farmers harvest acres of wheat from the endless stretches of open plains to sell in the markets of other lands. Gems of various types, coffee, fish, and a few kinds of fruit and vegetables are also shipped from ports in the Shining Lands to other parts of Faerûn. Manufactured goods are gradually becoming important export commodities too, as are trade goods from other lands. Durpari chakas specializing in exotic goods bring products from distant Zakhara and Maztica to the Shining Lands, where they are sold to both the local people and the merchants who wish to ship them to far-flung Amn, Waterdeep, and Thesk, among other places.

LAW AND ORDER

The Durpari hold very strongly to their belief in a code of conduct known as the Adama. This code affects every aspect of society, from trade practices to punishments for crimes. Both a religious belief and a way of life, the Adama dictates how citizens should conduct themselves in all aspects of life. Because so much of life in the Shining Lands centers around trade, however, the precepts of the Adama tend to focus on a person's conduct in business.

In general terms, those who adhere to the Adama view all crimes as theft—whether the perpetrator has stolen property, life, or the trust of another. Thus, fraud is considered just as heinous a crime as murder, and unfair or dishonest business practices draw penalties just as harsh as those imposed for more traditional crimes. Few criminals receive second chances here, since tolerance for injustice is minimal.

In general, punishments for crimes in the Shining Lands fit the culture. Fines are effective deterrents in a society that values commerce and wealth above almost all else. Even trying to pass

substandard products off as quality workmanship can result in financially crippling punitive damages. Furthermore, since citizens are quick to abandon a chaka that has been found guilty of underhanded business practices, the fiscal damage often far exceeds the mere fines levied. More than a few chakas have lost both business and political clout (see Government, below) when consumers registered their dissatisfaction with their coin purses.

Interestingly enough, Durpari society views capital punishment as an offense against the Adama. Thus, people found guilty of capital crimes are restrained, usually as indentured workers in mines or on farms, instead of being put to death. For most offenses, such enforced servitude lasts only a few years, but the criminal must begin again with nothing upon release—a secondary punishment in itself. Those not rehabilitated after an initial sentence are restrained for the rest of their lives.

DEFENSE AND WARCRAFT

Each country in the Shining South handles its military affairs in a slightly different manner, though the end result is nearly the same across the entire region.

Durpar: Like all other matters in Durpar, national defense is treated as a business proposition and contracted out to the private sector. Thus, instead of maintaining a national standing army, the country entrusts its defense to a collection of privately operated mercenary companies, each based out of whichever city funds its operations. The nawabs of the various communities handle the hiring of the defense chakas, but the execution of the local defense is generally left up to the heads of the chakas that receive the contracts.

Every city and town in Durpar collects sufficient taxes from the sale of goods (see Government, below) to pay a contract for defense. The larger ports typically hire chakas that specialize in naval defense, but even the tiniest town usually hires a defense chaka, though it might be no more than an extended family of traditional soldiers. More than a few adventuring groups have chosen to retire in Durpar, form a chaka, and accept a contract to defend the community they call home.

Estagund: Unlike in Durpar, where absolutely every function is a business process, the time-honored tradition of a noble warrior class is still alive and well in Estagund. Known as the Maquar, the members of this noble class follow a highly restrictive code of conduct that dictates many aspects of their lives and limits or prohibits many activities. In exchange for these sacrifices, the Maquar are freed from the responsibility of providing for themselves so they can devote their lives entirely to the protection of the people. The Maquar are answerable only to the Rajah of Estagund and those he deems fit to lead (usually the leaders of the various cities to which units of Maquar are allocated for defense).

Var the Golden: Not all is calm and peaceful in the Land of Wheat. Three major factions—the nawabs (merchants), the hajwas (landed nobles), and the janas (priests of the Adama)—constantly struggle with one another for power (see Government, below), and each side of this unstable triangle backs up its claims with private military forces. Although such gamesmanship has little effect on the daily life of the common merchant or laborer, the costs in coin, time, and manpower to keep all these troops in good order saps the country's profits. But in many ways the money is

well spent, since the presence of these forces acts as a deterrent to would-be invaders. Few enemies would casually affront Var, knowing that the various factions could easily band together and pool their forces to repel any threats from the outside.

RELIGION

The Adama pervades all facets of life in the Shining South, just as mainstream religion does in many other parts of Faerûn. The major difference is that the Durpari people are extremely tolerant of other religions, since their belief system accepts the multitude of deities followed in other parts of the world, rather than competing with them.

In the strictest sense, the Adama, also known as "the One," is the embodiment of the spirit found in all things—humanoids, animals, plants, rocks, and even the gods. Therefore, all creatures and objects on Toril, including deities, are considered manifestations of the Adama. In principle, the Adama is so far-reaching that worshipping any deity is effectively paying homage to it.

In practice, however, not every deity is acceptable. Some are favored because they embody the core values of the Adama better than others. In particular, Zionel (Gond), Curna (Oghma), Lucha (Selûne), Torm, and Waukeen represent the broadest aspects of day-to-day life in the Shining Lands, and thus their followers are welcomed above all others. Other deities—specifically those that require human sacrifice, and Mask, who represents thievery—are rejected because the tenets of their faiths are at cross-purposes with those of the Adama. This seeming contradiction does not bother the inhabitants of the Shining Lands. The opposite of a cherished principle might be a philosophical necessity, but that doesn't make it appealing.

Following the Adama is more a matter of everyday bearing and conduct than ceremony and ritual. The Durpari believe that the Adama exists in all things they do, and if their dealings with others are fair and just, then they honor the Adama. The laws that govern the people are based on the Adama's tenets, which for all practical purposes are the same as the principles espoused by the five Faerûnian deities who best exemplify it.

Adventurers

For the most part, adventurers are treated the same as any other visitors to the Shining Lands—neither sought after nor scorned. While sellswords and wandering wizards have ample opportunity to explore the edges of civilization and unearth treasures from the ruined remains of the past, the Durpari do not want such activities to interrupt the flow of business. Thus, adventurers who get in the way of commerce (or worse yet, violate the laws of the Adama through their actions) are dealt with just as quickly and harshly as any local citizen might be.

This general ambivalence toward adventurers does not, however, mean that the folk of Estagund, Durpar, and Var the Golden have no use for them. On the contrary, Durpari merchants are quite happy to conduct business with any newcomers who have coins burning holes in their pockets and need specialized—and expensive—equipment. Likewise, they are quite willing to bargain with adventurers who return victorious from distant places with wondrous—and often magic—treasures to exchange. Beyond the opportunity for profit,

though, the citizens of the Shining Lands recognize the need for brave outsiders who can rid their lands of foul beasts that would otherwise prey on their cities, disrupting both lives and livelihoods.

Veldorn is the obvious exception to this attitude, since the beast-chieftains of that land hold adventurers in the lowest regard. As far as these monster lords are concerned, anyone who comes storming into their territories spoiling for a fight is fair game for a little retributive amusement, and monster-hunting heroes automatically go to the top of that list. Few who strike out to tame wild Veldorn realize just how united the beast-chieftains are when it comes to repelling invaders, and fewer still return to warn others of their unusual level of organization. Occasionally, the foul creatures of Veldorn do more than send the would-be heroes packing—they also mount a counterattack, usually along a trade way, to reinforce the concept that they are not to be trifled with.

politics and power

The Golden Rule ("He who has the gold makes the rules") applies in the Shining Lands perhaps better than anywhere else in Faerûn. Wealth might well be the driving factor in the politics and power structure of most other nations, but nowhere else is that fact so openly embraced.

The nations of the Shining Lands look at politics in slightly different ways, as described below.

Durpar: The people of this nation so completely buy into the idea that wealth is synonymous with power that they have established a government based solely on affluence, with the leaders of the richest chakas forming the nation's ruling body. This system is not nearly as corrupt as it might appear. Although it behooves every chaka to amass as much wealth as possible to earn a seat on the council, doing so at the expense of solid business practices inevitably backfires. A chaka that produces shoddy goods and overcharges for them might gain a seat for one season, but such tactics would soon become known, and the offending chaka could well crumble from the ensuing fines and lost business. The citizens of Durpar are shrewd, and they understand that shopping is more than just procuring goods—it's also a means of voting for council members. No chaka on the High Council can remain there long by engaging in shady contracting practices, either. Contracting one's own chaka to perform street cleaning or some other public function won't work unless the chaka has the means of getting the job done right. The people of Durpar won't stand for any affront to the Adama, so the members of the High Council must act in the public interest.

Despite the inherent checks and balances on the system, the politics of Durpar are not entirely nonpartisan. On the contrary, the various nawabs constantly plot and scheme with one another to incorporate favorable trading conditions for themselves and their allies into the laws and contracts. Perhaps the most recent—and possibly the most stunning—display of politics in Durpar was the High Council's recent decision to relocate the capital from Heldapan to Vaelan, a move that most Vaelenor consider a true feather in the city's cap, though the citizens of Heldapan still scowl about it when the issue is brought up.

Estagund: Since Estagund is a hereditary monarchy, its power structure isn't quite the same as Durpar's, but the result is similar

because the Rajah of Estagund draws his power from wealth. Not only is he the wealthiest individual in Estagund, but he is also the kingdom's war leader and the supreme commander of the Maquar. The heads of the various wealthy chakas do wield considerable influence in government, but they act as an advisory council at best; the Rajah functions as a true monarch.

Var the Golden: Also a monarchy, Var is ruled by Supreme Potentate Anwir Duprestiskava. Just below him, three powerful factions—the hajwas, the nawabs, and the janas, constantly vie with one another for supremacy. Each faction is powerful enough in its own right to unseat the ruler if it could focus on that goal, but Anwir avoids that outcome by playing one against the others in an endless political game. If not for this incessant power struggle, life in Var would be a lot more like that in its neighbor states.

The hajwas, or landed nobles, have the most wealth in the form of property and trading investments. The nawabs, leaders of the various chakas, argue constantly with the hajwas for a greater percentage of the profits because they make the deals and do all the work of shipping the goods to market. The janas, or priests, want to see the wealth reallocated for the glory of the Adama and spent as they see fit. After all, without their divine guidance, there would be no wealth to enjoy—or so they claim.

Veldorn: In the Land of Monsters, the power structure is simple: The beasts rule as much territory as they can, and all who oppose them are brutally eliminated. No love is lost between the rulers of Veldorn's various city-states, either. If greater threats from beyond their borders did not occupy much of their attention, the monsters that control this region would tear one another apart. But because a few of them have the foresight to understand the fate that awaits them all without cooperation, they have forged a loose alliance in which each watches the others' backs. So far, this system has worked, and the beast-leaders otherwise leave each other alone to conduct their affairs.

history of the shining south

The region around the Golden Water began as a fertile land well suited to the nomadic lifestyle of the many human tribes that roamed its coasts. Over time, these tribes tired of skirmishing with one another and suffering the depredations of other, greater nations, so they settled into more permanent communities, where trading became a prominent occupation. Today, the inhabitants of these nations are considered some of the best hagglers in the world.

TIMELINE

Year	Event
–2488	Imaskar falls. Left without guidance, the subject-states of Durpar and Gundavar (present-day Estagund and Var the Golden) fall into barbarism.
–1922 to –623	A series of skirmishes between Mulhorand and Durpari barbarians occurs. Many Durpari tribes are wiped out; others are reduced to a few families.
–1405	Heldapan is founded as a fishing and trading center.
–1234	Vaelen (currently known as Old Vaelen) is founded as a trading center on the site of a natural spring.
–1183	Vaelantar (currently known as Vaelan) is built as a fortified trading post.

–862	Klionna (currently known as Chavyondat) is founded as a fishing and trading center.
–623	Year of Clipped Wings: The Kingdom of Durpar is founded under Maharajah Udandwi, uniting all the trading communities along the northern coast of the Golden Water.
–256	Year of Able Warriors: Satama, a Durpari trader, begins preaching the Adama.
–252	Year of Vindication: Satama is named Maharajah of the Kingdom of Durpar.
–241	Year of the Sand Shroud: The Veldorn tribe—the most prominent in the region between the Golden Water and the Curna Mountains, as well as along the Liontongue River—declares itself the Kingdom of Veldorn. Vaelen is designated as its capital.
–236	Year of Unfriendly Ports: The tribes in Gundavar are united under Rajah B'heshti I, and the Kingdom of Gundavar is founded.
–229	Year of the Myrmidon Maid: A formal alliance between Gundavar, Durpar, and Veldorn is established.
–162	Year of Boneblight: Tribesmen in western Gundavar revolt against the Rajah and found the Kingdom of Estagund.
–119	Year of Close Scrutiny: Rajah Marak III of Gundavar invades Estagund in an attempt to reunite the two countries.
–112	Year of Tortured Dreams: Rajah B'heshti II relinquishes claims on Estagund, changes the name of Gundavar to Var, and declares the Adama the official state religion.
–83 to 1002	Barbarians from Ulgarth begin raiding Durpari cities. Such raiding continues for the next millennium.
48	Year of the Bloodied Pikes: Thultim, the seventh king of Estagund, dies heirless. A succession war breaks out, and Estagund disintegrates into a collection of city-states.
127	Year of the Defiant Stone: Durpar, Var, and Veldorn establish formal trade relations with Mulhorand.
142	Year of the Prowling Naga: Beholder clans descend from the Curnas and conquer Assur, enslaving the humans and establishing themselves as princes.
143	Year of the Smiling Princess: Durpari forces unsuccessfully attempt to free Assur from the clutches of the beholder princes.
147	Year of the Iron Colossus: Assurian beholder princes conquer Vaelantar and Ormpé. Veldorn is referred to as the Land of Monsters by Maharajah Waileen I.
153	Year of the Wolfstone: Several demons appear in Ormpé and defeat the beholder princes in a battle for control of the city.
212	Year of the Awakening Magic: Durpar makes a second attempt to free the coastal cities of Veldorn from monster influence and is again repulsed.
245	Year of the Dun Dragon: The city of Vaelen is overwhelmed by werecreatures led by a wererat prince. Thousands of refugees continue to flee to Durpar to avoid the monster incursions.
317	Year of the Riven Shield: A trade dispute sparks the first Mulhorandi-Durpari Coin War.

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| <p>428 Year of the One's Tears: Maharajah Waileen V of Durpar dies without heirs. A High Council of the eleven wealthiest merchants is established to maintain calm and order until a successor can be named.</p> <p>447 Year of the Awakening Treant: The High Council of Durpar is formally recognized as the official form of government in Durpar.</p> <p>551 Year of the Barren Chamber: Estagund is conquered by the Arkaiuns of Dambrath.</p> <p>552 Year of the Dead: Var is conquered by the Arkaiuns of Dambrath.</p> <p>553 Year of the Gnashing Tooth: The Durpari cities of Sandrun, Pharsul, and Morvar are sacked by the Arkaiuns of Dambrath.</p> <p>554 Year of Waving Wheat: Estagund regains its independence from Dambrath and unites under King Bonrial. Var also declares its independence, and the noble, merchant, and religious factions begin squabbling over who will become the new Rajah. The Golden War begins, named for the endless wheat fields where much of the fighting takes place.</p> <p>557 Year of the Melding: Muwadeen, a retired sellsword from Estagund without ties to any of the three Varan factions, negotiates peace among the janas, nawabs, and hajwas. In a rare moment of agreement, all three factions ask Muwadeen to serve as Supreme Potentate of Var, with a council of advisors from each faction to counsel him.</p> <p>823 Year of the Floating Petals: Estagund and Var skirmish over water rights along their common border.</p> <p>1002 Year of the Heavenly Rock: Durpar negotiates an armed peace with Ulgarth.</p> <p>1023 Year of the Pirate's Trove: King Selkarin of Estagund attempts to invade Dambrath and is slain. His brother Hedgita ascends the throne, the kingdom in shambles.</p> | <p>1026 Year of Crimson Magics: Jeradeem Seltarir, a nawab of the High Council of Durpar, negotiates the purchase of the throne of Estagund from financially strapped King Hedgita and places his oldest son Numambi on the throne as Rajah.</p> <p>1027 Year of the Tempest: Rajah Numambi Seltarir of Estagund establishes the Maquar as both an elite military body and a public works force to aid in getting the economy moving again. He also renames the capital Chavyondat, after his first daughter.</p> <p>1043 Year of the Dark Rider: The second Mulhorandi-Durpari Coin War erupts over tax rates. Wererats of Vaelen attack several military caravans from both sides during the fighting.</p> <p>1046 Year of the Twilight Campaign: Mulhorand attacks Vaelen to destroy the wererat presence there. The city is reduced to rubble, but the werecreatures remain in force, mostly underground.</p> <p>1048 Year of the Chevalier: Saed, formerly a nawab on the council of Turelve in Durpar, is transformed into a vampire and flees to the destroyed city of Vaelen, where he quickly assumes control.</p> <p>1049 Year of Auril's Absence: The beast-chieftains of Veldorn are united under Saed, the vampire lord of Vaelen.</p> <p>1102 Year of the Chaste Maiden: Combined forces from Durpar, Var, and Estagund drive the beholders out of Vaelantar and Assur and send them fleeing west, toward the Toadsquat Mountains.</p> <p>1103 Year of the Consuming Glory: The Durpar/Var/Estagund forces defeat the demons of Ormpé and scatter them northwest, into the wasteland there. Humans begin to resettle the vacated cities.</p> <p>1152 Year of the Portentous Waters: Durpar makes its first attempt to reopen the trade route with Mulhorand by</p> |
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old vaelen or vaelan?

Over the centuries, merchants and explorers from the Heartlands have visited the Shining South and returned with numerous maps of the region. Unfortunately, few could agree on both the location and the spelling of the city known as Vaelan. Some claimed that they had visited a bustling, fortified trading port by that name on the western coast of the Golden Water, which was under Durpar's banner. Others insisted that Vaelen was actually a monster-filled ruin far inland from the bay, nestled near a natural spring in some hills about a half-day's ride from a great river. Only recently was this confusion resolved, when a scribe named Loducius the Laughing returned from the shining Lands to Waterdeep with an explanation.

In the early days of the Shining Lands, the Veldorn tribe gathered yearly in some low hills, where a spring bubbled forth and trickled away toward the Liontongue River. Eventually, when these tribesfolk settled down to engage in trade, they founded the community of Vaelen at their old gathering site. In later years, when rival tribes began to attack their caravans, the Veldorn

built a fortified trading port on the coast of the Golden Water and named it Vaelantar, which meant "Little Vaelen" in Durpari. The caravans could store their goods there until ships arrived to pick them up.

When monsters began pouring forth from the Curna Mountains in the second century DR, Vaelantar fell to beholders and was lost to Veldorn. A century later, the capital of Veldorn also fell, this time to werecreatures. Then Mulhorand, tired of having its caravans harassed by the werecreatures of Vaelen, sent an army that reduced the former capital of Veldorn to rubble in 1046. A half century after that, Durpar reclaimed Vaelantar for the human population by finally driving out the monsters, sending them north and west. The nawabs of the High Council, recognizing the advantage of controlling more ports on the bay, claimed the territory between the Golden Water and the Curna range as part of Durpar and began to resettle the old communities. Somewhere along the way, the name Vaelantar was shortened to Vaelan, and the original capital became known as Old Vaelen.

sending an expeditionary force to clean out the monsters of Veldorn. The attack fails because every monster power comes to the aid of the others.

- 1184 Year of the Howling Hourglass: The blue dragon Anwir Dupretiskava slays the Supreme Potentate of Var. Disguised as a human, the dragon claims to be a distant cousin of the old ruler and gains the throne.
- 1281 Year of the Cold Soul: Durpar and Estagund make a second, joint attempt to clear Veldorn of monsters. The march into Veldorn territory lasts only 3 days before the Durpari are forced to turn back.
- 1370 Year of the Tankard: The first Durpari merchant ships return from Maztica with trade goods.
- 1371 Year of the Unstrung Harp: The High Council of Durpar votes to relocate the capital of Durpar to Vaelan.
- 1373 Year of Rogue Dragons (current year): Merchants of the Shining Lands travel as far as Waterdeep, the Utter East, Zakhara, and Maztica to procure wares for other markets.

government

The formal power structures of the nations known as the Shining Lands differ more than any other shared feature. Though to all outward appearances the almighty coin is king in Durpar, Estagund, and Var, the truth is a little different. In fact, each kingdom approaches government from a slightly different perspective.

Durpar: Compared with the citizens of other countries along the southeastern coast of Faerûn, the people of Durpar live almost autonomous lives. Though the citizens consider adherence to the Adama to be of paramount importance for maintaining peace, harmony, and a sense of accomplishment on both a personal and a national level, the people of Durpar are generally free to conduct their business and personal affairs as they see fit.

The nawabs of the eleven richest chakas in the country form the High Council of Durpar, the ruling body of the nation. Seats on the council are filled annually, according to the chakas' reported assets, and the leader of the wealthiest one becomes the Grand Nawab of Durpar. The current grand nawab is Kara Jeratma (LG female human aristocrat 4/illusionist 10), who is not only the wealthiest member of the High Council but also one of the wealthiest individuals in Faerûn.

The people of Durpar accept the High Council's authority because they believe that its members act in the best interests of the country. The logic behind this assumption is purely mercantile: The council members have already proven their business acumen by accumulating the vast fortunes necessary to gain their council seats in the first place. Predictably, their decisions tend to benefit their own chakas, but from a business viewpoint, what's good for them is likely to be good for the rest of the chakas as well.

In theory, the nawabs are empowered to make only the decisions that are necessary to keep the kingdom's infrastructure operational and its economy running smoothly. For example, they can collect a modest tax on every sales transaction to fund public works. With these funds, the High Council contracts various chakas to protect the population from invasion, keep the streets clean, maintain the

public buildings, keep the peace, and so forth. In reality, the eleven wealthiest people in Durpar have quite a bit of political pull, so they can influence many other chakas behind the scenes. Recently, several of the nawabs on the High Council managed to swing a vote to move the capital from Heldapan, its traditional location, to the newer city of Vaelan. The nawabs who voted in favor of this change all maintain their chakas along the old Veldorni region of the Golden Water, and a new influx of wealth from mines in that area enabled them to earn enough seats on the High Council to pass the measure. Thus, those chakas stand to gain improved trading conditions and can reward their own favored chakas with juicy contracts for public service.

In the same way that the High Council manages the affairs of the entire country, individual councils—each with eleven nawabs—control the operations of the individual communities where they are based. The only requirement for earning a seat on such a community council is that the chaka's headquarters be inside that city's boundaries. Only rarely do nawabs of the High Council also sit on community councils. Though they are certainly eligible to do so by virtue of their wealth, they are usually far too busy to manage multiple council positions. But when the High Council's membership shuffles because of a sudden change in wealth status, the nawabs unseated from the High Council tend to take a sudden interest in their local ones.

Estagund: In this kingdom, the rajah maintains control over the country, but he relies heavily on the assistance of his advisors—landed nobles who also happen to be the heads of Estagund's wealthiest chakas. Though the power rests in the hands of a hereditary monarch rather than a council of the wealthy, as in Durpar, the royal family also controls the wealthiest chaka.

In 1026 DR, Jeradeem Seltarir, considered by many to be the most uncanny trader in the history of the Durpari people, actually purchased the throne of Estagund from King Hedgita for precious gems with a total value in excess of a million gold pieces. Jeradeem promptly placed his second son, Numambi Seltarir, on the throne as rajah. This new wealth allowed the formerly impoverished Hedgita to become a landed noble and an advisor in Numambi's court, and the change allowed Estagund to dig its way out of financial squalor and become a respected trading power. The Seltarir family has ruled Estagund ever since, and neither its power nor its wealth has waned. The current rajah, Ekripet Seltarir (LG male human aristocrat 5), is a young but energetic ruler who works hard to see his nation prosper.

The one true force that allows Ekripet to remain in power, even when his decisions are unpopular with the nobility, is the Maquar. A wise legacy from Numambi, who established the organization in his earliest days as rajah, the Maquar is a cadre of hand-picked soldiers fiercely loyal to the throne. Though some units of the Maquar have been placed under the command of various nobles to protect the countryside, they never move against the throne, regardless of their commanders' orders to the contrary. The current leader of the Maquar, who answers directly to Rajah Seltarir, is Indamu Podo (LG male human fighter 8/Maquar crusader 6), a dedicated soldier who has trained for the position since childhood. Though Ekripet nominally commands the Maquar, he considers Indamu a close friend and carefully considers his advice in all military matters.

The nobles are sometimes referred to as hajwas, though that title is formally used only in Var. Many are longtime landholders (descendants of the original nomadic tribes that first settled the region) who have amassed their wealth from centuries of farming. Others are the new rich—the offspring of merchant princes who used their profits to purchase baronies within the last few generations. These two groups often find themselves at odds with one another, and the rajah must occasionally settle disputes between rival nobles who like to look down their noses at one another. When they are not arguing, the nobles manage their holdings much as they see fit, though they are still constrained by the tenets of the Adama and by the good business practices it requires. In a way, the common folk of Estagund exert a degree of power over the nobles because, should a noble not provide the safety, infrastructure, and incentives for trade (low taxes) that the people expect, they can simply relocate to a barony that does.

Var the Golden: The government of this peninsular country is by far the most convoluted and controversial in the three trading nations. Supreme Potentate Anwir Duprestiskava is nominally the head of state, but realistically, the three factions (the hajwas, the nawabs, and the janas) that vie for influence with the ruler wield almost as much power as he does. This unstable triangle spawns constant maneuvering, infighting, and outright conflict among the factions, and the potentate typically plays the role of peacemaker.

The hajwas are traditional nobles, hereditary landowners who have invested most of their wealth in their property and in business. They want to continue to control the wealth of the nation the old-fashioned way, with the common people working the land for the nobles' benefit. Any landed noble is automatically part of the hajwa faction should she choose to participate, but the owners of the larger holdings have considerably more influence within the faction than those with smaller holdings.

If Estagund were a more agrarian country, the hajwas would undoubtedly hold sway over the other two factions and have the potentate's ear. But since Var's economy has expanded beyond agriculture, the nawabs (merchants) have gained an equal footing in the politics of the country. The nawabs have established a stranglehold on Var's trade industry, including the export of grains and vegetables from the nobles' land. The merchants identify most closely with Durpar's business empire model and would like to see their own nation mimic it. Any merchant headquartered in a Var port may participate in the Nawab Council, as the faction is called. As in Durpar, the eleven wealthiest merchants form its ruling body. All other members may only discuss issues and advise their leaders.

While the other two factions bicker over the nature of business, the janas strive to refocus the country's ideals on a higher goal. The janas, or priests of the Adama, are much more powerful here than they are in the other kingdoms of the Shining Lands. The janas established a foothold during Var's early days as a nation, when Rajah B'heshti II, a devoutly religious ruler, lavishly donated to the temples of the Adama. The rajah encouraged the priests to preach that the pursuit of coin at the expense of mutual well-being was the basis for the rift that divided old Gundavar into Estagund and Var. The janas gained their greatest level of power during the Arkaiun occupation by appealing to the common folk who toiled for the benefit of others. Even after the withdrawal of the Arkaiun occupying force, the janas remained on equal ground with the hajwas and nawabs.

Wedged in among these three factions is the Supreme Potentate of Var, a hereditary ruler who must constantly perform a subtle balancing act to stay in power and keep the country running. The leaders of the three factions established the monarchy as a means of ending the Golden War—a battle for control in the power vacuum left behind by the withdrawal of the conquering Arkaiuns of Dambrath. Realizing that no faction would support a leader from either of the other two, all three wisely agreed to bring in an outsider to become titular ruler. Though the monarchy is hereditary, no potentate with ties to any of the three factions may take the throne. Thus, the title does not always pass from parent to child, though as far as anyone other than the potentate knows, it has always remained within the same family.

Few people realize that the current Supreme Potentate of Var, Anwir Duprestiskava by name, is actually an ancient blue dragon playing at being human. Though he is a powerful creature in his own right, he is coming to understand (after nearly two hundred years on the throne) that the forces of public opinion and the wealth of the populace can be much stronger influences on the course of events than a single being—even a dragon. On occasion, Anwir has been forced to eliminate—sometimes very unsubtly—his most outspoken opponents. Now and then, he orders the assassination of a particularly charismatic figure with no strong ties to him, or even one of his allies, simply because the individual could unbalance the trio of factions that he manages to keep at odds with one another. Such heavy-handed tactics work only because on the surface, it is not always clear that the outcomes favor him, but many suspect he has had a hand in them nonetheless.

Veldorn: The Land of Monsters is hardly a nation at all, though it began its existence as the fourth trading power of the Golden Water region. Indeed, its borders no longer resemble those of the former human kingdom; they have migrated north and west because of Veldorn's continuous conflict with Durpar, Estagund, and Var.

Each center of civilization in Veldorn is an independent city-state ruled by some fell creature or group of creatures. All that has kept these beasts from falling to the armies that march against them from time to time is the alliance they have established with one another for mutual protection.

But the Land of Monsters isn't made up only of horrible creatures out of nightmare. The general populace of each center of civilization (to use the term loosely) is usually composed of more common sorts of folk. Plenty of humans still live in Veldorn, though many of them are indentured laborers, slaves, or outlaws who have fled other realms. Numerous humanoids who find the rulership of beholders, dragons, werecreatures, and vampires to their liking also dwell there. The beast-chieftains (as the residents of nearby countries have named the monster leaders) rule with an iron fist, running totalitarian states where might makes right and the economy is based on raiding caravans and communities on the fringes of other civilizations.

In Veldorn, the traditional power structure has been turned upside down. The criminal elements—such as the thieves guilds, evil arcane conclaves, and groups that might become fringe societies in other cities—are in charge, and the righteous defenders of the downtrodden have been forced underground to fight for freedom in secret.

enemies

For the most part, the trading nations of the Shining Lands have no enemies. Only those who oppose honest trade, such as thieves, can expect to incur the wrath of the governments in these countries. But Durpar, Estagund, and Var the Golden all oppose the monsters of Veldorn, which wreak havoc on any trade that flows northwest toward Mulhorand. Though a few military clashes have occurred between countries in the Shining Lands, most of the conflict occurs in the marketplace, where competition for the sale of goods can be fierce.

For its part, Mulhorand instigates hostilities almost as often as it welcomes the trade goods that the Shining Lands send its way, primarily because of quarrels over tax and coin exchange rates. In addition, the peace that has existed for some time between Durpar and Ulgarth is a guarded one, for those two nations have a history of conflict that many citizens cannot forget. But both Ulgarth and Mulhorand recognize the greater benefit of trade over war, and their leaders work to keep relations with the Shining Lands favorable. Only Dambrath could be considered a true enemy of the Shining Lands. Its leaders—both the Arkaiun tribes of long ago and the Crinti of modern times—have a history of invading the three trading nations.

cities and sites

The vast majority of Shining Lands communities hover around the bay known as the Golden Water. Originally established as trading sites for the tribes that roamed the shores of the bay, these settlements slowly grew into centers of civilization where nomads could turn to sedentary pursuits in exchange for safety.

Trade always has been the foremost function of these communities, and most of that trade is conducted by sea. Thus, every city of note has both a large, permanent marketplace and a good harbor with sufficient capacity for oceangoing ships to dock. Even the few cities that lie inland from the water were founded on the banks of rivers large enough to support shipping vessels.

ASSUR (large town)

Founded as a small trading community to serve the Durpari tribes that roamed the western shores of the Golden Water, Assur was originally part of the kingdom of Veldorn. But in the Year of the Prowling Naga (142 DR), several clans of beholders swept down out of the Curna Mountains from the region known to the barbarians as the Beastlands and overwhelmed the city in a matter of hours. Any who resisted were slain; the rest were enslaved. In the course of a day, the beholders had firmly entrenched themselves as the undisputed totalitarian rulers of the town.

Humans were unable to drive their monstrous overlords out of Assur until the Year of the Chaste Maiden (1102 DR), when they finally sent the beholders fleeing toward the safety of the plains to the northwest. After its reclamation by humans, Assur existed first as an independent city-state and more recently as a part of Durpar. Little evidence of the time of the eye tyrants remains, and today the community is as vibrant and prosperous as most other trading centers around the bay.

With a population slightly in excess of 3,200, Assur sports a sizable marketplace, which sits very near its deepwater harbor. Many of the natives make their livings fishing; others harvest pearls and coral—though unusually intense shark activity in the nearby waters has made these trades hazardous in recent years.

The First Nawab of the Assur Council, Turmli Valshu (LN male human aristocrat 7) of the Valshu Chaka, specializes in textile imports. He currently seeks a group of adventurers to find and return his wayward daughter to him. She recently ran off with several Sharess-loving acquaintances who enticed her to wander the wider world and partake of its pleasures with them.

chavyondat (metropolis)

The capital of Estagund, Chavyondat is the largest city in the Shining Lands that is not actually on the coast of the Golden Water. Originally known as Klionna, the city was founded by its namesake tribe in -862 DR. In the Year of the Tempest (1027 DR), Rajah Numambi Seltarir renamed the capital in honor of his firstborn daughter.

Chavyondat has been raided numerous times by both land and sea—most often by Dambrathans (both the Arkaiuns of the fifth and sixth century DR, and the Crinti of more recent times). The city was the first to fall when Reinhar I of Dambrath launched a full invasion of Estagund in the Year of the Barren Chamber (551 DR).

Chavyondat (Metropolis): Conventional; AL LG; 100,000 gp limit; Assets 337,445,000 gp; Population 67,489; Mixed (human 82%, halfling 7%, half-elf 4%, dwarf 3%, gnome 2%, half-orc 2%).

Authority Figures: Rajah Ekripet Seltarir (LG male human aristocrat 5), ruler of Estagund and head of Chaka Seltarir, the wealthiest chaka in the country.

Important Characters: Indamu Podo (LG male human fighter 8/Maquar crusader 6), the leader of the Maquar; Mulad Shaulim (LG human male cleric 5 of Waukeen/hand of the Adama 7), High Priest of the Temple of the Adama; Venz Krulmir (wizard 7/Red Wizard 4), head of the Thayan Enclave.

MARKET AND DOCKS

The marketplace in the city's old district, near the docks, consists of rows and rows of permanent, roofed stalls. The Chavyondat Commerce Authority—the governing office that manages trade, the docks, and the public works—rents these structures to merchants by the day, the tenday, or the month. Because of its distance from most other communities of the Shining Lands, merchant ships from western lands that dock at Chavyondat don't have to sail as far to sell their wares or acquire new cargo. Thus, Chavyondat gets a slightly better trade value for both imports and exports.

Five of the rajah's warships patrol and protect the harbor and the Bay of Kings from invasions, pirates, and sea monsters. Also based here are another twelve warships owned and operated by major chakas, including six that belong to Chaka Seltarir. The chakas use their ships both to defend the city and to escort their merchant ships through troubled waters.

HOUSE OF THE VANQUISHER

This structure, just a little west and downhill from Seltarir Palace, serves as the traditional home and training center for the Maquar. At present, more than two thousand Maquar warriors live here, and three times that many are scattered among various other cities, where they serve the nobles. During a military crisis, the Maquar can either form into elite units or assume command of militia formed from the ranks of the country's population.

HOUSE OF CHAKAS

All the business behind the business is handled in this building. The Commerce Authority, which answers directly to the rajah, maintains its offices here, and all public business records for the various chakas are kept on file in this building as well. The chakas convene a Leadership Council in the hall's great auditorium on a regular basis to discuss business practices, set loan rates, address grievances, and elect advisors to Rajah Seltarir.

MAJOR TEMPLES

The largest temple in Chavyondat, located near the center of town, is dedicated to the Adama. Mulad Shaulim (LG human male cleric 5 of Waukeen/hand of the Adama 7) presides over the faithful, conducting services daily at dawn and dusk.

On the west edge of town, the halflings have dedicated a small shrine to Cyrrollalee in their sizable community.

NOTABLE BUSINESSES

Anything and everything is available for sale in the market of Chavyondat, but one notable shopping area is separate from the market. The Thayan Enclave, established three years ago, is a walled manor house in the wealthy district of town from which the Red Wizards sell all sorts of imported goods—particularly spell components. Their specialty is discounted magic items, and their prices are lower than those of most other merchants in the city (consistently 10% lower than the prices given in Chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

SELTARIR PALACE

The rajah's palace sits on the highest ridge along the eastern end of Chavyondat, overlooking the whole community and the bay below. The palace was built more than three hundred years ago out of white limestone and highlighted with salmon-colored coral details. Constructed on the site of the watchtower that protected the city when it was no more than a trading camp, the palace has been expanded three times since it was built. It houses the rajah's extended family and is defended by a host of three hundred Maquar.

old vaelen (large town)

This ruined city once served as the capital of Veldorn, but many tragic events have befallen it since. The community was founded in -1234 DR, on the site of a natural spring amid a cluster of hills. In

Illustration by Ralph Horsley



The marketplace of Chavyondat

the Year of the Dun Dragon (245 DR), an army of werereatures led by a wererat prince swarmed up out of the hidden places in the city and wrested control of it from the human population. Since that time, the place has been known as a haven for werereatures of any sort, as well as a dangerous thorn in the side of every caravan that tries to cross the open plains from the Golden Water to reach Mulhorand and more distant points.

Tired of taking so many losses on the caravan route, Mulhorand marched an army on Old Vaelen and destroyed it in the Year of the Twilight Campaign (1046 DR). Although the city had been reduced to rubble, a significant number of the werereatures survived—mostly by hiding underground, where the Mulhorandi feared to go. Two years later, a newly transformed vampire named Saed, who had been a nawab on the Turelve Council, fled to Old Vaelen and quickly established a following. Soon enough, the majority of the creatures inhabiting Old Vaelen recognized him as the lord of the city. A year after taking control, Saed somehow managed to convince the other beast-chieftains to unite against their common foes by forming a mutual protection pact. With such an agreement in place, the werereatures serving under Saed were free to raid caravans with impunity once more.

Today, Old Vaelen appears to be nothing but grassy knolls with a scattering of stone rubble. Beneath those hills, however, lies a huge complex that serves as a lair for a sizable population of wererats, wereboars, werewolves, and other lycanthropes, as well as a number of undead servitors. In all, more than 2,000 creatures dwell in the former capital of Veldorn.

Ormpé (Large town)

Like Assur and Vaelan, Ormpé started out as a small fishing village and eventually grew into a sizable trading community before beholder princes seized control of it in the second century DR. But though the beholders held the other two cities for centuries, they did not last long in Ormpé. In the Year of the Wolfstone (153 DR), a horde of demons led by a particularly nasty ghour attacked the city, driving the eye tyrants out and assuming control of their human slaves. The ghour and its minions maintained a reign of terror in Ormpé for the next 950 years, until Durpar, Estagund, and Var managed to uproot them through a combined effort. Many humans and demons were slain in the fighting, but the ghour managed to escape, fleeing toward the Giant's Belt Mountains where, according to rumor, he took up with the native hill giants.

Today, Ormpé is a rustic mining community with approximately 4,500 residents. Several chakas have built their fortunes here through the sale of beautiful gemstones and jewelry. The Gemstone Chaka, a dwarf merchant house, recently roared to the forefront of Durpari politics when its discovery of a rich lode of emeralds catapulted its leader, Krakus Stoutgut (LN male gold dwarf aristocrat 2/expert 9), into the High Council. With Nawab Stoutgut's help, the High Council successfully relocated the capital of Durpar to Vaelan, a move that brought the Gemstone Chaka certain tax benefits and cheaper shipping prices (due to an agreement with the nawab from Vaelan, offered in exchange for the Gemstone Chaka's vote).

The influx of both wealth and people seeking it has caused the population of Ormpé to grow rapidly—far faster, in fact, than the

Ormpé Council had anticipated. As a result, the city has a rather large slum section where those with little money and few prospects for work congregate, waiting for a break. Part of the problem is that the Gemstone Chaka prefers to employ only dwarf miners for the digging and gnome gemcutters for preparing the emeralds, leaving the desperate humans unemployed. If something isn't done about the squalor soon, the situation could quickly turn ugly.

Pyratar (metropolis)

The capital city of Var the Golden, Pyratar (population 44,389) is one of the largest cities on the Golden Water—second in size only to Heldapan. Besides serving as the center of government for Supreme Potentate Anwir and the three power factions of Var, Pyratar is also its most cosmopolitan city, thanks to the various outside influences that have gained a stronger foothold here than elsewhere. The drift from the tenets of the Adama represented by these outside factions runs deeper than most folk realize. A sect of Mask-worshipping thieves has established a lucrative operation in the bowels of the city, headed by Fourth Nawab Kelsipal Turamir (LE male human rogue 5/cleric 11 of Mask) of the Pyratar Council.

Vaelan (metropolis)

Like Assur and Ompré, Vaelan once fell to the monsters of the Curna Mountains but was eventually reclaimed. In the earliest days of Veldorn, it was simply a fortified caravan stop called Vaelantar—a waystation set up to protect goods until the ships that would carry them to distant ports arrived. Gradually folk who catered to traders began to set up businesses there, and soon enough it became a thriving little market community. While the beholders held the town, they actually built it up considerably, turning it into a veritable armed fortress filled with magical defenses. After a hard-fought and bloody battle, the trading nations reclaimed the city, and the portions of it that were still standing when the dust cleared were quite impressive.

In the two and a half centuries since Vaelan was freed, it has been transformed into a thriving port and marketplace that rivals the other major trading centers in the region.

Heroes and monsters

Characters from the Shining Lands are most often humans or half-elves, though a few might be halflings whose ancestors migrated from Luiren or dwarves from the Curna Mountains. Among the humans of the region, the vast majority are Durpari, though some are Mulan or Arkaiun. In addition, various kinds of monster characters hailing from Veldorn might have decided to leave the oppression of that region behind for a life of adventuring.

Among the prestige classes detailed in Chapter 2, the Maquar crusader, the hand of the Adama, and the Great Sea corsair are all common to the Shining Lands.

A wide variety of monsters can be found in the lands around the Golden Water, especially in Veldorn. Among those new creatures detailed in Chapter 5, the dark tree, cyclops, and mantimera are indigenous to the region. Other monsters native to Veldorn include beholders, werereatures, leucrotta, demons, and various giants.



HALRUAA

In a region ringed by mountains lies Halruaa, a nation of reclusive wizards. This rich realm is famous for its gold mines, its fiery Haerlu wine, and most of all, its magic. Halruaans wizards, like their mighty Netherese ancestors, crave powerful magic and pursue their craft with fanatical devotion, and even Halruaans who do not practice the Art respect its inescapable power and influence.

geographic overview

Halruaa is almost completely encircled by the Walls of Halruaa, a series of mountain ranges that form the eastern, northern, and western borders of the country. The coastline of the Great Sea forms its southern boundary. Halruaa stretches approximately 500 miles from east to west, and more than 350 miles from the coast to the northern foothills. The vast majority of the country consists of flat, windswept plains, broken only by broad, sluggish rivers and the occasional unusual feature.

For the most part, Halruaa is a warm, humid land, with temperatures ranging from more than 100 degrees in the summer to between 80 and 90 degrees in the winter. The mountains trap the moisture that rolls in off the sea, producing sudden and frequent thunderstorms. The higher foothills and valleys of the Walls of Halruaa are cooler and more comfortable than the lowlands in the middle, and the mountains are even colder, with permanent snowcaps on the highest peaks. Winter often brings snow to the temples on the mountain slopes as well, though never to the inland plains. The winds blowing off the mountains make life inland more bearable, though the weather patterns produced when they meet over Lake Halruaa make the lake a tricky place to sail.

major geographic features

The nation of Halruaa is perhaps the single most isolated country in Faerûn, with the possible exception of some island kingdoms. Great mountains tower over the central plains, their snowcapped peaks tantalizingly out of reach of those who live in this hot, windswept land. High, narrow passes through these severe mountains provide some measure of contact with the rest of the world, as does shipping from the Great Sea to the south. For the most part, however, the wizards of Halruaa live in comfortable dissociation from those around them.

The Akhlaur swamp

This 4,000-square-mile swamp to the west of Lake Halruaa is a warren of dangerous creatures and long-forgotten magic. Named after an ambitious necromancer who set up his hidden and magically defended fortress-home at its center, the Akhlaur wasn't always the size it is today. When the necromancer first went into seclusion, the swamp that flanked the River Ghalagar covered only half the territory it does now. Until recently, the lowlands around the swamp continued to flood at a slow but steady pace, expanding the swamp's boundaries by perhaps 100 feet a year, though the river drained off more than enough water to maintain equilibrium.

Most Halruaans knew that the swamp was flooding because of a *portal* to the Elemental Plane of Water, but few know the whole truth. Akhlaur was an ambitious wizard who focused his attention on researching interplanar connections. When one of his experiments with a connection to the Elemental Plane of Water went awry, the magic he had set in motion went out of control. Magically charged water began to pour through a never-closed *portal* from that plane, flooding Akhlaur's laboratories and overflowing into the swamp. The *portal* pumped more water into





Illustration by Rick Sardinia

The Akhlaur Swamp is home to many undead creatures

the swamp than the river could drain effectively. Had it kept expanding, Akhlaur Swamp would eventually have reached the coast, swallowing Halagard in the process. Recently, however, a wild elf magehound named Kiva moved the *portal* to the Nath by means of a magic device similar to a portable hole, stopping the expansion of the swamp. Later, a sorceress named Tzigone closed it during a battle between the Halruaan wizards and some Mulhorandi invaders. Just before it sealed, Kiva managed to bring Akhlaur back through from the other side.

Today, the swamp remains at the size it was when the *portal* was moved, but many concerns remain—the most important of which, at least to those who know the swamp well, is the presence of the larakens. These bizarre creatures from a distant plane began to appear at about the same time that the flooding began. Few know for sure whether they originated from the Elemental Plane of Water or were simply pulled through from another plane at about the time the *portal* was opened. Whatever their origin, the larakens present a deadly danger to wizards everywhere because of their magic-draining abilities.

The larakens are not the only dangerous creatures dwelling in Akhlaur Swamp. Snakes, crocodiles, and schools of piranhas hide in the shallow areas, and numerous undead—some the results of Akhlaur's strange experiments and others spawned from doomed expeditions—lurk everywhere in the interior of the swamp. Despite these threats, wizards and adventurers often enter the swamp in search of Akhlaur's fabled magic treasures.

The Bandit wastes

In the shadow of Halruaa's North Wall lie the desolate barrens known as the Bandit Wastes. The rough, rocky terrain of this region consists of jagged hills and dusty plains, punctuated by draws, ravines, and dry streambeds. This hot and desolate place boasts very little vegetation, water, or shade. Few stay in the region for long unless they must, and those who do stay rarely survive long.

In addition to a wide variety of monsters, this region has traditionally served as home to outlaws fleeing the reach of Halruaan, Lapaliiyan, or Shaaryan justice. At present, the worst such group is the Blood Screamers, a band of savage gnome dire weremoles led by a gnome vampire called the Blood-Curdling Scream (CE male rock gnome vampire illusionist 9). This group reportedly lairs in a warren of tunnels dug by giant ants in the barrens east of Lapalgard, and its members raid as far afield as the Rathgaunt Hills and the Nath.

Lake Halruaa

This central body of brackish water connects the land's river ports to the sea. Though strong and unpredictable winds blowing in off the mountains make sailing and fishing in the lake tricky—and flying over it in a skyship even trickier—Lake Halruaa is the central hub for the majority of trade and travel passing through

the country. Each of Halruaa's major rivers ultimately feeds into Lake Halruaa, and every ship that moves along one of these waterways skirts the lake, hugging the shoreline to avoid the worst of the choppy water and capricious winds before moving into a new channel and completing its route. Because of this heavy shipping traffic, most of the nation's population is concentrated in communities on or near the shores of the lake, including the capital city of Halarahh.

Though few Halruaans care to venture out into the wild, hazardous central portion of the lake, more than a few unusual beasts call these waters home. Some of these creatures are likely native to Lake Halruaa, while others migrated up the wide channel connecting it with the Great Sea to the south. Whatever the case, sightings of such creatures are common enough that they cause little stir among the populace. Once in a while, however, an aquatic beast ventures close enough to shore to stir up some excitement. When a real threat is discerned, the local wizards waste little time chasing the interlopers back to the lake's central depths. In the past year, a few unusually large sharks, octopi, and dragon turtles have been spotted, and quite a few folk have reported a winged beast—possibly a dragon—diving into or soaring out of the midst of the lake, usually at night.

of the country, this area boasts a slightly more temperate climate. Temperatures in the Nath rarely reach 100 degrees, and the rains, though more frequent, are much gentler, nurturing the meadow grasses upon which the herds graze.

Perhaps the most significant features of the Nath Valley are the temples situated on the lower slopes of the mountains that surround the valley. Each of these temples focuses on one school of arcane wizardry above the others. The sects are small because while most in Halruaa profess at least a passing devotion to Mystra or Azuth, few feel the need to cement their connections to the divine through ceremony. The clerics and wizards who tend the temples are the few who have been called to serve the deities of magic in a more formal way.

Other than the temples, the valley holds little of significance. The Nath is a rugged, wild country compared to the rest of Halruaa, and those who live here must be prepared for threats from many directions, though by far the greatest threat comes from the east. Crinti riders occasionally sneak through the Nath Pass to harass the herders or raid the temples in the hills. Sizable Crinti forces have invaded this area on more than one occasion, but the powerful magic of the Halruaan aristocracy has always forced them back before they could get much beyond the mouth of the valley. Even so, the folk who by proximity serve as a first line of defense remain ever-watchful for the gray-skinned riders.

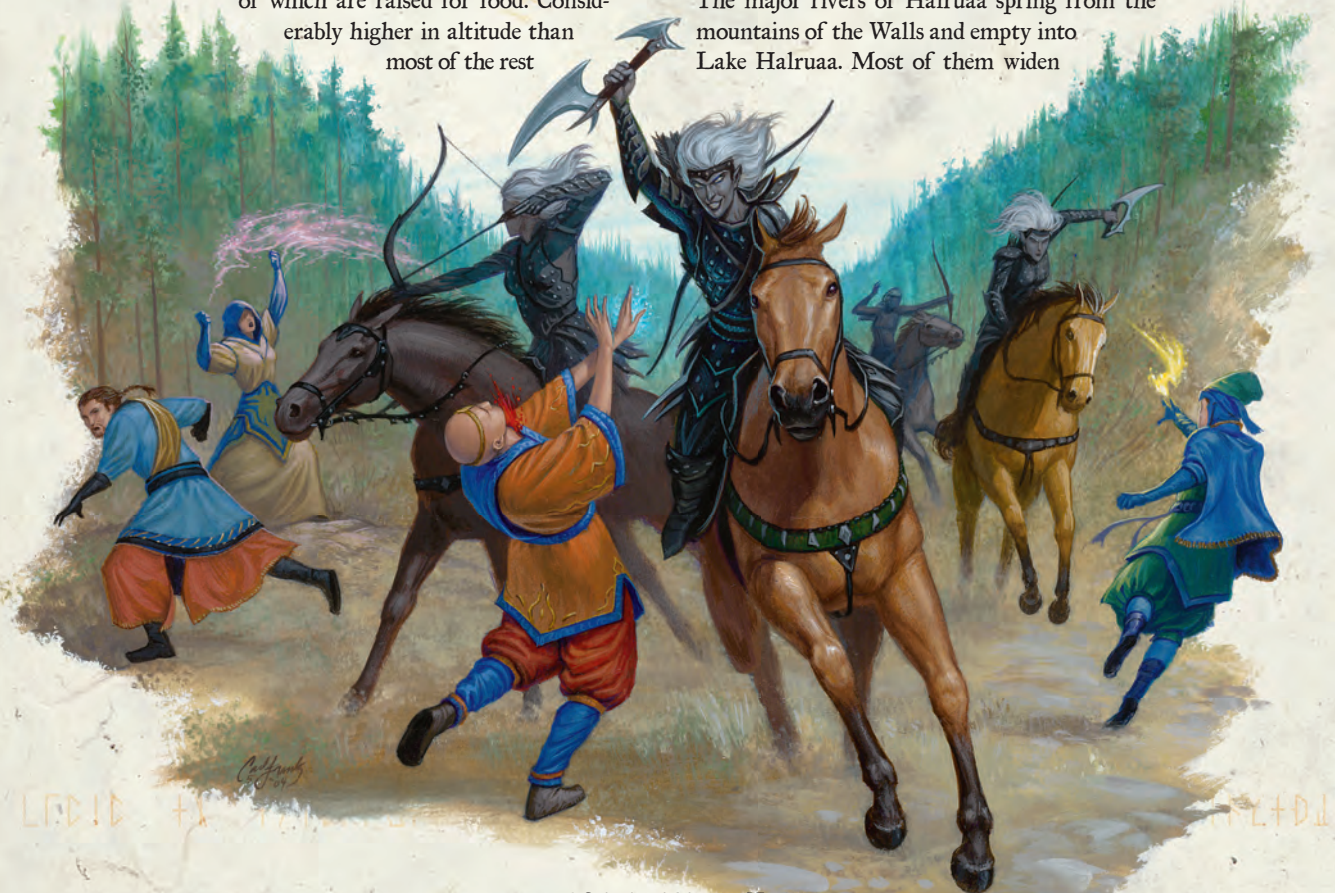
The nath

The Nath, an upland basin of gentle hills in the northeast corner of Halruaa, is known for its herds of wild rothé and auroch, both of which are raised for food. Considerably higher in altitude than most of the rest

The rivers

The major rivers of Halruaa spring from the mountains of the Walls and empty into Lake Halruaa. Most of them widen

Illustration by Carl Frank



A Crinti raid in the Nath

considerably in the flat plains, often spreading several miles across as they meet the broad lake. At such points, the rivers flow calmly and shallowly, appearing more like channels or inlets of the lake than rivers in the strictest sense.

River Ghalagar, on the west side of the lake, is the only runoff from the West Wall that runs through the Akhlaur Swamp. Because of the extraplanar water source that has until recently fueled the Akhlaur's bizarre expansion, the lower Ghalagar is rather swift. The Rivers Halar and Aluer, both of which drain the North Wall, are the widest, most trafficked waterways in Halruaa. Countless villages and towns line the banks of these two rivers, receiving their goods from the merchant ships and barges that pass back and forth along their courses. To the east, connecting Lake Halruaa to Lake Maeru, the River Maeru flows down out of the East Wall. This waterway serves as the main shipping avenue for the vast quantities of gold mined from those mountains, and it too is lined with communities at regular intervals.

Like the lake they feed, these watercourses occasionally sport an unusual creature or two. For the most part, however, they host nothing more dangerous than large schools of fish.

The walls

Three mighty mountain ranges known as The Walls bound Halruaa on the west, north, and east, creating an isolated nation that is most easily reached by sea. The Walls are breathtakingly high, and each range boasts several peaks towering 20,000 feet or more above sea level. Only five major passes through these mountains connect Halruaa to the often hostile kingdoms beyond.

The mountains on the west side of the country are known as Lhairghal, or the West Wall. This range spans more than 350 miles from its southern end, which borders the Great Sea, northward to Talath Pass. The West Wall is split in two by the Mhair Pass, which links Halruaa with the Mhair Jungles on the other side. Where the West Wall meets the North Wall, in the northwest corner of the nation, Talath Pass connects Halruaa with Lapaliya.

The northern range, including the mountains surrounding the Nath, is called the North Wall, or Nathaghal. This stretch of mountains and steep hills runs from Talath Pass on the west to the Nath Pass on the east, spanning a distance of more than 600 miles. The North Wall is divided by the Bandit Pass, which connects Halruaa with the Bandit Wastes to the north. The Nath Pass in the northeastern section of the country provides a corridor between Halruaa and Dambrath.

The East Wall is known as the Muaraghal. Like the West Wall, it stretches more than 350 miles and, like both of the other mountain ranges bordering Halruaa, it is split by a pass. The Azhal Pass lies just south of the river Maeru and connects Halruaa with the Great Swamp, Rethild. The Muaraghal is richly veined with some of the purest gold deposits in Faerûn. Mining in the hills and mountains of the East Wall is perhaps the second most valuable industry in Halruaa, next to magic.

The mountains surrounding Halruaa—particularly those that cradle the Nath Valley—are home to the country's various

temples of magic. Mount Talath, in the western half of the North Wall, houses the high temple to the deity Mystra and contains one of the largest libraries and storehouses of magic in Faerûn (see Mount Talath, below).

All told, the mountains are uncommonly threat-free, at least on the Halruaan side, where long years of careful defense have largely tamed them. The opposite slopes, however, are much wilder and more dangerous. On the west side lurk nagas, yuan-ti, and other threats from the Mhair Jungles, while a variety of monsters—including bestial gnomes and bandits—roam the north side. On the eastern side, Crinti raiders from the plains of Dambrath and creatures from the Great Swamp, including lizardfolk and mysterious serpent beings, plague the lower slopes. Furthermore, ogres, tall mouthers, giants, perytons, and stray outsiders all call the entire set of mountain ranges home. Most of these creatures, however, know better than to tempt the wrath of the Halruaan wizards, so they rarely brave the high and forbidding peaks to reach the other side of the mountains.

people of halruaa

Perhaps because they are descendants of the mighty Netherese wizards, Halruaans have never lost their love of and fascination with magic. It permeates their lives, affects every facet of their existences, and provides a standard of living found nowhere else in Faerûn. Though not all Halruaans have mastered the Art, everyone feels comfortable around it. The nation's wizards pursue the Art with fanatical devotion and consider all other studies to be inferior pursuits. Thankfully, the Halruaans have thus far avoided the soul-blindness that doomed Netheril, and if they remain vigilant against such hubris, they might enjoy the fruits of their labors for many years to come.

Races and cultures

Halruaa is predominantly (90%) a human nation, and Halruaan humans make up 80% of the human population. In the country's earliest days, the great valley formed by the three Walls of Halruaa was sparsely populated by Lapal tribes that had fled the jungles to the west. With the fall of Netheril, a group of Netherese led by the great wizard Raumark moved southward, arriving in magnificent skyships to find a land that seemed like paradise. Within a generation, they had begun to blend with the natives. Not long after that, waves of Arkaiun tribespeople who had come west from Dambrath intermingled with the early Halruaans, creating the ethnic group that exists today.

Most modern Halruaans are dark-haired—a trait shared by both their Netherese and Lapal ancestors. Though the fair-skinned Netherese originally dominated the population, the darker, olive-colored skin tones of the Lapal tribes proved more suitable for the sunny clime and became a dominant trait. Today, the typical Halruaan has dark hair and skin in any shade from ruddy to deep olive, though an occasional paler-skinned child is born. Eye color ranges from black to chocolate brown to deep green. Halruaan men average about 5 feet 9 inches tall, and women about 3 inches shorter.

Halruaans speak Halruaan, which is simply a modern dialect of ancient Netherese. They employ the Draconic alphabet in their writings.

The remainder of the nation's population consists primarily of dwarves and halflings. Most of the dwarves live in the mountains that form the eastern perimeter of the country, where they work the gold mines. Some adventuresome strongheart halfling traders from Luiren have settled in trading communities near the coast, while small populations of lightfoot halflings have been established in Halruaa's urban centers for several generations.

A few elves and half-elves also call Halruaa home, though they are rare enough to be considered oddities anywhere in the interior of the country. For the most part, those with elf blood who have made themselves at home in this nation of wizards either have sufficient aptitude to vie for the power that comes with magic, or have chosen to serve as counselors to others who do. A small handful of elves and half-elves make up one bloc of the governing Council of Elders (see Government, below).

Life and society

Most folk who have never been to Halruaa hold a couple of mistaken assumptions. The first is that all Halruaans are wizards. Though far from true, this assumption has doubtless been fostered in the minds of foreigners by the few Halruaans with whom they have had contact. In fact, only about one-third of all Halruaans have the gift of wizardry; the other two-thirds just act as though they do. The second bit of misinformation shared by those not native to Halruaa is that all the country's wizards seclude themselves in dark, brooding towers built in desolate areas, where they cackle gleefully while working on their latest magical experiments. Again, though this notion is quite understandable, it isn't accurate.

In truth, Halruaans live their lives in much the same way as other people in Faerûn. They marry, have families, and live in communities where they have friends and engage in trade and gossip, just like other folk. The difference is that magic pervades their lives on an everyday level, and they don't think twice about its presence. In most of Faerûn, those who understand magic are considered mysterious outcasts, but in Halruaa, they have the inside track to health, wealth, and happiness, and those who don't have the spark of magic feel as though they're on the outside looking in. Although it is not necessary to practice magic in order to live well in Halruaa, it does help—a fact that might explain why so many Halruaans at least pretend to know a bit of wizardry.

Of the third of the population with magical skill, approximately two-thirds have never been able to get beyond a simple trick or two (as noted in the description of the Magical Training feat; see page 36 of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*). The rest—a little more than 10 percent of the total population—actually understand the intricacies of casting spells. To Halruaans, the true Art is wizardry—they view sorcery as a dangerously undisciplined and primitive approach to magic. Those few Halruaans whose gifts lead them to sorcery instead of wizardry either downplay the extent of their powers or leave the country.

With all that magic at their fingertips, it's no wonder that Halruaans practice exaggerated courtesies with one another. Halruaan social interactions usually involve lengthy declarations of intent, ritual sharing of spell components, and other elaborate niceties, usually as part of formal visits to one another's homes. Such practices might be considered an unnecessary waste of time in a society that doesn't feel the weight of magic every day, but for Halruaans, they represent self-preservation as much as politeness. To the eyes of visiting outsiders, these courtesies initially seem to be a whirlwind of gestures, bows, and ritualistic exchanges that are too rapid and confusing to figure out. Eventually, though, patterns become discernible, and visitors soon learn to follow along and participate.

Halruaans as a whole are self-satisfied people more interested in staying at home than in exploring or exploiting the rest of Toril. Wizards enjoy pursuing their research in the privacy of their laboratories and don't see much need to get beyond the Walls. Those who do leave their native land are often merchants or agents in search of unusual spell components. A few such agents are important enough to travel in one of the fabled Halruaan skyships, but these flying vessels are fragile and so valuable that they are not sent outside the Walls for anything less than major missions.

While Halruaan wizards do spend a substantial amount of time on their studies, they still manage to make time for family life, though they rear smaller numbers of children on average than citizens of other nations. As a result, children in this country tend to get more individual attention. Halruaans receive public schooling until at least the age of thirteen. Screening for magical aptitude occurs at age five, and magic-capable students often master cantrips by the time they are fifteen.

The smaller than normal number of offspring also means that Halruaa is not a densely populated nation. In fact, it has no large cities, and almost every urban center that does exist is less crowded than one would expect. The streets are wide, stately boulevards, the homes sit on spacious lots with plenty of open grass, and public parks and squares are numerous and open.

ECONOMY

To its citizens, Halruaa is truly a land of plenty. Much of its countryside consists of open plains that are well watered by frequent rains. Farming is a significant part of the economy, and because of the relatively sparse population, the farms around Lake Maeru and north of Lake Halruaa can produce most of the food the country needs. Fish abound in the wide rivers and along the shores of the lakes, and fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and meat are daily fare on most tables throughout Halruaa.

The nation's largest exports are gold and Haerlu wine. The gold is mined out of the mountains on the eastern side of the nation, and the wine is made in vineyards throughout the countryside. Some of the gold is smelted directly into ingots and used as trade bars, but a significant amount is crafted into fine works of art, either alone or alloyed with silver to form electrum. Gold and electrum jewelry and Haerlu wine fetch fine prices all along the southern coast of the Great Sea, and in nations such as Lapaliiya and Chondath.

Halruaans could rival the Red Wizards in the export of magic if they chose to do so, but oddly enough, spells and magic items do not often make their way beyond the country's borders. Halruaans are decidedly possessive about their magical creations and do not easily let them spread into the wider world beyond their borders. As it is, more than a few folk in prominent positions scowl every time they hear another tale of a skyship racing along somewhere beyond the Walls.

Magic is perhaps first on the list of Halruaa's imports. The appetites of the Halruaan wizards for new and unusual magic from other lands knows no bounds, and their habit of taking magic without giving any back doesn't seem to bother them in the least. In addition to arcane imports, Halruaa is also a viable market for precious metals and other rare and valuable goods—particularly those useful in the creation of magic, such as spell components. In a nation with such a high quality of life, the demand for exquisite jewelry and other fine art is always high, and ostentatious wizards prefer to craft their magic items out of the best materials.

LAW AND ORDER

Perhaps the greatest dangers in living in a society so steeped in magical ability are the threats of escalating magical combat and the effects such battles could have on innocent bystanders. Because Halruaans recognize the danger of the magic they wield, such awesome and deadly displays are few and far between. Nonetheless, magic seems to hang in the air of every village and town, and wizards of every persuasion magically check out anyone who might appear to be a threat. Srying is common, and divinations of every sort are flung about on the streets of Halruaan communities like trinkets at a parade. The result is that for the most part, Halruaa is a self-policed nation.

When a problem does arise, justice is swift but carefully measured. The Halruaan magehounds, who are tasked with enforcing the laws regarding magic, track down renegade practitioners and bring them to justice. No trial is convened without thorough wizardly research, and no case is ever presented without ponderous magical proof to back it up. Once sufficient proof has been offered that a person is guilty of a crime, punishment is not far behind—assuming that punishment is deemed appropriate. Intent figures significantly into the justice system, and an argument of, "He pointed something at me that looked like a wand, so I slew him," is an acceptable defense—provided that the defendant really thought her life was in danger.

All the magical power at everyone's beck and call actually serves to make Halruaa a peaceful nation, at least internally. Few can expect to get away with crimes if people on every street corner have the means to magically force a confession out of the perpetrator.

DEFENSE AND WARCRAFT

A simple glance at a map reveals that Halruaa is geographically well protected. The mountains that surround it on three sides are high and forbidding, and they completely isolate the country from all its neighbors.

The best means that Halruaans have found to ensure their own safety is prevention. One good bit of intelligence goes a long way toward avoiding military disasters, and divination is often the best way to gain knowledge of the enemy. Over the centuries, diviners have earned great prestige for their ability to forecast impending danger—be it monstrous threats, hazardous weather, or invasions by hostile countries—and Halruaa's military has managed to turn back numerous attacks in recent decades simply by knowing what was going to happen before it did.

Still, all the preparation in the world wouldn't do any good without a strong military presence to back it up, and Halruaans learned long ago that magic alone cannot make the difference. Though skyships can whisk soldiers, supplies, and support magic from place to place quickly, the vessels are fragile enough that the wizards rarely waste them in actual battle. Instead, skyships are typically set down to unload troops, and more traditional military tactics often decide the day.

The five mountain passes are the biggest weaknesses in the Halruaan armor, but those are easily defended. Though less forbidding than the high ridges that flank them, the passes are not easy routes for an advancing army, especially if a smaller force is determinedly entrenched in its path. The few times that enemy forces have managed to reach the interior of the country (a rare event, thanks to timely divinations), the Halruaan military has met them with a force that included a large percentage of light cavalry to take advantage of the open ground. Historically, only the Crinti just to the east have given as well as they have taken in mounted combat.

The Halruaan navy can mount a strong force for defense against invasion by sea. Several fast, maneuverable warships are docked in every port city, and more patrol the nearby waters. Since the majority of the population dwells in the interior (around Lake Halruaa), any invading navy would have to sail straight up the channel between the lake and the sea to mount an invasion. Few armadas would be able to survive such a confined route, particularly with the agile warships darting around them and both banks of the river lined with wizards defending their homeland. The only other viable option for invasion would be to land on the outer shores of the country and unload troops, which would then have to march overland. At that point, the superior mobility of the Halruaan skyships would quickly gain the defenders the upper hand.

But even in the face of such defenses, more than a few enemy nations and hordes of monsters have attempted forays against the nation of wizards, lured by the enticing rumors of magic to be gained. The reality of Halruaa's magic is a little less flashy than the stories indicate, but the locals nevertheless put it to good use in protecting their own.

RELIGION

Though religion has its place even in a society dominated by arcane magic, it is not at the forefront of everyday life in Halruaa the way it is in some locales. Nonetheless, almost all Halruaans offer at least a token nod to the gods, knowing full well the folly of turning their backs on the deities that granted them the

marvels of magic. To believe that they could get by without such veneration would be the height of arrogance.

Most Halruaans worship either Mystra or Azuth. The vast majority of the population pays homage to the Mother of All Magic, praying to her to watch over the Weave and thus ensure that the Halruaan way of life continues undisturbed. Every community of village size or larger has, at the very least, a shrine dedicated to Mystra, and an extravagant temple honors her in every major town and city. While some of these temples verge on ostentatious, they all pale in comparison with Mouth Talath, the center of magic in Halruaa. High on the mountain slopes along the north side of Halruaa is Mount Talath, the site of the largest temple to Mystra in Faerûn. It houses not only a grand worship center, but also one of the most complete and coveted archive and library in Faerûn—at least so far as magic is concerned.

Not everyone in Halruaa chooses to venerate Mystra—a sizable faction follows the teachings of the Lord of Spells. Indeed, the rise of Azuth's following during the earliest days after his ascension to godhood took place largely in Halruaa, and his worshipers here have constituted the nucleus of his church for more than a millennium. Their collective voice has grown stronger in the years since the Time of Troubles because more than a little dissent grew among the ranks of the Mystra-worshipers during that period, causing significant numbers of wizards—even among the elders—to shift their patronage.

As if the rivalry between the two faiths did not create enough strife, rumors have begun to surface that a new secret cult dedicated to Shar has emerged in Halruaa. Such whispers suggest that some Halruaans—perhaps even a few elders—have heeded the Mistress of the Night's call and turned to the Shadow Weave. Although such tales might be exaggerated, they probably do contain seeds of truth. While the members of the Council of Elders traditionally have difficulty finding common ground on much of anything, those among them who have embraced the Dark Goddess are almost certainly united in their own dark causes.

No other faith has established much of a foothold in Halruaa so far. The churches of Savras and Velsharoon are the most prominent of the minor faiths, but both of these have been largely absorbed into the Church of Azuth, and the populace works to keep it that way. While priests of other deities might visit coastal ports for short durations (perhaps in the service of traders or as emissaries from another nation), they are not welcome to venture deeper into Halruaa, nor are they permitted to spread the tenets of their faith among the locals. Those who attempt to do so quickly draw attention to themselves and are politely asked to leave. Any who persist are magically discharged from Halruaa to the other side of the nearest border, typically landing high in the mountains or in the midst of the Great Sea.

Adventurers

Because Halruaans are fond of their isolation, few of them appreciate outsiders traipsing around the countryside. The nation does accept a small number of local adventurers who periodically

visit the more remote regions—particularly the Walls of Halruaa, Akhlaur's Swamp, the jungles of Mhair, and the Swagdar in Dambrath—in search of profit and adventure. But folk from other lands who come to Halruaa to hunt treasure and slay monsters are seldom welcome. Those few who manage to slip in are not forcibly removed as long as they don't cause trouble and do not try to spread the tenets of an unwelcome faith, but the locals keep a suspicious eye on their activities.

Some career adventurers also find alternate means of making a living in Halruaa. Veteran combatants can usually find work with the military, while mages might be able to pay or trade for training, especially if they bring knowledge and samples of outside magic. Foreign thieves, however, are not tolerated. Like rival priests, those who are caught plying the thief's trade are either asked to leave or magically evicted from the nation.

politics and power

Magic is the most venerated form of power in Halruaa, and those who can wield it most effectively tend to wield political power as well. Fortunately for the rest of the world, the wizards of Halruaa seldom see eye to eye on any topic. Thus, Halruaa's power structure consists of numerous factions of wizards, all working at cross-purposes in their quest for more magic.

Zalathorm, the present Wizard-King of Halruaa, is a diviner whose ability to foretell the future has extinguished several threats before they could become serious. In fact, Zalathorm and the other diviners have been so successful in protecting the nation that most citizens favor placing divination specialists in leadership positions from now on, rather than entrusting the nation's fate to evokers, conjurers, and the other kinds of wizards who ruled in the days when Halruaa had to defend itself actively.

history of halruaa

The earliest people to settle the warm, rain-drenched plains of Halruaa were Lapal tribes that had fled from their oppressive yuan-ti masters in the jungles to the west. These sturdy folk settled along the banks of the wide, gentle rivers and around the lake, becoming farmers, fisherfolk, and shepherds. Because the three mountain chains around Halruaa formed a natural barrier against the outside world, the tribes were left mostly in peace.

No others arrived in the valley until nearly 1,400 years later, when a group of Netherese wizards led by the archmage Raumark fled the scourge of the phaerimms and the destruction of the empire of Netheril by skyship. Raumark had foreseen the doom approaching his native land and begun planning such an escape even before Karsus's fateful act and Mystyl's death. Upon crossing the mountains, the Netherese found a beautiful and rich country, sparsely populated by Lapal shepherds and fisherfolk, and decided to adopt it as their new home.

The two ethnic groups embraced one another rather than fighting over such a bountiful and available land, and they quickly learned to coexist. The wizards provided the simple folk of Halruaa with an organized ruling class, laws, justice, and wondrous works. Native Lapalians with a talent for magic were

accepted as students with no hesitation, and the presence of so many powerful wizards soon discouraged the raiders and monsters that had once plagued the lowlands.

In the years after the arrival of the Netherese, Halruaa grew and prospered as a nation of wizards in relative isolation. But although its citizens have never shown much interest in occurrences beyond the Walls of Halruaa, the converse has not been true—Halruaa's neighbors have made numerous attempts at conquest despite the country's fabled defenses. Envious of Halruaa's riches and magical treasures, the Dambrathans have been the most frequent pests, invading Halruaa for brief periods on several occasions.

In 585 DR, a fleet of Dambrathan galleys attacked Halruaa's coasts and occupied the country south of Lake Halruaa for several months, until the great Halruaan wizard-king known as Mycontil defeated the invaders and slew their leader. The last serious invasion occurred about one hundred years ago, when a charismatic satrap of Lapaliya led a great raid through Talath Pass. The Halruaans drove off these invaders easily.

TIMELINE

Year	Event
-1732	Lapal tribes begin to settle the Lake Halruaa basin.
-339	Year of the Sundered Webs: Karsus causes the fall of Netheril, and the archmage Raumark leads a cadre of Netherese south. This group eventually finds and settles Halruaa.
-125	Year of Banished Wisdom: Hetel Hastalhorn, a prominent Halruaan archmage, founds Mhairhetel, now known as the City of Renegades, in the southern tip of the Mhair Jungles.
147	Year of the Iron Colossus: Azuth worshipers formally break with the Church of Mystra and establish the House of the High One Ascendant in the mountains near Lhair.
173	Year of Screaming Sharn: Several followers of Leira, dissatisfied with the stranglehold that worshipers of Mystra and Azuth have gained over the Council of Elders, depart Halruaa in skyships. These wizard lords eventually settle in Nimbral.
426	Year of the Black Dawn: Ongild, a wizard of some renown, crafts a magic gem that stores spells and gives it his name. The Ongild eventually winds up in the belly of a red dragon named Hoondarrh.
546	Year of the Rusted Sabre: Gulkuluster begins creating a series of powerful wands, one of which is currently in the possession of a sapphire dragon named Malaeragoth, who lairs beneath the Graypeak Mountains.
553	Year of the Gnashing Tooth: Arkaiun barbarians from Dambrath invade the coast of Halruaa and occupy numerous cities for several months.
554	Year of Waving Wheat: Mycontil, the Wizard-King of Halruaa, assembles an army to drive the invaders out. During the battle, he slays the barbarian king, Reinhar I, with a devastating spell that also consumes Mycontil and his circle of apprentices.

585	Year of the Ogling Beholder: A fleet of Dambrathan galleys attempts to sail into the channel leading to Lake Halruaa and conquer Halagard. Devastating magic launched from both shore and skyships sinks almost every ship.
638	Year of the Menial Phrases: The first rumors of a temple dedicated to Grumbar, hidden in the West Wall, arise on the streets of Halruaan cities.
827	Year of the Sacrificed Fortune: The wizard Omm Hlandrar of Halruaa engages a Red Wizard named Velsharoon in a spectacular magical battle in the skies over the Shaar. The contest ends in a draw.
973	Year of the Emptied Lair: Crinti shadow marauders begin raiding the Nath Valley through the pass connecting the two nations.
1144	Year of the Giant's Maul: The Halruaan archmage Ootheraum Deirin slays the dragon Thoklastees over the Shining Sea east of Ortil in an aerial battle.
1146	Year of the Tardy Guests: The necromancer Akhlaur opens a <i>portal</i> to the Elemental Plane of Water, releasing the larakens into the swamp where his tower sits.
1260	Year of the Broken Blade: Lapaliya attempts to invade Halruaa and is repulsed.
1262	Year of the Black Wind: Zalathorm, the current wizard-king, ascends the throne of Halruaa.
1263	Year of the Tressym: Netyarch Zalathorm moves the capital of Halruaa from Halagard to Halarahh for defensive purposes.
1312	Year of the Griffon: Thongameir "Stormspells" Halargoth acquires a young bronze dragon as a mount and is frequently seen flying to and from his secluded mountainside keep, known as Narthtowers.
1321	Year of Chains: Darsson Spellmaker, later renowned for creating numerous spells, is born.
1332	Year of the Sword and Stars: Hansandrar Ilmeth, an archmage of Halruaa, creates the Mighty Rune of the Master, a magic "spell tome" of Deneir.
1355	Year of the Harp: Dwalimar Omen, an agent of Zalathorm, departs Halruaa in the Realms Master, a special skyship equipped with the Astrolabe of Nimbral, to collect dangerous artifacts across Faerûn.
1357	Year of the Prince: Netyarch Zalathorm goes briefly mad while divining the Time of Troubles and is replaced on the throne by Gabrela for a period of two weeks.
1372	Year of Wild Magic: The Wizardwar occurs. Akhlaur and Zalathorm, who owe their long lives to certain magic they created together in their youth, face off against one another. Zalathorm destroys the red gem around his neck that houses the last remaining portion of their life-extending magic, killing them both. Immediately afterward, the survivors of the battle, together with the Cabal—a group of elf spirits recently freed from another, larger gem—resurrect Zalathorm.
1373	Year of Rogue Dragons (current year).

government

Halruaa's ruling body is the Council of Elders—a tumultuous body of more than four hundred powerful wizards headed by the netyarch, or wizard-king. Though all the elders are independent thinkers with widely differing opinions, they somehow manage to work together well enough to govern the country effectively.

The leader of the council and current netyarch of Halruaa is Zalathorm Kirkson (LN male human diviner 20/lore master 4/Halruaan elder 5), who is rumored to be several centuries old. His tower stands in the middle of the temple complex dedicated to Mystra in Halarahh. The netyarch's palace is an ornate building protected by a wide variety of magical guardians and defenses.

Zalathorm uses a special magic item known as the *Crystal Orb* (see page 59) to call a meeting of the council. The *Orb* allows him to contact all the elders at once with a single command, and those who respond remain in telepathic contact with Zalathorm and the other respondents for as long as desired. The use of this device means that the elders need not actually travel to the palace to participate in a meeting, though most of them have the magical wherewithal to do so easily. On most occasions, fewer than half the elders respond to the telepathic summons, since many of them are involved in arduous magical research or other personal business when a meeting occurs. Unless the issue at hand is of the direst nature, only one-tenth of the council members need to vote to render a decision. When an issue seems serious enough to warrant the participation of the entire council, a special vote is called. If it passes, a magical summons is sent out to every single elder, requesting that she proceed with all due haste to the palace because important business is afoot. When feasible, a waiting period is established to allow every member a chance to arrive. Once the full council is in session, however, those unable to attend must live with the decisions of those present.

To become an elder, an individual must demonstrate a certain minimal arcane aptitude and petition the council for entry. In general, the wizards already on the council perform a "background check" with a few perfunctory divination spells to ensure that the potential member isn't going to create a problem later. Most of the time, this check is a mere formality, since every wizard worth her salt in Halruaa already knows every other one (either as a potential ally or a rival) and is keenly aware of the dynamics of all the various factions in the Council of Elders. Once accepted into the council, each individual member finds a level of participation that is both useful and comfortable.

When the netyarch dies or steps down, the full Council of Elders convenes to select a new one. The elders are supposed to choose the most powerful among their number, but the succession meetings have always been contentious, politically charged affair. The last three netyarchs have all been specialists in the school of divination, primarily because diviners have demonstrated the value of ferreting out threats to the nation before they actually occur.

Since most Halruaan wizards worship Mystra, her church plays a key role in the government. Priests of the Lady of Mysteries serve as judges for the state, determining truth and intent in all criminal trials via divination spells. More recently, the legal side

of the governing process has opened up a bit more to servants of Azuth, giving this segment of the population better representation in all facets of Halruaan politics.

The Council of Elders determines policy for the nation at large, but each town and city elects a mayor to handle local matters. In practice, the citizens almost always vote a Council Elder to the post of mayor, since they believe that the most powerful wizards are also the most qualified to run their communities. The mayors manage the mundane issues in their communities and appoint worthy individuals to fill all manner of government posts—particularly those that involve keeping the peace and defense. Patrols, city guards, and, occasionally military forces are common sights on the streets. Such a defensive unit almost always includes a priest and a mage to serve as judge and executioner.

Enemies

To a Halruaan, people of any other nationality are enemies. The Halruaans view natives of other nations as a bunch of greedy, magic-grubbing freeloaders who can't wait to get their hands on the results of all the wizards' hard work. Perhaps this attitude is a residual effect of Halruaa's early days, when the displaced Netherese believed that the phaerimms were coming for them, or perhaps it results from the various raids on Halruaa in the not-too-distant past. Whatever the cause, most folk in Halruaa believe that everyone outside their nation covets their magic and wishes to steal it.

BANDITS

Perhaps the most irritating foes Halruaa faces are the endless hordes of bandits that seem to worm their way over, through, and under the North Wall from the Bandit Wastes. While divination is a useful tool in forecasting major threats to the land, it does not do as good a job predicting the arrival and movements of small bands of raiders. Thus, the Halruaans from the northern part of the country have learned to keep an eye open for trouble and a hand near their spell components at all times.

DAMBRATH

Realistically speaking, few countries would dare to take on a wizard nation directly. Thus far, the boldest such challenger has been Dambrath, but historians have always found the wisdom of that country's pre-Crinti barbarian leadership suspect. More recently, raiding the Nath has become great sport for the Crinti of Dambrath, though such raids are typically forms of entertainment sponsored by independent-minded nobles rather than actual invasions organized by the queen and her advisors. Since the rise of the diviners has led to better preparedness and more effective defenses against outside attacks overall, the Crinti have been gradually losing interest in annoying their neighbors. Still, the range of formidable mountains and the vast swamp that separate the two countries are probably a boon to both. So long as they do not venture far from the docks, Crinti merchants are welcome to trade in Halruaan cities, and this courtesy seems to appease both sides.

LAPALIYYA

This loose confederation of city-states has decided before that raiding Halruaa would be beneficial. The acquisition of magic is the most likely explanation for this decision, but that same magic resulted in resounding defeat for the Lapaliyyan invaders, and that situation isn't likely to change any time soon. Currently, healthy levels of trade flow in both directions through Talath Pass, and as long as the Lapaliyyans are willing to stay on their side of the mountains, the Halruaans are happy to do business with them.

THAY

Though overt hostilities have never broken out between these two great magic-using nations, no one who understands the two countries at all has any doubt that they distrust one another. For their part, the Red Wizards would like nothing more than to get their hands on Halruaa's more extraordinary secrets, and they have tried repeatedly to establish an enclave in Halruaa, though all such attempts have been firmly rebuffed. The Halruaans suspect that letting the wizards to the north get a foothold in their country would just be inviting endless trouble, no matter what pretense the Thayans offered. Individual Red Wizards have occasionally been caught sneaking into and around Halruaa, though what they were doing there is anyone's guess, since Halruaa's policy is to deal swiftly and summarily with all such trespassers before they have a chance to cause any damage—and often before they can be made to talk. Not surprisingly, guesses as to the true reasons for their presence usually involve the theft of magic.

cities and sites

The population of Halruaa congregates in numerous villages and cities scattered throughout the country's interior. Most of these communities are small, cozy settlements with no more than a few hundred inhabitants each. The folk in such a village can usually rely on a wizard of at least 11th level to provide both protection and leadership. Such an individual serves as the mayor and probably also as a member of the Council of Elders.

The largest of Halruaa's urban centers is small in comparison to the great cities of most other nations, and Halruaa's cities are far less densely packed than the urban sprawls common elsewhere. The capital city of Halarahh is the largest community in Halruaa, but it boasts only about 8,000 citizens, though it easily covers enough acreage for a city twice as large. Most of the other major cities huddle along the shores of the sea, the lakes, and the rivers, though a few have grown up around the resources used in the country's leading industries—namely mining and winemaking.

Life in the cities of Halruaa is touched by magic in many ways. Quiet streets are lined with a variety of houses—some large and ostentatious, others small and modest—each of which has a few built-in magical enhancements. A favorite practice in cities along the coast is to magically coax coral to grow into "walls" to enclose homes and gardens, and streets in all parts of the country are well lit at night with light-producing spells that adjust their brightness in relation to the time of day. Even a common laborer might have a minor magic item or two at his disposal to

make some part of his life or work a bit easier. Spells of cooling, cooking, and food preservation are available to everyone.

For those who can afford it, exotic magic is as much a means of decoration as a tool. Spells that produce sparkling light and pleasing sounds are often woven into fine fabrics to enhance their beauty. Strange and highly magical creatures, such as behirs, are favored as pets. Travel by means of floating carriages, carpets of flying, or skyships is common. Everywhere in Halruaa, the people take great pains to show off their abilities as well as their wealth.

Aluarim (small town)

Situated near the banks of the river Aluar, Aluarim (population 1,328) is well protected from potential invaders by virtue of its location in central Halruaa. The town functions primarily as a shipping center for exports from the surrounding farms. Most of the acreage of this quaint town is taken up by the produce warehouses near the riverbanks, where the docks jut into the water. Naval traffic to and from Aluarim is steady, since it is the last stop along the northbound shipping route except for Eru in the far north.

Until about six months ago, Aluarim was the home of Rhodea Firehair (NG female human evoker 18/Halruaan elder 3), the most powerful evoker in the country. Rhodea was known for her absolute fearlessness, and she led troops into combat on several occasions.

Surprisingly, Rhodea died not in battle, but in an accident at the royal mint involving a polymorphed dragon. A short time after her tragic demise, her daughter Thalia was stabbed to death by Procopio Septus and Dhamari Exchelsor, the two wizards whose magic had caused the incident at the mint.

The tower in which Rhodea made her home has stood on the northern fringes of Aluarim since before the town existed. For reasons unknown, tradition demands that this tower always serve as the home of an evoker. Its previous occupant, one Aldeb Lazin, was far less friendly with the locals than Rhodea was, though he did his part to help defend the town when necessary. The tower has been vacant since Rhodea's death, but her skyship, the Will o' Wisp, is still docked at the top.

chasolné

A bizarre remnant of a civilization that predates the arrival of the Netherese, Chasolné lies on the coast of the Great Sea at the southern tip of the East Wall, close to the Bay of Pirates and Yaulazna. Two stone heads with exaggerated features have been carved out of the cliffs that border the ocean here, rising more than 500 feet above the water. Almost caricatures of human heads, these images stare out toward the ocean, flanking an open space in which a winding, narrow staircase leads up the side of the cliff from a narrow strip of sandy beach. Cut directly into the rock, the stairs ascend for more than a quarter-mile above sea level to a well-hidden outcropping that also faces the sea.

Atop this rocky ledge are some crumbled and tumbling ruins, plus a large stone table—possibly an altar—carved with bizarre sea life and odd-looking ocean vessels. Flanking this table are two

wide, shallow, stone bowls, their interiors blackened from oil fires. Set back into the cliff face to the rear of the outcropping are two sets of columns that flank the mouth of a tunnel, which opens into a large, high-domed chamber with no other apparent exits. More than a few adventurers have visited this site in hopes of discovering more about the area and finding any hidden treasures that might lie inside.

Galdel (Large town)

Galdel, a cozy community of about 3,200 people, lies on the south side of Lake Halruaa. Its primary claim to fame is its population of electrumsmiths. A dozen or so highly sought-after artisans make their homes here, alloying gold and silver into the metal known as electrum and fashioning fine art objects, rings, wands, and weapons from it. Among these artisans is a dwarf craftsman named Boronuil Ironfist (LN male gold dwarf fighter 4/expert 13), who is considered by many to be the best in the business. If the customer can afford it, Boronuil can craft custom-made items from gold, silver, or electrum for magical enhancement. He charges quadruple standard rates and has a waiting list of two years or more.

Halagard (small city)

With about 7,500 residents, Halagard is second only to Halarahh in population. Situated at the mouth of the Halagard Channel on the Bay of Halruaa, the city boasts a sizable fishing fleet. The Bay of Halruaa is both a safe harbor and a productive fishing area, and fish is one of Halagard's major exports. About two-thirds

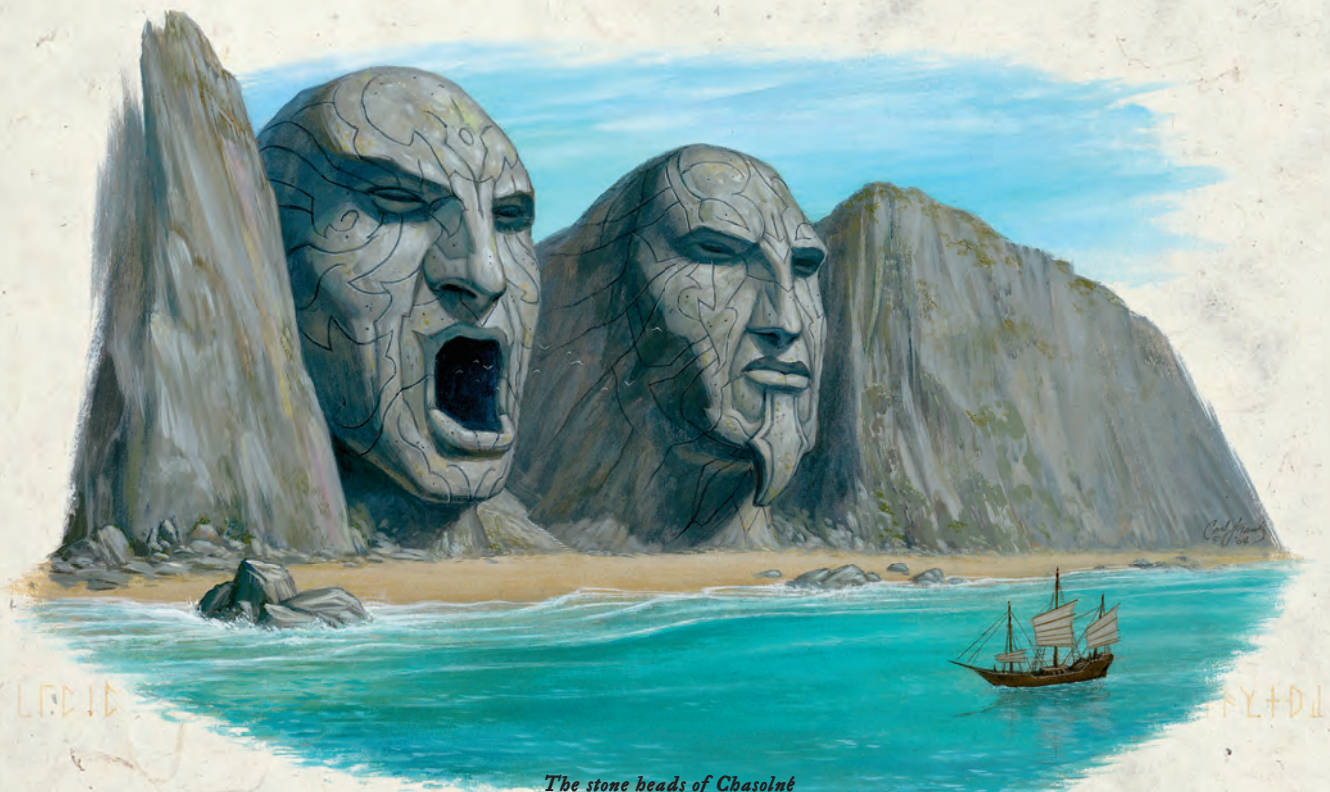
of the fish taken from the bay go inland to feed the rest of the nation, and the other third is smoked or salted and packaged for shipping to distant lands.

For many years, Halagard served as the capital of Halruaa, but a little more than a century ago, Zalathorm called the Council of Elders to vote on moving the capital inland, where it would be safer from potential invaders as well as the encroaching danger of Akhlaur Swamp. The vote was close, with a strong bloc led by the mayor of Halagard dissenting, but the measure passed, and the citizens of Halagard have never forgiven the wizard-king for this embarrassing slight. Despite the change, some residents of Halagard still think of themselves as the true bearers of the Halruaan spirit. In keeping with their stand against newfangled Halarahhan fashions (a means by which they silently protest their beloved city's demotion), wizards of Halagard generally specialize in conjuration or evocation rather than divination.

The current mayor of Halagard is Eledric Omanrys (LN male human conjurer 14/Halruaan elder 2), who is also a rather influential member of the Council of Elders. A conjurer of no small talent, Eledric is very fond of apprentices and counselors, so he makes a practice of surrounding himself with numerous conjurers-in-training and Jordaini advisors. The lives of his apprentices are not easy; he works them hard and expects a great deal from them. Despite his reputation as a difficult master, however, he never lacks applicants to fill vacancies on his staff, since he is one of the most powerful conjurers in the land.

Twelve other elders also live in Halagard. The number of elders in residence briefly swelled after the capital moved, but the reason was clear: As the swamp to the west crawled inexorably closer to the outskirts of the city, the dangers it sheltered became more obvious.

Illustration by Carl Frank



The stone heads of Chasolné

The situation had to be dealt with quickly to prevent Halagard from being swallowed up in the morass of wetlands. To that end, several prominent wizards moved to Halagard to study the swamp's progress and research ways of thwarting the encroachment. Still others came merely to provide some defense against the dangerous creatures wandering out of the swamp. Now that the *portal* to the Elemental Plane of Water within the swamp has been closed, most of the wizards who came to study the phenomenon have left, but a few, finding the city to their liking, remained.

Halarahh (small city)

The seat of Zalathorm's power, Halarahh has a population just slightly above 8,000, making it the largest city in Halruaa. This wide, sprawling town is situated on the northern banks of Lake Halruaa, at the mouth of the river Halar. The city boasts lots of expansive public places for strolling, oratory, and celebrations.

Fully three thousand of the capital city's inhabitants, including seventeen members of the Council of Elders, are practicing wizards, giving Halarahh the largest concentration of magical prowess anywhere outside Thay. Hundreds of wizard's towers—lofty edifices built of colorful coral, stone, crystal, and magical force—dominate the skyline, jutting upward from an otherwise low-slung city profile. In past decades, each wizard tried to outdo his rivals by building the highest tower with the grandest and most breathtaking view of the countryside around the city. Eventually, however, the risks to both towers and skyships forced Zalathorm to actively discourage this "tower war," and the mad building spree

halted. In hopes of currying Zalathorm's favor, some wizards have actually reduced the height of their towers, making the skies that much safer for skyships.

Because of its high concentration of wizards and the fact that the wizard-king and his council conduct business here, Halarahh is a difficult place for those not gifted in the Art to live. In all walks of life, favorable treatment and promotions come to those who have the spark but elude those who lack magical aptitude. The obvious exceptions to this rule are the Jordaini. These magically immune counselors vie for positions and prestige alongside their wizardly patrons in the never-ending game of politics that is Zalathorm's court. Though they cannot partake of the vast wealth—both fiscal and magical—that is available to so many others in the city, their stature in the eyes of everyone from the wizard-king down to the lowliest street urchin is affluence enough for them.

ARBOR SQUARE

Near the Netyarch's Palace in the heart of the city lies Arbor Square, an expanse of parks, rivers, pavilions, and gazebos designed for strolling, chatting, or orating. A wide variety of temperate to tropical trees, many of which are flowering or fruit-bearing, fills the square. Vine-covered trellises create spaces for private conversations, and bridges span manmade canal-rivers, giving Arbor Square the feel of a vast, perfectly manicured garden. Along the periphery, vendors sell wares ranging from edible treats and beverages to magic trinkets such as cooling caps (hats with minor chilling spells cast upon them)



*Halarahh, capital of Halruaa*

and dazzle stones (pretty colored rocks enspelled with cantrips to make them blink or spark.)

The citizens of Halarahh come to Arbor Square regularly to converse, debate, or listen to passionate orations. Anyone is free to step onto a platform and begin pontificating on whatever subject most concerns him, but a few well-known speakers always draw the largest crowds. Some of the liveliest debates that have led to policy changes for the nation began as passionate speeches in Arbor Square.

DOCKSIDE SQUARE

As with other Halruaan cities, much of Halarahh has grown up along the shoreline. Its docks, however, are not the tight, noisy causeways abutted by closely packed warehouses that are standard for Faerûn's port cities. Instead, its broad docks quickly give way to an open park known as Dockside Square. This open plaza is paved in colored stone, and large trees provide good quantities of shade for strolling and chatting. Interspersed among the trees are numerous pavilions with brightly colored awnings.

Dockside Square is the customary site for just about every festival and fair that takes place in the city. In the spring, when the Queen's Regatta is held over Lake Halruaa, crowds gather in Dockside Square to witness the spectacle and hopefully gain a bit of the scatted fortune dust that floats down during the traditional light shows. In the summer, the square hosts numerous monster fairs in which exhibitors offer their latest catches from all over

Faerûn. Wizards interested in procuring fashionable pets, preparing new culinary delights, or simply restocking consumed spell components flock to these events to examine the wares. As one Durpari merchant said upon visiting Halarahh during a monster fair, "If you can eat it, cage it, put it on a leash, or chop it up for parts, like as not it'll be there."

THE ICE HOUSE

In a low-slung building near the docks, numerous journeymen wizards are hard at work each day, using their magic to generate huge quantities of ice. Once created, the ice is promptly segmented into blocks, wrapped in insulating cloth, and delivered all over the city to those who can afford the luxury and to those who can't operate their businesses without it.

Because the manpower needed to create so much frozen water is extraordinary, even by wizard standards, the possibility of securing a steady source of ice by creating a *portal* to the Ice Wastes in the Abyss has recently been under discussion. The cost savings in magic would be immense and immediately felt, but the potential dangers of such an option have thus far kept the proposal bottled up in committee among the elders of the council.

THE NETYARCH'S PALACE

Even in Halarahh, where wizards who mix magic with architecture vie with one another to create the grandest homes, the Netyarch's Palace is more dazzling than any other edifice.

The sprawling structure is a masterpiece of architecture that features soaring spires connected by causeways seemingly suspended in thin air. Large facings and supports made of transparent material—or sometimes magical force—give the whole building an open, airy feel.

Inside, the heavy-handed use of magic borders on the frivolous. Every room is decorated with a liberal sprinkling of magical enhancements. A night sky, an ocean-caressed beach at dusk, and an otherworldly scene of glowing flora from the distant Underdark are among the many lighted displays designed to resemble majestic outdoor scenes. Various chambers have been built to showcase the more interesting properties of sound, and the hallways are filled with magic constructs designed to frighten, delight, and awe the viewer. Life-sized mechanical dragons, complete with misty vapors issuing from their mouths, crouch in niches along the wide corridors, and specially created display cases filled with living, breathing, miniaturized versions of real creatures form dividing walls between rooms. Deep within the heart of the palace, a few special rooms illuminated with artificial sunlight feature thick rain forests populated by colored birds, snakes, and tree frogs.

But not all the magic in the wizard-king's grand home is for show. The entire place is warded with untold varieties of protective magic designed to prevent entry by thieves and assassins, and to keep treasures safe. Several wings of the palace are strictly forbidden to visitors because they are replete with deadly symbols, animated guardians, and binding magic intended to destroy trespassers rather than just thwarting them.

THE PROMENADE

One of the most fashionable and enjoyable pastimes for the citizens of Halarahh is to see and be seen strolling the Promenade, especially at dusk. The Promenade is a wide walkway that runs along the tops of the city walls, which for the most part are ceremonial rather than functional, anyway. The path can be reached via several sets of wide marble stairs, making it readily accessible to the citizens. Every evening, hundreds of the city's well-to-do venture forth dressed in their best finery (which often bears magical enhancements) and perhaps walking their favorite Halruaan behir or other pet. These folk have made a game of seeing whether they can outdo one another, but simply being part of the crowd is the most important consideration.

House Jordain

Along the very southern coast of Halruaa, on a peninsula that juts out into the Bay of Taertal, a large, sprawling complex looks out over the Great Sea. This walled compound is House Jordain, home of the order that trains and indoctrinates all the magic-resistant counselors known as Jordaini. House Jordain boasts enough acreage to support large gardens and numerous fields of crops, plus provide plenty of open land for grazing herd beasts. In the center of the grounds stand several buildings that house barracks, a kitchen and dining hall, classrooms, and combat training facilities for the aspiring Jordaini who live there. Like other major plantations and ranches, House Jordain is entirely self-sufficient, though it maintains trade relations with the nearby

city of Khaerbaal anyway, so as to acquire trade goods its residents cannot produce themselves.

Not just anyone can come to House Jordain to learn the ways of the magic-resistant Jordaini; its recruits are literally bred for the task. Divination spells select parents that can provide the proper genetic makeup, and special elixirs ensure that the newborns resulting from such planned pairings have an uncommonly powerful innate resistance to magic. Once a Jordaini is born and determined to be an appropriate candidate, every detail of his life is carefully planned out by the hierarchy of House Jordain.

House Jordain serves as home not only to aspiring Jordaini but also to numerous wizards who serve as instructors and trainers. Each day, they present the Jordaini with a wide variety of magical challenges, honing their charges to physical and mental perfection. At the same time, they use other spells to teach the young Jordaini how to retain knowledge and become indispensable to their future patrons.

khaerbaal (small city)

On the southern coast, sheltered in the Bay of Taertal, lies the city of Khaerbaal. Like most of Halruaa's settlements, Khaerbaal is open, airy, and filled with wide avenues, parks, and plazas, though it is undeniably rougher around the edges than most of its sister communities.

One of only two bases for the small Halruaan navy, Khaerbaal has about fifteen seafaring ships and six skyships in residence. The navy's principal fortified base and construction docks are on the isle of Rulasuu, which lies just off Khaerbaal's coast. Since Rulasuu has no real city—just a military fortification and the accompanying docks—most of the sailors based there take shore leave in Khaerbaal. The unusually large number of inns and taverns that have sprung up to handle this trade make Khaerbaal a rather wild town.

In addition to serving as a military post, Khaerbaal also functions as a trading center for the southwestern section of the country. Merchant ships whose captains don't wish to make the trip all the way up the mouth of the bay into Lake Halruaa come to Khaerbaal instead. The prices here are nearly as good as those in the interior, and merchants can shave several days off their travels by trading here. Most of the people in Khaerbaal who aren't wizards or military personnel are merchants who represent all the local villages and farms of the region.

Khaerbaal is governed by Grozalum (N male human illusionist 16/Halruaan elder 2), the leading elder of the city, though he is rarely present. Grozalum prefers to spend his time at the netyarch's court in Halarahh, hoping to curry favor and funding for his endless series of magical research projects. In his absence, he leaves the affairs of the city to the naval officers, who have to spend as much time keeping their own troops in line as enforcing the law. Such an arrangement has naturally led to no small amount of resentment among the officers, who feel that their time and resources are stretched too thin. Thus far, however, the citizens of Khaerbaal have been disinclined to make a change because they are quite happy with only a small governmental presence.

Perhaps the single most significant feature of Khaerbaal other than its military fleet is the spacious park in the center of the city, where several great bilboa trees grow. These gigantic trees tower high above all the buildings, and experts claim that this great size is almost certainly due to magical influence. The radius of a bilboa tree's top can easily reach 100 feet, creating a self-contained world within its foliage. Transients and vermin often nest in the hollows of the great bilboa trees, creating settlements similar to the slums in other cities of Faerûn.

maeruhā (village)

Deep within the foothills of the East Wall sits Maeruhā, the settlement closest to the nation's gold mines. Little more than a rough-and-tumble mining town, Maeruhā is filled with folk who dig for gold by day and carouse in the evenings. The merchants who cater to the miners expect a raucous crowd in the evenings, and they strive to offer goods and services that appease their patrons while minimizing brawls and riots. Plenty of bards and musicians make their way to Maeruhā, as do courtesans of every persuasion and interest. Gambling halls occupy every street corner, and some wizards (particularly illusionists) have made small fortunes offering magical entertainments and shows for the locals to enjoy.

Despite its rough reputation, Maeruhā is not completely lawless. Two companies of dwarf mercenaries, the Righteous Hammers and the Golden Shield, have agreed to enforce the peace on behalf of the handful of elders who call the town home. Just as gruff and rowdy as the rest of the folk, these troops bash a few heads when the need arises and brook no nonsense from anyone. In general, however, they keep the place quiet enough that outsiders aren't afraid to visit.

Each of the elders living here has a skyship, though they have little use for such ostentatious items other than personal prestige and enjoyment. Some of the more rambunctious locals occasionally try to swipe one of the flying vessels and take it for a joyride, so the wizards have had to employ creative security measures to dissuade theft without harming the miscreants.

Maeruhā (Village): Conventional; AL NG; 200 gp limit; Assets 6,340 gp; Population 693; Mixed (human 83%, dwarf 8%, half-elf 5%, elf 2%, halfling 2%).

Authority Figures: Mayor Rinlin Pulgro (NG male human evoker 14/Halruaan elder 2).

Important Characters: Kelvrim Errowd (LN male human diviner 11/Halruaan elder 1), Dobyō Flurrig (NG male human abjurer 12/Halruaan elder 2), Inyda Lauz (LG female human diviner 12/Halruaan elder 4), and Drindos Bez-Mont (N male human evoker 13/Halruaan elder 2), members of the Halruaan Council of Elders; Branwig Forkbeard (LN male gold dwarf fighter 13), leader of the Righteous Hammers mercenary company; Holper Stoutshield (LN male gold dwarf fighter 9/giant-killer 6), leader of the Golden Shield mercenaries; Dreela Fallstatter (NG female half-elf expert 14), proprietor of the Winsome Wyvern festhall and gambling parlor.

Righteous Hammers Mercenaries: Cleric 5, cleric 2, fighter 9, fighter 7 (2), fighter 6, fighter 4 (3), ranger 8, ranger 4 (2), sorcerer 6, warrior 4 (3), warrior 3 (2), warrior 2 (2).

Golden Shield Mercenaries: Barbarian 4, bard 7, cleric 6/fighter 4, cleric 3, fighter 8, fighter 6, fighter 5 (3), fighter 2 (3), ranger 6, ranger 3, rogue 7, rogue 3 (2), warrior 5 (3), warrior 4 (3), warrior 3 (5), wizard 6/fighter 5.

Other Characters: Aristocrat 3, aristocrat 1 (4), barbarian 1, bard 6, bard 5, bard 4 (2), bard 2 (3), bard 1 (2), cleric 3, cleric 2, cleric 1 (2), commoner 10, commoner 9, commoner 8, commoner 7 (2), commoner 6 (4), commoner 5 (3), commoner 4 (5), commoner 3 (4), commoner 2 (8), commoner 1 (396), expert 6, expert 5 (3), expert 4 (3), expert 3 (5), expert 2 (8), expert 1 (13), fighter 7, fighter 5 (2), fighter 4 (2), fighter 3 (5), fighter 2 (6), fighter 1 (13), monk 1, paladin 2, ranger 2, rogue 7 (2), rogue 6 (2), rogue 5, rogue 4 (3), rogue 3, rogue 2 (4), rogue 1 (7), sorcerer 1, warrior 4, warrior 3 (2), warrior 2 (3), warrior 1 (22), wizard 11, wizard 9 (3), wizard 8, wizard 7 (2), wizard 6 (4), wizard 5 (7), wizard 4 (10), wizard 3 (12), wizard 2 (17), wizard 1 (19).

mount talath (small town)

Considered by some to be the center of magic in Halruaa, Mount Talath is a small town located high on the slopes of one of the tallest mountains in the Walls. The town is really nothing more than a series of homes for the folk who work in the high temple to Mystra carved into the mountainside.

The high priestess of the temple is Greila Sontoin (LN female human cleric 20 of Mystra), who is said to have gained unearthly wisdom and insight into all things magical through both her own magic and the favor of Mystra. Though Greila is very old and seldom leaves the temple anymore, she is still capable of powerful magic, and she could be a formidable challenger to Zalathorm should the two ever cross one another. Fortunately, the wizard-king and the high priestess are on good terms and communicate regularly because each trusts the other's judgment about most issues.

The Temple of Mystra is a magnificent structure with soaring spires that seem impossibly tall alongside the steep mountain slope. Like the grand towers of the wizards in the cities below, the temple is built primarily of stout stone, but it also includes crystalline walls and permanent *walls of force*. Anyone wishing to pay homage to the Mistress of Magic may enter here to worship, but those who come expecting to get their hands on unique spells or magic items are invariably disappointed. All items of true value are kept behind and beneath the temple proper, in a huge cavern complex designed to store centuries of magical knowledge safely.

Gaining access to the temple storerooms is no easy matter. Visitors who wish to enter the storehalls must undergo a rigorous series of magical screenings. Those who pass muster are admitted, but the depth to which any particular individual may roam is strictly defined, and the temple staff might require the visitor to be escorted while inside. A member of the Council of Elders is permitted access to almost every section, but other natives of Halruaa are restricted to the more mundane areas. Visitors to the country can only scratch the proverbial surface, and each must pay a ridiculously high fee to gain access at any level. Travelers who return to their native lands from a trip to the temple at

Mount Talath often speak of its wondrous libraries, not realizing that they have not seen a third of its treasures.

Despite the best efforts of the priests, thieves and spies occasionally gain entrance, but ample abjuration magic is always in place to deal with such intruders. Many are not found for several days after they have been fried, frozen, or partially disintegrated.

The complex has some degree of organization—visitors can usually locate any desired piece of magical knowledge with no more than five or six years' worth of diligent research. Halruaan wizards pride themselves on their ability to track down the information they need in Talath's caverns, and some diviners have actually devoted their lives to the goal of devising new spells expressly for speeding that process. In the end, though, no one in all Halruaa—except perhaps a lich or two with knowledge of such matters—has any real idea just how vast the body of information within Mount Talath is.

Talathgard

The fortress of Talathgard sits in the bottom of the pass at the base of Mount Talath. The military force stationed here is charged with guarding the path that leads to the settlement of Mount Talath and the entrance to the High Temple of Mystra near the mountain's summit.

Talathgard is staffed with an elite, 200-member force of potent wizards and battle-hardened warriors. No wizard of Halruaa is foolishly prideful enough to believe that such defenses can keep out every creature intent on gaining entrance to the temple or the cavern complex behind it, but the force does deter most potential threats. Ninety percent of the prowlers are chased off before they get beyond the gates of Talathgard; the other ten percent know better than to come at the temple from the front road anyway.

In addition to serving as a gatehouse for the temple, Talathgard also provides a first line of defense for Talath Pass, which connects Halruaa with Lapaliiya—a nation with which the wizards of Halruaa have squabbled in the past.

Yaulazna (Bay of Pirates) (Hamlet)

Hidden deep within the inlet known as the Bay of Pirates, the secret shantytown of Yaulazna serves as a refuge and hangout for many of the pirates who ply the waters along the coast of the Great Sea. Half of this hamlet lies on shore; the other half on a floating platform composed of derelict ships that have been lashed together. The landbound portion was built on a much older site—a collection of ancient foundations and odd stone columns dating from the same time and culture as the ruins at Chasolné. Numerous tunnels, warrens, and chambers honeycomb the ground beneath and behind the shantytown, where the mountains rise up from the ocean.

Unlike Purl to the east, Yaulazna has a strong central authority figure—the legendary Pirate King Yargo (LE male lightfoot halfling rogue 9/Great Sea corsair 8). Yargo considers himself the owner of Yaulazna, and for all intents and purposes, he is right. He maintains iron-fisted control of the community, and he has

the hired muscle to back up his word. But despite his authoritarian nature, most of the pirates welcome Yargo's authority in Yaulazna.

First and foremost, Yargo provides pirates with a suitable place to hide when either the law or a rival is hot on his trail. The Pirate King couldn't care less what a pirate does on the high seas. As long as he minds his manners while in port, he's free from persecution or retribution.

Second, Yargo happily resolves disputes between feuding corsairs who come before him. His one stipulation is that anyone who chooses to submit to his counsel must abide by his decision or never be welcomed back in Yaulazna again.

Third, Yargo maintains a standing offer that anyone wishing to store plunder can keep it safely in the caverns beneath the town for as long as desired, so long as Yargo gets ten percent of its total value, payable upon placing the goods in storage. The Pirate King has demonstrated his own trustworthiness on so many occasions that most of the pirates feel comfortable taking him up on his offer, and an astonishing amount of booty is hidden in the network of chambers underground. Once in a while, a rogue pirate sneers at the thought of handing his treasure over to Yargo for safekeeping, but the Pirate King never has to defend his practice. Almost every other pirate in town quickly speaks up on Yargo's behalf when such a situation occurs.

An outsider might find it somewhat surprising that the navies of the coastal countries have made no effort to shut down Yaulazna, but Yargo has planned for such a contingency. In fact, both Halruaa and Dambrath have tried several times to sail an armada into the Bay of Pirates and burn the shantytown to the ground, but each time ships have arrived, their crews have found nothing to put to torch—as if the whole place had simply vanished. This impression is actually not far removed from the truth. Yargo has a powerful friend—a renegade wizard from Halruaa named Zuusted Nimderval (NE male human conjurer 20), who has developed a variation on the *plane shift* spell that actually causes the entire shantytown to vanish to another plane temporarily. For security, Yargo simply posts watches near the entrance to the bay and higher up the sides of the mountain (to watch for skyships), and Zuusted uses magical means to detect scrying spells and creatures trying to approach with magical stealth. At the first sign of trouble, the shantytown and everyone in it shifts away until the heat is off. Yargo uses a good portion of the money that pirates pay him for storing their treasure to keep Zuusted happy.

Yaulazna (Hamlet): Conventional; AL LE; 30,000 gp limit; Assets 9,000,000 gp; Population varies (about 180), averages 300; Integrated (human 37%, halfling 23%, half-elf 13%, half-drow 9%, half-orc 7%, elf 5%, tiefling 4%, other 2%).

Authority Figures: Yargo (LE male lightfoot halfling rogue 9/Great Sea corsair 8), the Pirate King of Yaulazna.

Important Characters: Zuusted Nimderval (NE male human conjurer 20), Yargo's right-hand man; Cam Beely (NE male human rogue 7/Great Sea corsair 4), captain of the Starsnake and formal rival of Yargo; Ly'stri Faerow (CE female half-drow rogue 4/fighter 7/Great Sea corsair 8), captain of the Black Widow and considered the most notorious pirate on the Great Sea; Wamdra Brooling (N female human rogue 3/expert 14),

former courtesan of Calimport and proprietor of the Purple Genie tavern and hostel.

Targo's Butchers: Bard 5/sorcerer 8, cleric 9, fighter 10, fighter 7, fighter 6 (3), monk 12, rogue 15, rogue 12 (2), rogue 6/sorcerer 5, rogue 9, rogue 8 (3), rogue 7, rogue 5 (2), sorcerer 7, wizard 13, wizard 8, wizard 7 (2).

Ships' Crews: At any given time, 1d6+4 ships are in port. Each has a captain with character level 8th–12th (usually a rogue or fighter with several levels of Great Sea corsair), plus 2d20 fighters, rogues, experts, and warriors of 1st to 10th level.

Other Characters: Barbarian 1, bard 3, bard 1 (2), commoner 7, commoner 6, commoner 5 (2), commoner 4 (3), commoner 2 (7), commoner 1 (18), expert 6, expert 5 (3), expert 4 (3), expert 3 (2), expert 1 (2), fighter 6, fighter 5 (3), fighter 4 (7), fighter 3 (8), fighter 2 (11), fighter 1 (13), rogue 3, rogue 2 (4), rogue 1 (7), sorcerer 2, sorcerer 1, warrior 3, warrior 2 (5), warrior 1 (8), wizard 1.

zalazuu (Large town)

Zalazuu, located on the Bay of Azuth, is a large town of nearly 5,000 people that serves as the main trading center for the southeastern portion of Halruaa. Like Khaerbaal, Zalazuu functions as an urban getaway for a nearby Halruaan naval base. Almost 2,000 military troops and nearly twenty warships (both seagoing vessels and skyships) are stationed at Fort Zalazuu, a large walled fortress located just outside the town.

Lailuu Gyrrite (LG female human cleric 19 of Mystra) rules Zalazuu, but she is more concerned with defending Halruaa than ruling the city. She leaves the day-to-day administration of the town to a bureaucracy of petty clerks and officials that has become more massive and unwieldy with each passing year. Most of these civil servants have little or no skill with magic, but they have managed to elevate their own importance (and thus, preserve their job security in a nation predisposed to favor wizards) by creating a tangle of forms, procedures, and regulations that no one else understands. As a result, trade in this port of call is less lucrative than it could be, simply because most merchants know it's easier to conduct business in other Halruaan cities. Despite the extra travel time, most of them believe it's better to sail up the channel than to stop in Zalazuu.

THE KILMARUU SWAMP

Just east of the town of Zalazuu lies the Kilmaruu Swamp. Though slightly less famous than Akhlaur Swamp near Hala-gard, it is still a fetid, dangerous spot and a threat to those who live nearby. In fact, this bog is part of the reason that the Halruaan navy has based so many of its vehicles and troops in Zalazuu.

Somewhere in the middle of the swamp lies a ruined city. Few have managed to reach the ruins and return with any details, but those who did come back revealed that the city was built by elves before the swamp existed. For reasons unknown, a trio of powerful Halruaan wizards diverted a river that normally flowed into the Bay of Azuth and flooded the elf community. The elves attempted to battle the wizards, hoping to drive them away so that they could restore the river to its normal course,

but they could not prevail. Their community was destroyed, and the slain elves rose as undead creatures. Their festering negative energy eventually pervaded the entire swamp, saturating it with foul diseases, twisted and corrupted creatures, and still more undead.

Soldiers and adventurers alike have tried time and again to rid the swamp of this foul pestilence, but until recently, almost every effort served only to make the swamp more deadly. To quote a common Zalazuu expression, "The swamp helps keep the number of fools in town low." A few months ago, however, the magehound Kiva took a group of Jordaini into the swamp and destroyed the green sphere (an artifact created by the necromancer Akhlaur) that had been responsible for their creation. Ever since, the number of undead creatures in the swamp has been shrinking rapidly. Now that their reign of terror has ended, more mages and other adventurers have started to search the ruins, hoping to recover the lost treasures of the elves.

heroes and monsters

Most characters who hail from Halruaa are human, though a hero of some other race could easily originate in that country. A gold dwarf, for example, might be the offspring of gold miners in the eastern mountains or craftsfolk from any of a dozen cities that export fine jewelry or items destined for magical enhancement. An elf or half-elf could be the child of one of the elf wizards on the Council of Elders. In addition, a few halflings from nearby Luiren have migrated to the coastal cities over the centuries, finding urban life in a land of wizards to be interesting and filled with opportunity.

Since wizards are especially abundant in Halruaa, any wizard character could easily hail from that nation. Bards are also common, though most have heard more than a few snickers about their "parlor magic." Sorcerers are not unknown in Halruaa, but they are exceedingly rare, and many take up adventuring to leave a life of suspicion and persecution behind. Priests of the deities of magic and spellcasting are common enough in Halruaa, but those devoted to other deities are almost nonexistent. Druids and rangers are more common in the rural sections of the countryside—particularly on or near the mountains—than they are in the cities. A few monks have trained in the temples dedicated to the deities of magic, and an occasional paladin champions an esoteric cause, but neither class is prevalent in Halruaa. Likewise, rogues and barbarians are exceedingly rare.

All the feats in Chapter 1 are relevant to a character who calls Halruaa home. The Halruaan magehound, Halruaan elder, and jordain vizier prestige classes detailed in Chapter 2 are particularly suitable for characters hailing from the land of wizards.

Few monsters roam Halruaa, primarily because its citizens have taken such careful pains to ensure that their home remains free of such threats. However, adventurers are likely to find a few monstrous creatures between the Walls, including the beguiler, the Halruaan behir, the laraken, and the starsnake. Other creatures—typically those with the strength and endurance to find their way across the mountains—include dragons, lizardfolk, werebeasts, summoned creatures, and yuan-ti.



LUIREN

Luiren, the land of the halflings, is both peaceful and bustling. Though halflings can be found in almost every country in Faerûn, all their ancestors originally migrated from Luiren. Sometimes known as Small Folk, halflings actually prefer the term *hin*, the name they call themselves. But they don't hold the use of other names against visitors who don't know any better. They're happy enough to welcome newcomers with a smile and a place to stay—though that lodging might be a half-sized stable or barn.

geographic overview

The *hin* nation of Luiren sits on the southern coast of Faerûn, nestled between Dambrath to the west and Estagund to the east. The settled portions of the kingdom wrap around a small bay known as the Luirenstrand, on a strip of ground between the bay and the Lluirwood that measures no more than 30 to 50 miles wide in most places. This populated region stretches generally southwest to northeast, covering approximately 275 miles from the edge of the Southern Lluirwood to the point where the Lluirwood meets the ocean, just east of Fasruil.

The Lluirwood lies north of the open coastland where the major settlements are. Though ostensibly part of the kingdom, the forest is mostly untamed wilderness, and few halflings dare venture into it. The north side of the Lluirwood is bounded by the Toadsquat Mountains, and beyond those, the vast plains of the Eastern Shaar stretch away for hundreds of miles. Most of Luiren's countryside is filled with gentle, rolling hills blanketed with rich soil that supports a wide range of crops. Small copses of very large, very old trees dot this pastoral landscape. The only portion of the nonforested land that is not arable is the Mortik Swamp, which butts up against the southern coast of

the Luirenstrand and divides the southern peninsula of Luiren in half.

Like the rest of southern Faerûn's coastal region, Luiren is warm and humid through most of the year. Because of the Toadsquat Mountains, which catch the updrafts of humid air off the ocean and churn them into cooler, rain-filled clouds over the woodlands, Luiren gets more rain than either Dambrath to the west or Estagund to the east. The season of heaviest rain, during the winter months, slows trade and travel but is good for the growing season during the rest of the year.

major geographic features

The green, rolling farmland that makes up most of Luiren is bounded on three sides by forest or mountains, and on the fourth by the ocean. Though the halflings enjoy the forests, they do not stray far into the woods for fear of the monsters that live there. Most of the region is rural, and the halflings grow grains, vegetables, and citrus fruits for eating or sale to merchants from other lands. In the quaint communities of hillside tunnel-homes that dot the open country, the *hin* often gather together to share produce, stories, and news from other lands.

The Lluirwood

Sometimes referred to as the Long Forest by the halflings to the south, the Lluirwood stretches more than 400 miles along the north side of Luiren, covering nearly half the country. Along its whole length, citrus trees and many warm-weather evergreens form a deep, dark canopy that shelters trailing vines and a profusion of undergrowth. Where the northern side of the forest climbs up the slopes of the Toadsquats, numerous hardwood trees, especially oaks, which thrive in the cooler temperatures, replace the less hardy varieties.

Though no place within the forest is safe, the eastern end is by far the more dangerous, especially in and around Thruldar. Ghost-



wise halflings call this area home, and they brook no intrusion into their territory. In addition to the occasional bandits, the eastern end of the Lluirwood is home to immense spiders, rhino beetles, flying snakes, stirges, and perhaps worst of all, tall mouthers. The western section of the wood serves as the expansive "temple" of Nola Treesong (NG female strongheart halfling ranger 5/druid 8 of Sheela Peryroyl), who spends her time nurturing the forest, aiding marchwardens in keeping it safe, and discouraging foolish and unprepared folk from venturing too far into its depths.

The Luirenstrand

The bay known as the Luirenstrand is not as calm and safe as either the Bay of Dolphins to the west or the Golden Water to the east. Its depths are noticeably darker and murkier than either of those two bodies of water, and the halflings, who are not much for sailing, spend little time on its surface. Still, the amount of trade passing in and out of Luiren means that merchant ships crisscross the Luirenstrand on a regular basis. A regularly scheduled route from Shoun to Krenalir crosses the bay in one direction every couple of days to ferry merchants and other folk between those two cities, thereby saving them several days' travel overland.

The Mortik swamp

The Mortik Swamp is a lowland region in southern Luiren that effectively separates the tip of the peninsula from the rest of the country. The region is so close to sea level that the ground cannot drain properly, and the excess water has formed a swamp.

Mortik Swamp is a nasty bog filled with countless pests. In addition to the giant ticks that give the place its name, Mortik is also home to giant varieties of frogs, snakes, water spiders, and deadly wasps, as well as biting swarms of more mundane insects. Perhaps the most dangerous and cunning inhabitants of the swamp, however, are the merrow. These creatures occasionally raid the surrounding farms and caravans, carrying off livestock and food stores to feed their tribes. A powerful shaman or chieftain known as the Bog King (CE male merrow barbarian 7) presides over these creatures. With these creatures at his command, the Bog King can make the road between Chethel and Krenadir a dangerous route.

Almost as long as this region has been inhabited, rumor has held that a hidden city lies somewhere in the middle of the swamp. To date, the persistent lack of evidence to support such claims has never stopped adventurers from trying their luck. Most of those foolhardy enough to brave the Mortik and lucky enough to return emerge with swamp fever, rashes, leech bites, and mud-covered bodies, but no fortunes to speak of.

quelthiir

The isle of Quelthiir is little more than a wide sandbar that divides the mouth of the Luirenstrand from the rest of the Great Sea. The entire island, 100 miles long but only 10 miles wide, is made up mostly of low hills covered with sea grasses, scrub brush, and a few scattered, stunted trees. Every few years, a storm surging inland from the ocean scours the island unmercifully with rain and wind.

Despite its inhospitable geography, this island is the source of many rumors. More than a few tales have hinted at buried treasure hidden on the island by pirates who once terrorized the southern coast of Faerûn. The most-often heard rumor revolves around Captain Jape "One-Eye" Belson, a notorious rake from Durpar with a cunning nature and a mean streak. According to the stories, One-Eye seized a fortune in pearls and silver from an outbound Dambrathan merchant ship that he subsequently sent to the bottom of the sea with its entire crew still on board. Thereafter, he sailed straight to Quelthiir, where he constructed a buried vault protected by all sorts of nasty tricks and traps. He supposedly hid the loot in the vault and then high-tailed it to Purl to hole up for a while, but the Dambrathans caught him and dragged him to the temple of Loviatar, along with his entire crew. His treasure, if it ever existed, must still be sitting at the bottom of that hidden vault.

The southern Lluirwood

This untamed stretch of forest serves as an effective boundary between Luiren and Dambrath. In the formative years of Faerûn, the Lluirwood and the Southern Lluirwood comprised a single, great forest that covered present-day Lluiren. This vast woodland was eventually divided into two parts by a combination of clearcutting by the stronghearts after the Hin Ghostwars, several bouts with tree blights, and the need for a road to Delzimmer. In the years since, the Southern Lluirwood has shrunk to perhaps two-thirds of its original size, but it is still shunned by most prudent folk.

A gloomy, mysterious place, the Southern Lluirwood houses creepy, dark things that the halflings use in their ghost stories. Some of the hin (particularly marchwardens) try to patrol the periphery of the woodland, but the dangers are so real and subtle that many of them simply disappear and are never seen again. What they don't realize is that two different but very dangerous creatures roam the forest, and neither of them likes to be noticed.

The first threat is a tribe of yuan-ti based in the southern regions of the Black Jungles on the Chultan Peninsula. Members of this tribe have been entering the wood for some time by means of a two-way *portal* and kidnapping halflings who stray too close, then transporting them back to their own city for experimentation. In addition, these woods are haunted by a tribe of beholders led by a very old and cunning beholder mage named Xianthrope (LE beholder mage 7). Xianthrope has created a number of death tyrants to destroy both hin and yuan-ti who wander into their hunting grounds.

The Toadsquat mountains

The Toadsquat Mountains form Luiren's northern border, dividing it from the Eastern Shaar to the north. This range, sometimes referred to as the Little Mountains by people in Estagund, is old and worn, and its gentle slopes are covered with trees on the south side, where it merges with the Lluirwood. If it weren't for the silver that lies in the depths of these mountains, few would pay them any attention at all.

Numerous tribes of gold dwarves live in the mountains and work the silver mines they have established there. The Stout Folk

divide their time between extracting the silver and battling the ogres that contest their living space. In recent years, the fighting has gotten worse, primarily because an ogre mage named Kalispar Onefang (LE male ogre mage sorcerer 7) has been organizing and inciting his followers toward more aggressive tactics against the dwarves.

people of luiren

Most folk who visit Luiren come away with a mixed sense of warmth and confusion. The halflings of this land are happy and gregarious, but their customs and traditions seem more than a little strange to anyone from another land. On the coast, where the majority of their trade occurs, the halflings go out of their way to accommodate the Big Folk, building larger places for them to sit, eat, and sleep. Those living inland are just as happy to see humans, elves, half-elves, and dwarves as their kin on the coast, but about the best they can offer in the way of hospitality is a dry barn and a hot meal or two.

Races and cultures

Though the hin can be found in almost every corner of Faerûn, they are considered visitors everywhere in the world except here. In the cities of the humans, halflings are often relegated to ethnic neighborhoods. In Luiren, however, the hin rule, and their culture

reflects that fact. Few members of the other races stay in Luiren long—not because they are inherently unwelcome, but simply because they don't fit in—both literally and figuratively.

The three halflings subraces all look the same, though their manner of dress tends to differentiate them from one another. The typical hin stands about 3 feet tall and weighs between 30 and 40 pounds. She has dark brown or black eyes, ruddy skin, and straight, black hair. Once in a while, however, a child is born with fairer skin and curly brown or red-brown hair. Such a feature is always considered a good portent, and the hin say that such a child is “blessed by Brandobaris.”

HALFLINGS (GHOSTWISE)

Very few ghostwise halflings still dwell in Luiren, and those who do live deep in the Lluirwood. These hin are rarely seen by visitors.

HALFLINGS (LIGHTFOOT)

Though lightfoot halflings call Luiren home, they constitute only a small minority there because most of them departed the Lluirwood right after the Ghostwars. According to the tales passed down from parents to children, the lightfoots were unwilling to remain in close proximity to the sites of the massacres that had occurred during that conflict. Those few who stayed behind had little choice but to settle in with the stronghearts, trading in their nomadic ways for more sedentary lifestyles.

Illustration by Vince Locke



A village festival in Luiren

Lightfoot halflings are similar in almost every physical respect to their strongheart cousins. In fact, the only discernible difference between the two subraces is attitude. Lightfoot halflings tend to be jovial, almost carefree individuals, and their nomadic nature has never completely left them. In fact, the habit of frequent relocation within Luiren (see *Life and Society*, below) was instituted by the lightfoots to assuage their wanderlust without actually leaving their homeland, though this practice was later adopted by the stronghearts as well. Lightfoots immensely enjoy pets, and the typical lightfoot family keeps a large hound of some sort as both companion and protector. Lightfoots might not be quite as stodgy and dour as their strongheart cousins, but both groups have learned that the only way to convince the tall people to leave them alone is to fight back. The lightfoots used to just run away, but now they stand shoulder to shoulder with their strongheart neighbors when necessary.

HALFLINGS (STRONGHEART)

Of the three subraces of halflings native to Faerûn, the stronghearts are the most closely tied to Luiren, and the vast majority of them still reside in their native land. It was the stronghearts who first experienced the depredations of the ghostwise tribe during the Hin Ghostwars, and the stronghearts were the ones who insisted on seeing that grisly work all the way to its conclusion (see *History of Luiren*, below). After the Hin Ghostwars, the strongheart halflings chose to turn away from their previously nomadic existence, clearing the forest and settling the land now known as Luiren.

Though not quite as dour and reserved as ghostwise halflings, the stronghearts are the most down-to-earth and practical of the three subraces. Whereas the lightfoots have never completely shaken off their desire for travel, most stronghearts are content to work their land, share their goods, and enjoy a pleasant evening in front of a hearth with a filled pipe. At the same time, the stronghearts have adapted well to the lightfoots' concept of a partially nomadic existence, and they occasionally pack up and shift to new locations (and as often as not new careers) without undue thought. The strongheart tribe has earned its name on more than one occasion from its members' fierce determination to stand strong in the face of adversity, to defend their homeland and protect their young, and to endure the hardships of the land. More than a few would-be invaders have been surprised by the unwavering determination of their strongheart foes.

Strongheart halflings prefer to dress in simple garb suitable for working in the fields or laboring in the city. A male strongheart typically wears loose pants stuffed inside stout work boots, with a sleeveless leather lace-up vest over a simple linen shirt. A female usually prefers a peasant dress, often with an apron, and a simple cap beneath which to tuck her hair. During inclement weather, a halfling of either gender wears a light cloak to keep out the damp. In addition, a typical strongheart takes along a good walking stick wherever she goes.

Life and society

The halflings of Luiren live a happy-go-lucky lifestyle that suits them well but causes some misunderstandings with other races.

Teamwork is a major component of hin society, and just about every halfling worth his salt pitches in to help with whatever community project is at hand. The Small Folk have an innate understanding of the fact that no individual can get much done without cooperation from his fellows.

One unique aspect of Luiren's culture is the halflings' occasional desire to uproot themselves and relocate. A family might suddenly decide to move to another part of the same town, or even to a different city. Families often exchange the intensity of life in an urban center for the rural quiet of farm life, or vice versa. Such a relocation can occur several times in a halfling's life, and someone moves at least once per tenday in any sizable community. When a halfling moves, all his possessions are left behind—furniture, food, clothing, and even his job. All the neighbors pitch in to throw a special kind of going-away party, wherein everyone helps clean up the property to get it ready for the next tenants. The house does not stay empty for long, because whenever a hin family moves away, another soon arrives.

At any given time, a certain percentage of the abodes in any locale are vacant and waiting for new occupants. Families visiting a town for the first time might spend a day or two checking out the vacancies before deciding which place (and furniture, and clothing, and job) are right for them. Outsiders find this behavior more than a little odd, but to the hin, it's as natural as a rainbow after rain.

ECONOMY

Most of Luiren's economy is based on agriculture. The hin export raw foodstuffs such as grains, vegetables, and citrus fruits, plus prepared foods such as cheese, brewed beverages, and baked goods (particularly pastries). They also offer a few handcrafted items, such as carved wood and fired pottery goods. A few farms also specialize in livestock, so wool and hides are exported in small quantities.

The halflings do a substantial amount of trade with the gold dwarves of the Great Rift, exchanging their surplus foodstuffs for precious metals. Most of their remaining trade goods travel to market by ship, but few halflings have the temperament for sea travel, so they rely on merchants from other lands (primarily Durpar) to handle such trade for them. Because of this frequent business contact, certain inns and taverns in the coastal cities of Luiren, where the human merchant ships dock, offer human-size accommodations.

The remaining goods are taken overland by caravan to Dambrath. Great care is used on such trips because the halflings know their Crinti neighbors (and their long history of aggressive invasion) quite well. For that reason alone, the halflings choose to conduct their negotiations with merchants in Dunfeld traveling deeper into Dambrathan territory. Other caravans travel the road between Luiren and Estagund, though this route isn't a main trading path, since moving the goods by ship is usually easier, faster, and less dangerous.

The hin do not mint their own coins, since they have no need for them except to trade with outsiders. Inland, most hin feel no need for money, instead using a barter system to trade with one another when the need arises. Halflings who do not have cause to visit the coast or the border regions of Luiren can go months or years without seeing a minted coin. What little coinage does

move through the coastal trading cities comes from other nations, primarily Dambrath and Durpar.

Thus far, the hin have adamantly refused to allow the Red Wizards of Thay to proliferate in their homeland. To date, the Thayans have inquired several times about the possibility of establishing an enclave in Beluir, and each time, the mayor—with the solid backing of both the citizens and the leaders of the clergy—has steadfastly refused. The hin feel that no good can come from allowing the wretched Red Wizards to get a toehold in Luiren, and their attitudes aren't likely to change anytime soon.

LAW AND ORDER

The hin of Luiren have few laws and many customs. Strictly limiting the actions of a people who are whimsical and mischievous by nature—and who acknowledge an avowed rascal in their pantheon—would be a nigh-impossible task. Nonetheless, the halflings manage to regulate themselves enough to prevent most serious offenses against society. When a native of Luiren commits a minor offense, the miscreant usually just receives “a good talking-to” and an admonition to straighten up and fly right from an older, wiser halfling. When an outsider stirs up trouble, the halflings often find creative ways to turn the crime back on the criminal. For example, a con artist might find himself duped into losing his own coin as well as what he gained through his cheating ways, or a thief might wake up to discover that he's been moved in the middle of the night—minus his belongings—to the middle of nowhere.

The halflings recognize that there are a few truly bad apples in every barrel, and that if left unchecked, an exceptionally villainous individual can cause quite a mess. When such a situation occurs, the hin call on a local marchwarden (see *Defense and Warcraft*, below) to administer justice. Though halflings are generally jovial and prone to forgiving slights, they can deal with serious threats quite firmly, as evidenced by the *Ghostwars*. When hin law catches up to a murderer, he shouldn't expect much more than a quick execution.

In any rural community in Luiren, two rather informal councils of village elders handle most of the governing. The menfolk assemble on the front stoop of the largest communal building (usually a taproom or general store), and the womenfolk gather around the baking table inside. These two groups discuss the situations facing the community and decide on the proper way to handle any problems. Usually, the most respected and/or prominent citizen in the community presides over the dual meeting as mayor or wise woman, though occasionally a marchwarden assumes the role of leader. This individual listens to all arguments and counterarguments and, if the gathering cannot come to a consensus, hands down a decision for dealing with the situation at hand.

In Luiren's urban centers, the governing body is more formal. During each of the five seasonal holidays, anyone who wishes a voice in the government comes to the central square (or the marketplace or the green in front of the mayor's office) to participate in discussions on the issues that concern the community. These debates address all pertinent topics, including whether or not the current mayor is handling the situation well enough to continue serving. More often than not, unless a real crisis occurs or the current mayor has decided to uproot and move to a new

place for a while, that part of the discussion lasts only a few moments and consists of a few toasts, some good-natured jokes at the mayor's expense, and a quick verbal vote before the real celebrations begin. Should a change of leadership be in order, the citizens might spend an hour or two hearing various prominent citizens speak before a vote is called. At that point, whichever hin is elected takes over management of the town or city.

The mayor is responsible for the city's day-to-day public operations, but he usually delegates such tasks to other halflings who he knows can get the job done. A halfling settlement often collects a minimal tax to help defray the costs of running the city, but the tax rates are usually very low. The marchwardens, with the aid of a few volunteer city guards, deal with any trouble that erupts, whether caused by halflings or outsiders. Few humans who have spent a night or two in a halfling-sized prison cell are eager to do so again.

DEFENSE AND WARCRRAFT

Along the boundaries of the nation—most specifically at the edges of the forests—a loosely organized group of halfling protectors known as marchwardens is constantly on the lookout for threats. The marchwardens are volunteers who understand the need to be vigilant and have the necessary skills to handle trouble. The rest of the population genuinely appreciates the marchwardens, recognizing them as Luiren's first line of defense against enemies.

For such a small people, the hin are surprisingly ferocious when it comes to defending their homes and land. They do not make a habit of going to war, but they are perfectly capable of rising up and organizing a defense against other nations or monsters that arrive with conquest on their minds. Marchwardens are quite effective at motivating and guiding militia forces of halflings against larger opponents, and many an invading army has discovered that such a force is good at guerrilla tactics, especially in regions heavy with wooded thickets. Since almost every side of Luiren is screened by forest, such tactics almost invariably work to the halflings' advantage.

Defense of the coast is a bit trickier for the halflings of Luiren. Only a few of the Small Folk are truly comfortable on the ocean, so hin warships are few. Instead, the folk of Luiren find honest, trustworthy human corsairs and offer them a regular cut of trade profits in exchange for patrolling the coastline. Those few halflings who do take to the sea often sail with this independent “navy.” Though halflings might seem silly and flighty to members of other races, they are good judges of character and have little trouble distinguishing trustworthy sea captains from those who would try to take advantage of them.

RELIGION

As a rule, halflings prefer to venerate the entire hin pantheon, recognizing the value that each deity brings to the overall religious experience. The stronghearts and lightfoots of Luiren, however, often choose to favor some deities over others. Arvoreen has the most ardent following, since the natives of Luiren find the tenets of the Vigilant Guardian most in keeping with their line of thinking about how to protect their land. Many clerics of the Wary Sword serve in positions of political power, as mayors or even marchwardens.

After Arvoreen, Yondalla is the most popular deity among Luiren folk. The halflings view her focus on home and security as wise and useful, and they welcome her notions of tradition. In addition, a sizable faction of hin—especially druids and rangers who live on the fringes of civilization—choose to venerate Sheela Peryroyl.

Most of the settled halflings who have remained in Luiren are curious, if not troubled, by the teachings of Cyrollalee the Hearthkeeper, who urges her followers to earn the respect of other peoples by establishing a hin nation. After all, Luiren is already such a nation, and its citizens do not understand why the goddess would suggest otherwise. While few hin go out of their way to discredit such views, they believe that this concept bears careful watching.

Although every halfling offers up some lighthearted respect to Brandobaris, few who live in Luiren truly venerate the trickster deity. All hin understand that Brandobaris's outlook and antics reflect a part of their nature, but the older and wiser individuals also understand the limitations of such behavior. Nonetheless, every halfling knows by heart the legend of how Brandobaris helped the halflings found Luiren in the dawning days of Faerûn, and almost every hin offers an occasional prayer of thanks to him for granting the race its clever and cunning nature.

Adventurers

The hin certainly do not object to the presence of adventurers in their lands, and in fact, their tradition of hospitality demands that they welcome such visitors, as long as they don't cause any trouble. The hin tend to be a little more cautious about wizards and sorcerers than they are about other adventurers, since proximity to Halruaa and Durpar has made the halflings wary of powerful arcane spellcasters who use magic excessively. Likewise, priests of dangerous or evil deities are unwelcome inside Luiren's borders, but other clerics are permitted to visit, so long as they do not attempt to proselytize to the locals.

The hin know that most out-of-towners come to Luiren not to see them, but to explore the dangerous places along the fringes of civilization. This suits the halflings just fine, since adventurers usually return from their quests with coin to spend on goods and services, and they might actually defeat a dangerous monster or two along the way. The halflings gladly let the adventurers keep half of everything valuable that they bring back from the depths of the forests, swamps, and mountains.

politics and power

In Luiren, the hin live in a sort of benevolent anarchy, since no actual law-establishing body other than the clergy exists. The eldest and wisest of the citizens in any given community enforce a level of control over the rest, but the hin accept this rulership more out of respect for the wisdom of their elders than through any real fear that disobedience could bring civil collapse. Beyond the local mayor and the village council, the hin informally recognize two other political powers within Luiren: the temple clergy and the marchwardens.

Many priests of the various halfling deities find themselves functioning as the spiritual and secular leaders of communities. At the very least, other hin come to the clergy for advice, for aid in settling disagreements, and for divine healing in times of sickness or injury. Clerics of the faith not burdened with any sort of formal leadership roles usually travel the land to teach, protect their flocks, and redress wrongdoings. Thus, though they are not formally recognized as a ruling body of Luiren, halfling clerics do hold appreciable influence in hin society.

The marchwardens also wield considerable power, functioning as the protectors, defenders, and perhaps even the vigilantes of Luiren and its people. They generally operate outside of any other ruling structure but cooperate fully with mayors and village councils. The marchwardens meet from time to time—often by chance but occasionally intentionally—to discuss persistent problems, threats, and progress in dealing with such. They have no real hierarchy among themselves, but they generally acknowledge the more experienced of their number as leaders during gatherings. Though disputes between marchwardens are not unheard of, they are quite rare—there is no room for pride or disagreement when the well-being of the country is at stake.

History of Luiren

In the earliest centuries, three tribes of the Small Folk roamed the great Lluirwood as woodland nomads. After the Ghostwars, the Strongheart Tribe and a few members of the Lightfoot Tribe stayed in the area and settled down, clearing the land for farming and establishing contact with other nations. From that point on, the history of the halflings was a quiet one, interrupted from time to time by the invasions and depredations of humans and humanoids who wanted Luiren and its resources for themselves.

TIMELINE

Year	Event
c. -6,000	Humans return from the Lluirwood Forest, which stretches from the River Ammath in the west to the River Gundar in the east, and from the Toadsquat Mountains all the way to the shore of the Luiren-strand. They report three distinct tribes of hin living in that region.
-102	Year of the Spiked Gauntlet: Desva, a cleric of Malar, attains a position of power among the ghostwise halflings and begins leading them into darkness and evil.
-68	Year of Discordant Destinies: The Hin Ghostwars begin in response to the evil acts of Desva and the ghostwise halflings. Chand, a strongheart hunter, becomes warchief of the Strongheart Tribe. The Strongheart and Lightfoot Tribes unite against the Ghostwise Tribe and begin exterminating its members.
-65	Year of Monstrous Appetites: Chand slays Desva in battle. Almost all the ghostwise hin are either slain or driven out of the Lluirwood, and the Hin Ghostwars at last draw to a close.
14	Year of the Unknown Beloved: Beluir is founded.



Kaldair and Vaprak

The Legend of Luiren's founding

Before the fall of Myth Drannor, when the Lluirwood covered the whole of the land that is now Luiren and Estagünd, the Small Folk came to Faerûn. At first, they lived on the coast of the Luirenstrand, while the ogres ruled the woods. These cruel, terrible creatures tormented the Small Folk constantly, and they prayed for deliverance. One day, a halfling named Kaldair Swiftfoot came upon the avatar of the ogre deity, Vaprak the Destroyer. The halfling began to tease Vaprak and finally challenged the avatar to catch him if he could. In a rage, Vaprak chased the halfling for ten days and nights, but he could never succeed in grabbing the irksome creature.

Finally, Vaprak collapsed in exhaustion, and Kaldair approached him. "You cannot defeat me in a battle of agility, and I do not think you can beat me in a test of strength," he said.

Vaprak growled at the insult and quickly agreed to the test.

"Let's see which of us can pull a tree out of the ground without ripping its roots apart," Kaldair suggested. "If you win, the hin will retreat to the mountains north of the forest, and the ogres may have the woodlands all to themselves. But if I win, all the ogres must live in the mountains, leaving the forest to the Small Folk."

Vaprak agreed and immediately grasped the nearest tree. He yanked it easily from the ground, but many of its roots tore. The ogre deity's avatar tried again, but again, he succeeded only in damaging the tree.

Finally, after Vaprak had tried and failed with many great trees, Kaldair took his turn. He walked up to the tiniest sapling and very carefully removed it, pulling its lone taproot from the ground with harming it in the least.

Vaprak trembled and roared with rage, but he knew that he had been beaten. At that moment, Kaldair revealed his true identity—Brandobaris the Trickster.

"You cannot best me in a test of agility, nor can you win in a contest of wits, it would seem," the hin deity taunted. "Now you and your kind must leave the woods for the mountains and never bother the Small Folk again."

Vaprak raged and stomped and tore up more trees, but he had been beaten fair and square. So he gathered his ogre people and took them into the Toadsquat Mountains, where they live to this day.

And that is how Brandobaris won the kingdom of Luiren for the halflings.

- 47 Year of the *Crystal Orb*: Chethel is founded.
- 116 Year of the Mortal Promise: Shoun is founded.
- 148 Year of the Blue Ice: Merrow from the Mortik Swamp attack Chethel. Half the town is destroyed before they are driven back.
- 218 Year of the Dancing Lights: Krenadir is founded.
- 328 Year of the Ermine Cloak: The Lluirwood is separated into two parts—the Lluirwood and the Southern Lluirwood—by logging operations and a new trade road to the west.
- 383 Year of the *Quelzarn*: Ammathluir is founded.
- 447 Year of the Awakening Treant: Ogres swarm down from the Toadsquats and rampage through the northern section of the Lluirwood for several years.
- 450 Year of the Corrie Fist: The ogres are defeated by an army of hin at the Battle of Three Stumps.
- 461 Year of the Lissome Apprentice: Ammathtar is founded to facilitate trade between the hin and Arkaiun humans.
- 546 Year of the Rusted Sabre: Luiren is invaded by Arkaiun barbarians from Dambrath. The majority of the halfling population is enslaved, but some individuals go into hiding.
- 554 Year of Waving Wheat: The humans of Dambrath retreat from Luiren after their king is slain in Halruaa.
- 572 Year of Writhing Darkness: The marchwardens are established to protect Luiren.
- 636 Year of the Luminous Tabard: Ammathtar is destroyed by an evil force from deep inside the Southern Lluirwood. (A beholder is responsible for the destruction, but no one realizes it at the time.)
- 709 Year of the Earnest Oaths: Halflings begin disappearing inside the Southern Lluirwood. Unbeknownst to them, the yuan-ti are using a *portal* to abduct halflings and take them to the Black Jungles for experimentation.
- 922 Year of the Spouting Fish: Crinti raiders from Dambrath attack Ammathluir. The halflings, led by the marchwardens, turn back the invaders after three days of fighting.
- 1105 Year of the Guardian: A great storm from the sea nearly destroys Beluir and causes widespread damage to Chethel and Krenadir.
- 1264 Year of the Shattered Altar: The druid Voolad Espiral, with the help of dark trees and other monsters, sacks Thruldar, an Estagundan community on the edge of the Lluirwood. Marchwardens and local ghostwise halflings slay Voolad and contain his spirit inside the ruins with magic.
- 1373 Year of Rogue Dragons (current year).

government

Luiren has no central government, since the halflings prefer cooperative self-regulation. The only communal governments are the village and town councils in the rural regions, and mayors who serve more as organizers than as true rulers in the urban

centers. The priests of the hin temples hold a great deal of influence over many aspects of society, and the marchwardens identify and deal with threats against Luiren and its people. No government beyond those groups is recognized, and the halflings manage to remain happy and civilized without any additional oversight.

enemies

Though Luiren has little in the way of valuable resources other than the produce from its farms, it has been the focus of enmity from other races and countries surprisingly often. The halflings keep to themselves and don't trouble anyone who isn't interested in trading with them, yet invasions both explicit and subtle have plagued them throughout their history.

DAMBRATH

Though Dambrath and Luiren are currently at peace, they maintain that state only because at present, trade is more lucrative than war. Luiren's western neighbor has such a long history of aggression against the halflings that the Small Folk never let down their guard anymore. From the raids by the human barbarians in early days to the more recent incursions by the Crinti, the Dambrathans have demonstrated time and time again that they are untrustworthy. The hin don't understand why they should merit such malevolence, but they've learned the hard way not to be fooled; they fully expect another attack from the west in the near future.

TOADSQUAT OGRES

A long-standing enmity exists between the sour-tempered ogres living in the mountains to the north and the halflings in the woods and plains below. Since the founding of Luiren, the two races have squabbled over territory, and the disputes are not likely to be settled anytime soon. The ogres used to swarm down out of the foothills and into the halfling villages on a regular basis, but in recent centuries, they have found the Small Folk to be more formidable foes, thanks in large part to the tireless efforts of the marchwardens.

YUAN-TI

The fact that the halflings don't even know the yuan-ti are their enemies makes these creatures the most formidable of all Luiren's foes. The serpentfolk have opened a two-way *portal* that connects Ss'yin'tia'saminass, one of their cities in the depths of the Black Jungles, with the center of the Southern Lluirwood. They use this magical pathway to travel to the woods, snatch up lone halflings who stray too far into the forest, and transport them back to Ss'yin'tia'saminass for experimentation. The yuan-ti are attempting to create a new slave race, and they believe that the halflings might be a key component in their success. The marchwardens who patrol the target area have known for a very long time that dangerous creatures creep around in the Southern Lluirwood, but they do not know the specific nature of the threats. Thus far, they have simply been warning any and all hin to steer clear of these woods.

cities and sites

As might be expected in a city where the people are half the size of humans, just about everything in a hin community is built to a smaller scale. The Big Folk might find a few businesses that cater to creatures their size, but for the most part, those who visit Luiren feel like overgrown giants in a child's world.

Most of the hin communities of any appreciable size are located along the coast, where the thriving trade allows halflings and visitors to intermingle easily. In every coastal city, businesses along the waterfront (particularly inns, taverns, and hostels) can handle guests of either human or halfling size, and the Big Folk tend to feel more welcome here. Farther inland, though, the lodgings quickly shrink to better accommodate the natives.

Beluir (metropolis)

Most of the folk who live beyond Luiren's borders consider Beluir its capital city. In truth, however, the hin do not have a capital at all, since they have very little in the way of established government, and certainly none to speak of on a national level. Still, Beluir is the largest city on Luiren soil, and it houses the biggest temple dedicated to Yondalla, so it's as good a place as any for outsiders to come seeking audience with important personages.

In keeping with their hospitable nature, the hin have designated one section of the city to accommodate diplomats and emissaries from other nations. A few human-sized homes in a particularly wide-open neighborhood go a long way toward offering comfort to foreign dignitaries.

In addition, many merchant ships put in at Beluir on a regular basis to acquire Luiren trade goods for sale elsewhere. Thus, the businesses along the waterfront cater to all sizes and tastes.

Calcitro Burrow (NG male strongheart halfling fighter 8) serves as the mayor of Beluir. The Burrow family is actually quite wealthy, and its members own a large fruit grove just a few miles beyond the city limits, as well as a number of fine taverns in town. Calcitro is something of a legend in the community. In his earlier years, he was a renowned adventurer who supposedly slew two raiding hill giants single-handedly. In fact, his opponents were drunken ogres, but whenever the tale is told, the truth stretches a bit more.

MAJOR TEMPLES

Gringa Thistlehair (LG female strongheart halfling cleric 10 of Yondalla), the Devout Voice of Yondalla, presides over Yondalla's temple—the largest one in the city. Gringa is fervent in both her faith and her efforts to better the lives of everyone in Beluir. Though she is privately troubled by Cyrrollalee's recent urgings for the hin to find a homeland, she keeps her concerns to herself and preaches that tolerance of outsiders will lead to respect for the hin. Gringa's other preoccupation at the moment is the number of disappearances in and around the Southern Lluirwood. She has discreetly approached a number of different adventuring groups, hoping she can find someone to investigate, but thus far, she has learned nothing.

NOTABLE BUSINESSES

A tavern and inn known as the Cold Duck, situated near the waterfront, caters to Big Folk as well as hin locals. The mayor of Beluir owns the place, though he rarely appears there, preferring to leave the day-to-day operations to his niece, Cullada Burrow (NG female halfling expert 6). The Cold Duck is famous for its deviled spice-and-salmon duck eggs, a delicacy known throughout the southern coast and the inspiration for the tavern's name.

Erdel Talftufts (NG male strongheart halfling rogue 7) runs Erdel's Extraordinary Equipment Emporium, a shop catering to outsiders who have come to Beluir intending to travel into its interior. Erdel sells just about anything an adventurer might want or need (everything on the Simple Weapons, Martial Weapons, Armor and Shields, Adventuring Gear, Tools and Skill Kits, and Clothing tables in Chapter 7 of the *Player's Handbook*), all at standard costs. What most folk in Beluir don't realize is that Erdel also heads up a small and rather informal thieves guild composed primarily of young boys and girls. He has trained the members of this guild to sneak aboard the various ships that come into the harbor and carry off a few items of valuable cargo.

Beluir (Metropolis): Conventional; AL NG; 100,000 gp limit; Assets 136,050,000 gp; Population 27,210; Isolated (halfling 92%, human 4%, half-elf 2%, elf 1%, other races 1%).

Authority Figures: Mayor Calcitro Burrow (NG male strongheart halfling fighter 8).

Important Characters: Devout Voice of Yondalla Gringa Thistlehair (LG female strongheart halfling cleric 10 of Yondalla); Captain Furl Mossfoot (LG male strongheart halfling ranger 5/Luiren marchwarden 5), first-ranking marchwarden in the Beluir area; Yannig Longtunnel (NG male strongheart halfling ranger 5/Luiren marchwarden 2), assistant mayor and commander of the watch.

The Watch: Ranger 3, ranger 2 (4), warrior 5, warrior 4 (3), warrior 2 (17), warrior 1 (215).

The rest of Beluir's citizens are too numerous to describe here.

Chethel (large city)

The city of Chethel lies a little way down the coast from Beluir, on the north side of the Mortik Swamp. With a population of slightly more than 14,500 people, Chethel is somewhat smaller and more quaint than the metropolis to the north. Chethel is known primarily for its wonderful hin shipyards, where the halflings happily construct some of the most seaworthy vessels around—though few of them actually sail aboard their craft.

About 1,500 of Chethel's inhabitants are elves and half-elves. They have established their own neighborhood, known as the Long Quarter, where most of them reside in homes and shop at businesses suited to their stature and tastes, but they get along well with the halfling population in the rest of the city. Perhaps because of the stable influence of the elf neighborhood, many hin have chosen to settle permanently in Chethel rather than move around, as their brethren in other parts of Luiren are wont to do.

Most of the outsiders who visit Chethel are merchants seeking trade opportunities or repairs for their ships, though adventurers

and explorers often stop here on their way to investigate the swamp. A small area near the docks houses a handful of businesses that cater to such brave folk, but the hin do not really expect repeat business, since the swamp claims plenty of adventurers' lives. In fact, some residents favor passing laws to prohibit anyone from entering Mortik, simply because those who go in tend to make the Bog King angry, and he and his minions take out their frustrations on Chethel. Because of this danger, Chethel's walls are high and stout, even by human standards.

crimel (village)

The village of Crimel is nestled up against the Lluirwood about 60 miles west of Beluir. Only about 500 hin dwell here in the shadow of the great forest. Many of these residents cut lumber from the forest under the watchful gaze of a druid and work the wood into usable and well-crafted items for sale in the markets of Beluir. Others provide food for the populace by farming the land or keeping herds of cattle or sheep in the open pastures surrounding the village. All in all, the hin who live in Crimel find life there simple but rewarding. Even with the risks inherent in living so close to the forest, the people of Crimel wouldn't trade the sense of community and friendship they all share just to move to safer environs.

Because of its proximity to the Lluirwood, Crimel has been the target of numerous monster attacks over the decades. As a result, the local temple has made certain that the community is prepared for any sort of danger. A sizable group of marchwardens lives in the village and patrols the forest around it, particularly the area where logging occurs.

NOTABLE BUSINESSES

Near the center of the village green is the Tumbling Troll, a popular tavern where the locals can meet and carouse with their friends and hear the latest news and gossip from travelers passing through. In addition, the village elders gather here on a regular basis to discuss developing events around Crimel. The Tumbling Troll has a couple of rooms that visitors can rent (one of which is human-sized), but its primary business is the taproom. The human-sized room has been rented for the last several months by a human called Malric Fodemun (LN male human cleric 5 of Bane), who claims to be a retired mercenary looking for a quiet place to live out his remaining years. In reality, he wronged a superior while serving the temple of Bane in Westgate on the Dragon Coast, found out about his error before his head was taken, and fled. Malric Fodemun is an assumed name.

On the opposite side of the green from the Tumbling Troll is Portly Pand's Provisions, a general store that offers basic tools, supplies, and hardware for the loggers and farmers in the village. Pand Roundnose (NG male lightfoot halfling expert 9) is as skinny as they come, but he found the misnomer of his store most humorous and kept it. A warm and compassionate fellow, he constantly extends credit to the locals when they need to barter. He doesn't supply much in the way of adventuring equipment—in fact, the only weapon he's ever purchased for the store is a mundane short sword that still hangs on the wall by the door, over his checkout desk.

MAJOR TEMPLES

The first center of worship in Crimel is the Temple of Yondalla on the northwest side of town. This building is actually the home of Hubin Sharpears (LG male strongheart halfling cleric 6 of Yondalla), the Revered Nurturer of the temple in the village. Hubin has been trying to convince the folk of Crimel that they need a proper shrine to Yondalla, and numerous discussions at the elders' meetings of late have included this topic.

In the woods just north of town, a small shrine dedicated to Sheela Peryroyl has been built into the hillside. Nola Treestump (NG female strongheart halfling ranger 5/druid 8) tends the shrine and occasionally enters the village to see if anyone needs her care, but she spends most of her time out in the forest, working with the local marchwardens to fend off threatening creatures. Nola is the druid who visits the loggers at least once per tenday to discuss which trees to cut and which ones to leave standing in order to best preserve and regrow the forest.

MAYOR'S HOUSE

Silvo Carver (NG male strongheart halfling aristocrat 2/expert 4) is the mayor of Crimel and its wealthiest individual. He dwells in one of the few homes in the village that's an actual building, as opposed to a burrow hole. Silvo owns a large farm on the outskirts of the village, and everyone says his livestock is the largest and healthiest for miles around. In addition to selling fresh dairy products in Beluir, he also sells some of his livestock each year, often to other farmers in the area. Silvo moved to Crimel about fifteen years ago and just happened to arrive shortly after the former mayor had decided to relocate. Silvo simply settled into the vacant house and the job, and no one has seen reason to vote him out since.

Crimel (Village): Conventional; AL NG; 200 gp limit; Assets 4,670 gp; Population 467; Isolated (halfling 99%; other races 1%).

Authority Figures: Mayor Silvo Carver (NG male strongheart halfling aristocrat 2/expert 4).

Important Characters: Rory Fingersall (NG male strongheart halfling commoner 4), proprietor of the Tumbling Troll; Malric Fodemun (LN male human cleric 5 of Bane), incognito fugitive; Pand Roundnose (NG male lightfoot halfling expert 9), owner of Portly Pand's Provisions; Hubin Sharpears (LG male strongheart halfling cleric 6 of Yondalla), the Revered Nurturer of Yondalla's temple; Nola Treestump (NG female strongheart halfling ranger 5/druid 8), keeper of the shrine to Sheela Peryroyl; Arvor Brightbrows (LN male strongheart halfling ranger 6/Luiren marchwarden 2), head of the local marchwardens.

Marchwardens: Adept 4, adept 2, adept 1 (3), barbarian 2, barbarian 1 (2), bard 2, cleric 3, fighter 7, fighter 4, fighter 3 (2), fighter 1 (6), paladin 1, rogue 4, rogue 3 (2), rogue 2 (2), rogue 1 (2), sorcerer 2, sorcerer 1, warrior 5, warrior 4, warrior 3 (2), warrior 1 (12), wizard 1.

Other Characters: Aristocrat 1 (2), cleric 3, cleric 1 (2), commoner 12, commoner 9, commoner 7, commoner 6 (2), commoner 5 (2), commoner 4 (3), commoner 3 (4), commoner 2 (5), commoner 1 (346), expert 5 (2), expert 3 (4), expert 2 (7), expert 1 (11), fighter 4, fighter 3 (2), fighter 2 (4), fighter 1 (2), rogue 3, rogue 1 (2), warrior 1 (7).



Krenalir (large town)

Krenalir sits on the opposite side of the Mortik Swamp from Chethel, its sister city. Although Krenalir's docks are more than adequate to accommodate all the trade necessary to keep its populace comfortable and happy, most merchant ships choose to tie up to the wharves at Chethel or Beluir instead, since those cities offer better accommodations for outsiders. However, quite a bit of caravan traffic comes around the swamp to Krenalir, despite the dangers.

With a population of about 4,800 people—almost all of them halflings—Krenalir is really just a cozy little community. Its main assets are the miles and miles of citrus orchards that stretch away eastward on the Krenalir Peninsula. At harvest time, ships line up three deep in the harbor, each waiting its turn to dock and take on a load of the precious fruit. During this time, Krenalir's population swells to almost half again its normal size. Afterward, when the rainy season starts, many Krenalir natives head north to other parts of the country in search of better weather, turning the city into a virtual ghost town until spring, when the trees need tending again.

Krenalir's mayor, Hudkin Madhair (LN male strongheart halfling aristocrat 3/fighter 1), is a former wanderer who hated life on the road and couldn't wait to get back home. As a result, he despises adventurers and makes every effort to keep Krenalir as inhospitable to them as possible. He has managed to establish regulations that prevent the town's businesses from offering human-sized accommodations or selling human-sized equipment. Such efforts haven't really stopped adventurers from coming, but they have made it difficult for the city to entice more trade. During the

past few elections, Hudkin has remained in office by only a narrow margin, and it's likely only a matter of time before the townsfolk get tired enough of his anti-adventurer stance to vote him out.

shoun (small city)

On the eastern coast of Luiren, the city of Shoun (population 7,487) sits on a jut of land that sticks out into the Luirenstrand and forms the bay's northern boundary. Shoun is the last major community along the trade route to Estagund before the trail enters the wild region where the Lluirwood meets the coast. Thus, the town receives the initial caravan traffic on the land route out of the Golden Water region. It is also frequently the first stop for ships arriving from other ports, before they travel farther into the Luirenstrand.

Shoun is well known for two major exports—baked goods and dairy products. The pastureland around it is filled with herds of cattle and goats, and the farmers who raise them bring cheese and butter into the city to sell. Many Shoun bakers have literally made their fortunes using those dairy ingredients to create a wide variety of consumables in their ovens, from cheese breads to delicate dessert pastries. Merchants make a point of stopping in Shoun to purchase some of both commodities, usually on their way back out of Luiren, so that they can ensure that the goods are as fresh as possible when they arrive at their next ports of call.

Melino Smalltoes (LN male strongheart halfling aristocrat 7/rogue 8) is the mayor of Shoun and has been for nearly 70 years. He also happens to be the wealthiest hin in the entire city and for a day's walk in any direction around it, since he owns numerous

dairies in the fields outside the town and a number of businesses in Shoun. Because of his accumulation of wealth, many in the community have begun referring to him as Richtoes, but only in a lighthearted way, for he is well loved by the community.

Perhaps two decades ago, Melino couldn't be bothered with integrity and forthrightness in his office, and corruption was high in Shoun. The rest of the city got frustrated with his backroom politics, and he nearly lost his mayoral seat to a rival. Somewhere along the way, though, he found religion and discovered that Shoun (and by extension, its mayor) could actually prosper more if he cleaned up the corruption and ran the city fairly. His plan worked, and though he had to "deal" with some of his former business partners who were none too happy about his change of heart, the citizens of Shoun have been grateful ever since.

Thruldar

Thruldar was once the last outpost city of Estagund along the trade route into Luiren. In the Year of the Shattered Altar (1264 DR), a human druid named Voolad Espiral led a surprise attack on Thruldar with the support of some of the monster chieftains of Veldorn. The druid commanded a small army of dark trees and other dangerous plant creatures, and he managed to take the city completely by surprise. Thruldar was razed and most of its inhabitants slain.

In the nearby forest, several tribes of ghostwise halflings took notice of the dark magic emanating from Thruldar and went to investigate. Upon discovering what had occurred there, the

tribes organized a second surprise attack and managed to slay the druid. But the powerful evil that had given the druid purpose would not accept the defeat of its servant, and Voolad soon rose up as a ghost. The hin managed to seal the druid's ghost and his fell minions inside the city by placing powerful spells on the walls. This solution meant that much of the city's wealth had to be sealed away, too, and it remains there still. Knowing that the druid and his dark trees are locked inside the city, the halflings make a point of keeping an eye on the place, hoping to discourage would-be adventurers from entering the ruined city and possibly releasing the evil inside.

Heroes and Monsters

Characters originating from Luiren are almost certainly halflings, whether stronghearts (the most prominent), lightfoots, or ghostwise. An elf or half-elf character could hail from the appropriate neighborhood of Chethel, or a human could come from a family that chose to settle down in one of the hin cities a generation or two ago. Other races are practically nonexistent as natives of Luiren, though extraordinary circumstances might result in such a heritage.

The appropriate prestige classes for characters native to Luiren include the hin fist and the Luiren marchwarden, and to a lesser extent, the Great Sea corsair.

Monsters in the region include dark trees and tall mouthers (both described in Chapter 5), plus beholders of various types, ogres, yuan-ti, and a wide variety of woodland creatures.

Illustration by Carl Frank



Ghostwise halflings keep watch over Thruldar

THE SHAAAR AND THE GREAT RIFT

To folk from other parts of Faerûn, the Shaar seems to be a vast expanse of nothingness that presents an unfortunate obstacle to trade among other lands. The fierce barbaric nomads and dangerous beasts that roam its grassy plains appear to spend all their time attacking caravans and fighting over precious water. Indeed, many feel that everyone would be better off if the Shaar just disappeared.

But this immense sea of gently rolling hills is far more diversified and wondrous than most people understand. The Shaar is a land of hardship and fierce people, certainly, but it also offers a bounty of unusual cultures, varied resources, and trade opportunities found nowhere else.

geographic overview

The Shaar is an almost endless stretch of grassy plains that measures more than 1,500 miles from east to west and averages about 250 miles from north to south. Its western end touches the very tip of the Shining Sea, and its eastern end butts up against Veldorn, the Land of Monsters. It is bisected by two significant geographical features: a cliff face called the Landrise, and the Great Rift, a gouge in the earth more than 200 miles long and half that wide. Folk usually refer to the area west of the Landrise as the Shaar, and the area east of it as The Eastern Shaar.

The Firesteap Mountains, a portion of the Chondalwood, the Uthangol Mountains, and the far southern border of Mulhorand all serve as borders along the north side of the Shaar. Similarly, the Channath Vale (a series of woods and mountains along the length of the River Channath), the Forest of Amtar, and the Toadsquat Mountains mark its southern boundary. A number of isolated woodlands and a couple of small collections of hills dot the otherwise featureless plain, and several shallow rivers and streams cross it, though these waterways tend to become sandy-bottomed gullies during the dry season.

While not truly a desert, the Shaar does not receive much rainfall, and little other than coarse grass, cactus, and thorny bushes grows on its surface. The days are blisteringly hot and the

nights uncomfortably cold. Both geographically and meteorologically, the Shaar is a land of extremes.

major geographic features

The sea of grass that makes up most of the Shaar is not as flat as outsiders claim, though compared to other parts of Faerûn, it might as well be. The forests, mountains, and rivers offer landmarks by which to navigate the open stretches, but the ground in between appears to be just an endless surface of flat earth to those who are not traversing it.

The plains gently undulate, and the country's entire length slopes at an almost imperceptible angle from east to west. In fact, the whole of the Shaar drains into the Sea of Fallen Stars far to the north, and the Shining Sea to the west. The mountain ranges at the southern end of the Shaar form a continental divide, even though the Great Sea to the south is closer to much of the land. Throughout the Shaar's length, the grasslands are dotted with localized variations on the terrain. In some places, sand dunes interrupt the flat horizon, while in others, small valleys gather enough rainwater to form ponds, supporting a relative abundance of plant life that attracts grazing animals and birds.

Nomadic human tribes have roamed the Shaar since recorded history began, but little in the way of civilization exists here. From time to time, other powers have assumed authority over certain regions of these grasslands and even built settlements to manage trade, but only the crumbling remnants of their efforts remain.

Humans are not the only nomadic creatures living on the plains. Wemics, centaurs, thri-kreen, and loxo also roam the Shaar,





hunting the great herd animals for food and constantly squabbling over water rights. From time to time, gnolls, perytons, manticores, wyverns, and dragons challenge the nomads for supremacy of the area.

Azulduth, the Lake of salt

In the southeast reaches of Mulhorand lies the Lake of Salt, a shallow, highly salinated body of water drained by the River of Swords. During the hot season, significant portions of Azulduth dry up to form salt flats for months at a time. By a quirk in the ancient treaty between Mulhorand and Unther, the Lake of Salt was claimed by neither empire. Even today, despite the fact that Mulhorand now rules much of Unther, the Old Empires display little formal interest in Azulduth. However, numerous powerful wizards and other Mulan have come south to investigate the Lake of Salt, particularly the ruins scattered about its shores. Evidence suggests that most of these ancient stones are the remains of a civilization built by a sauroid race more than thirty thousand years ago.

Today, a couple of small communities sit on the shores of the lake (or on the edges of the salt flats, during the dry season). The citizens of Azun and Buldamar make their livings mining the salt and fishing the lake. When caravans moving between the Golden Water and Council Hills pass their way, they barter whatever fish and salt they haven't consumed for other trade goods. From time to time, adventurers come to explore the ruins, causing the local economy to pick up slightly.

Besides the fish that live in the lake, Azulduth is home to a wide variety of crocodiles and snakes, whose presence makes the already harsh environment even more dangerous. Indeed, the reptile population around the lake has increased significantly in recent years, leading some to speculate that perhaps the ancient sauroid empire is on the rise again. Certainly, most locals point to the belief that more ruins lie beneath the surface of the lake as "evidence" of their theories. (For more information on Azulduth, see *Serpent Kingdoms*.)

The Channath vale

The Channath Vale is a narrow stretch of land along the southern side of the Shaar, where the River Channath flows west into the River Talar. The North Wall of Halruaa and the Bandit Wastes form its southern boundary, while the Shaar flanks it on the north. The vale consists of three separate woodlands (the Channathwood, the Misty Vale, and the Shaareach Forest), as well as the Dun Hills and the tiny range of mountains known as the Wyrmbones. A major caravan route follows the south side of the vale, connecting the Great Rift with lands west of the Shaar. Several communities have arisen in Channath Vale along this trade way, and their citizens reap the benefits of caravan traffic.

THE CHANNATHWOOD

The Channathwood is a region of steamy jungle nestled against the southern slopes of the Rathgaunt Hills, where the headwaters of the River Channath cascade into and through the woods. This hot, stifling thicket is not terribly large, but its thick, overgrown

interior is home to a tribe of ghostwise halflings. These reclusive hin keep to themselves most of the time, but they occasionally appear along the edges of the forest to trade with the human farmers who live on the outskirts of Channathgate. Such peaceful contact does not mean that friendly relations exist between the two peoples. Humans may gather herbs and berries on the edges of the forest without peril, but the halflings brook no deeper invasion of their woodland home. The ghostwise tribe actively discourages such incursions through the use of deadfalls, snares, and even a few warning shots from slings or bows.

THE DUN HILLS

This low stretch of hills shelters the Misty Vale from the coastal lands of Lapaliiya along the Shining Sea. The western slopes support scattered groves of olive trees, but little other vegetation grows there. Small herds of goats, some shepherded by local tribes, wander the region, feasting on scrub growth. The central hills hide many Lapaliiyan tombs, and wise travelers avoid the undead that continue to plague the area despite the efforts of Kelemvor's priesthood to clean it up. The mist-shrouded eastern slopes of the Dun Hills are covered with trees, making them nearly as impenetrable as the Misty Vale itself, though the wild elves who claim that forest do not venture so far west.

THE MISTY VALE

The Misty Vale is a largely unexplored, thickly overgrown, stiflingly hot jungle tucked between the Dun Hills and the Wyrmbones. The River Channath flows through the center of the woodland, becoming sluggish where tangles of creepers and vines dangle down into its waters. The river teems with fish, and the occasional crocodile, snake, and more unusual jungle aquatic creature also call its waters home. In the canopy overhead, countless birds with colorful plumage cry out, their voices echoing through the deep green.

In the courts of the High Suihk of Ormpur and the Overking of Lapaliiya, records dating back to the foundings of both realms speak of a race of feral elves native to the steaming jungle. According to these documents, the elves were so xenophobic that they made a practice of hunting down and killing any intruders in their ancient homeland.

The descendants of the wild elves described in those ancient records still dwell in the same forest today. Their oral tradition relates how their ancestors betrayed the other wild elves to the depredations of the drow during the Crown Wars. Afterward, they were given this section of woodland to call home, though the drow sorcerers had released numerous dark horrors there. Remorseful over having betrayed their own kind, the wild elves of the Misty Vale withdrew into the forest so deeply that no one would ever see their guilt, vowing to live in isolation forever after. In accord with that philosophy, they embraced Fenmarel Mestarine, the Lone Wolf, as their patron deity. Today, their descendants still adhere to both their ancestors' isolationism and the worship of their deity. They tolerate no intrusion into their forest and slay all intruders without exception. Though the wild elves have hunted many of the deadlier monsters in this wood nearly to extinction, a few terrible creatures still lurk in the deepest shadows of the Misty Vale.

THE SHAAAREACH FOREST

This section of stifling, sultry woodland straddles the junction of the River Shaar and the River Channath at the point where the two waterways merge to become the River Talar. Like its companion forests along the Channath Vale, the Shaareach is overgrown with thick, lush vegetation, making overland travel slow and difficult. The converging waterways make it far easier to navigate the interior of the Shaareach by watercraft than overland, but either route is fraught with dangers—in particular, the packs of digesters that roam the woods and attack anything that looks edible. Because of the forest's proximity to Lake Lhespen and the Lhespenbog, a number of giant eels, water spiders, and even a few yuan-ti also prowl the waterways inside the Shaareach Forest.

Near the center of the woods, where the tributaries converge to form the Talar, the banks are dotted with numerous ruins, all half choked and buried beneath the jungle growth. Few adventurers have managed to reach the ruins and explore them, but those who have found little evidence of their origin.

THE WYRMBONES

This small chain of mountains wedged between two forests got its name from the tribesfolk of the Shaar, who thought the ridges and peaks resembled a skeletal dragon slumbering on the plain. Despite the colorful name, the only creatures inhabiting the mountains in any numbers are gnolls, led by a powerful chieftain known as the Wyrms Master (CE male gnoll ranger 8). The Wyrms Master conducts raids on caravans along the trade road between

the Wyrmbones and the Shaareach Forest, but Kormul has yet to muster the forces necessary to deal with the threat.

council hills

Like a lonely island in a sea of grass, this cluster of hills sits smack in the middle of the Eastern Shaar. The hills would be utterly unremarkable except for the ruins of an ancient city in the central valley they enclose. Known as Shandaular during its heyday, the city rose up around the southern terminus of a two-way *portal* that connected with several other points throughout Faerûn. After the *portal* was shut down, the city slowly withered and faded away as its inhabitants took up the nomadic lifestyle and began to wander the Eastern Shaar. The final death knell for Shandaular occurred during a conflict with Unther and Mulhorand early in the third century DR.

Today, the site of the old city serves as a special gathering place for all the tribes of the Shaar. Every spring and fall, each tribe that is not engaged in war with its neighbors sends delegates to the ruins, where they hold peace talks and drink together, discussing alliances, hunting territory, and potential threats from other creatures. The area known as Council Hills is considered sacred neutral ground because many of the tribes have buried their ancestral chieftains in caves there. No fighting is permitted between nomads while either party stands among these hills. On numerous occasions, however, tribes have used violence to prevent enemy tribes from reaching the Council Hills gathering, setting up a perimeter of warriors to attack their approaching foes.



The great rift

The traditional home of Faerûn's gold dwarves, the wide canyon known as the Great Rift lies near the western end of the Eastern Shaar, not far from the Landrise. The bottom of this chasm lies more than 1,000 feet below the plains, surrounded by sheer cliff walls on every side. The arid, hilly ground that serves as the floor of the Great Rift is split down the middle by the Riftlake, a deep, icy-cold body of clear water that is often shrouded in morning mists. The lake is fed by the numerous small streams and rivers that flow throughout the Great Rift, as well as some very deep springs, which rumors suggest are fed by *portals* from the Elemental Plane of Water. The lake in turn drains into the River Shaar, which snakes along the valley floor before disappearing into a spray-filled gorge on the north end of the canyon. From there, it winds along a subterranean route more than 150 miles long before emerging in an impressive waterfall from a cave set into the side of the Landrise. Despite its high cliff walls, the Great Rift is wide enough that a person standing on the shore of the Riftlake can't actually see the walls on the other side. Thus, in many places, the valley floor seems more like open ground than the floor of a deep canyon.

The weather inside the Great Rift is somewhat wetter than it is on the surrounding plains, though the ground is far from damp. The grasses that grow on the valley floor are a bit thicker and greener than the sparse, coarse weeds native to the rest of the Shaar, and plenty of animals—some herded by the dwarves for food—graze on this lush abundance.

THE DEEP REALM

The Great Rift is but a fraction of the territory controlled by the gold dwarves, who also inhabit miles of underground caverns, tunnels, and fortifications connected to the surface in and around the canyon. Known as the Deep Realm, these hidden regions cover twice as much area as the canyon alone, mostly to the east and northeast. The Deep Realm is a place of wonder that features hanging spiral staircases, waterfalls and cascades operated by mechanical pumps, glowing, ever-shifting sculptures of magically radiant metal, and similar marvels.

THE DEEPWILD (GREAT BHAERYNDEN)

Beyond the reach and control of the gold dwarves lies a portion of the Underdark called the Deepwild. Known as Great Bhaerynden to the rest of the inhabitants of the subterranean realms, the Deepwild stretches outward beneath the Shaar in all directions, well beyond the boundaries of the Deep Realm. Included in this territory is the accursed drow city of Lhurth Dreier, where Ghaunadaur reigns supreme. The Deepwild also encompasses a series of dragon lairs known as the Wyrmcaves and a huge underground waterfall called the Deepwall.

Once the ancient home of the dwarves, the city of Bhaerynden once sat where the Great Rift is today, but deeper beneath the surface. Millennia ago, when the drow first descended into the Underdark, they invaded and conquered Bhaerynden and renamed it Telantiwar. Some time later, the great caverns that made up the heart of their new domain collapsed. Billions of tons of earth and stone came crashing down, crushing a dozen drow cities and

forming the Great Rift on the surface. Though the settlements in the center of the region were destroyed, the leagues of tunnels around the periphery of the Great Rift remain intact and in use by various denizens of the Underdark.

The Landrise

This escarpment divides the grassy plains into two halves and marks the boundary between the Shaar and the Eastern Shaar. Along the entire length of the Landrise, the eastern side is anywhere from 200 to 400 feet higher than the western side. The extended cliffs are broken in several places along the length of the Landrise, allowing travelers to move back and forth between the two elevations with relative ease. Most of these spots are nothing more than steep and often treacherous footpaths, but caravan routes cross the Landrise in several places where broader, more gently sloping breaches in the cliffs have been discovered. During rainstorms, the Landrise sports numerous cascading waterfalls, but most of the time, little water spills over the cliff edges.

The Landrise is more than just a notable landmark. Frequently, tribes at war with one another attempt to position themselves on the high side of the cliffs so that they can watch for their enemies' approach and gain a tactical advantage in battle. Other tribes consider the Landrise a holy place and bury their dead in high caves on the faces of the cliffs, often in spots that appear completely unreachable. A few bodies have even been laid to rest on platforms braced by logs protruding from the cliff face. Visitors who have seen these hanging crypts have marveled at the distances the nomads had to carry the wood and the effort needed to get the bodies into position. The prevailing wisdom holds that magic was almost certainly employed to create these odd tombs.

Lake Lhespen

Though not as salty as Azulduth on the other end of the Shaar, Lake Lhespen is a mineral-laden body of water with salt-crusted shores that is unsuitable for most uses. Despite its inhospitable nature, several small villages and towns have sprouted up along its shores over the centuries, peopled by hardy souls who manage to eke out a living by gathering salt or harvesting the few fish that live in these waters. Nomads who do not wish to pay the higher prices for salt in Shaarmid to the north frequently come here to gather their own or trade for it. In addition, the occasional adventurer, wizard, or sage is attracted to the place by the various ruins scattered around the periphery of the lake—all remnants of older civilizations that occupied the Shaar in bygone days.

In recent years, however, the yuan-ti and the creatures in the bog to the east have made the area around Lake Lhespen more dangerous than ever (see Lhesper, below). As a result, fewer and fewer caravans travel the road between Kormul and Shaarmid, preferring to utilize safer routes.

THE LHESPENBOG

The Lhespenbog is a region of soft, spongy grassland sprinkled intermittently with rivulets and ponds. The grasses of the plains grow incredibly tall here and mix with cattails, mangrove trees,



The Landrise divides the Shaar in half

and creeping vines and moss. Giant eels, darting water spiders, a few chuul, shocker lizards, and various oozes and slimes dwell in the Lhespenbog, feeding on one another and on foolish explorers who wander too deeply into its depths.

This marshy ground is also home to a number of undead. Sages believe that these creatures might once have been soldiers—part of a rebellion force that was cornered and slaughtered by troops loyal to the Shoon Imperium during the Seven Burnings campaign in the fifth century DR. Whatever the truth might be, the bog stirs with strange lights and sounds at night, and those who listen closely can hear the echoes of old battles being fought.

The Rathgaunt Hills

Wedged between Lake Lhespen and the Lhespenbog on the west and the Landrise on the east, this stretch of rocky crags dominates the southern half of the plains of the Shaar. Worn down from eons of exposure to the relentless winds that scour the region, these mountains are home to colonies of perytons, wyverns, and manticores. These creatures fly out over the flat grasslands to hunt, making the whole region around the mountains a dangerous place for the unwary.

The Rathgaunt Hills also support a large settlement of gnomes. In the heart of Sevenstones Hill, a prominent tor whose rounded peak overlooks the caravan route to the north between Shaarmid and Kholtar, these gnomes have established

a heavily fortified abbey known as the Shield of the Rathgaunt Hills. Manned by the Cult of Gaerdal, which numbers some 200 warriors and priests who venerate Gaerdal Ironhand, the abbey serves as a bastion of defense. The members of the cult tirelessly strive to keep the mountains safe for all gnomes in the area and to keep caravan traffic flowing. Led by Shield General Martak Ironwall (LG male gnome paladin 8/divine champion 5 of Gaerdal Ironhand), the gnomes have recently smoothed over some points of friction between themselves and the gold dwarves of the Great Rift. This new, more amicable relationship has led to a pact of mutual assistance and defense between the two regions.

The Riftwood

Just east of the Great Rift and generally north-northwest of Delzimmer lies the Riftwood, a small section of forest that appears lonely and isolated on the open plains of the Eastern Shaar. This woodland is generally round in shape and somewhat less overgrown with creepers, vines, and undergrowth than many of the near-tropical forests in the region. The Riftwood is not on the way to anywhere, nor is it particularly vital to anyone except the gold dwarves of the Great Rift.

The inhabitants of the Deep Realm have dug a large passage up into the heart of the Riftwood and established a small logging community there, shielded from the prying eyes of visitors. The gold

dwarves harvest timber from the Riftwood and take it to their homeland below the Shaar for use in various kinds of construction, including scaffolding for new digs, furniture for which stone is unsuitable, and so forth. They are careful to take no more wood than they need from the forest, and to replant sections they have already cleared so as not to exhaust their supply of wood. The gold dwarves maintain a large enough force on or near the surface to keep most natural predators away from the logging operations, but they allow those same beasts (panthers, snakes, giant beetles, and so forth) to remain on the periphery in hopes that they can keep unwanted visitors from entering the forest.

The river shaar

The River Shaar actually originates inside the Great Rift, where it drains the icy-cold Riftlake. The river plunges into a deep chasm at the north end of the canyon, where it begins an underground journey of more than 150 miles through caverns, fissures, and a couple of subterranean lakes. The gold dwarves channel some of the river's water into their realm for drinking, sluicing in their mines, and as a means of transport to different parts of the Deep Realm.

The River Shaar returns to the surface at the Landrise, emerging from a broad cavern at the base of the cliffs almost due east of the Shaarwood, near the ruins of Peleveran (see below). Still icy cold from its journey through the earth, its water is crystal clear and uncontaminated by the dwarven mining operations below the surface.

From the Landrise, the River Shaar winds its way across the Shaar, cutting a wide but gentle and relatively shallow course with numerous fords along its length. Eventually, it widens out into the body of water known as Lake Lhespen, then flows into the Shaareach Forest, where it merges with the River Channath to become the River Talar.

Many tribes rely on this waterway for sustenance, knowing that it is one of the few rivers in the Shaar that does not dwindle much in the hottest part of the year. Whereas many other watercourses are reduced to tiny trickles in sun-baked mud flats during the summer, the River Shaar flows strongly all year round. Some fish swim in its waters—primarily channel varieties and bottom feeders that prefer the sluggish motion of its current.

The shaarwood

The Shaarwood lies just north of the River Shaar, about equidistant between Shaarmid and the Landrise. Unlike most of the forested regions of the Shaar, the Shaarwood is a dry, dusty woodland, and its trees have been twisted and stunted by the eternal winds that blow across the grasslands. The Shaarwood is composed mostly of cedar and oak, interspersed with plenty of cactus, razor-sharp grasses that grow chest-high to a human, and thorny shrubs that slash and scrape any creature that tries to pass through them. The ground is hard-packed and arid, suitable only for lizards, snakes, scorpions, and ground squirrels.

The nomads of the Shaar occasionally come to the Shaarwood to harvest some of the peppers that grow in abundance there, which they use to season their food. Some also attempt to gather

berries from the thorny bushes, though doing so is hot, tiring, bloody-fingered work. The forest is completely unsuitable for the nomads' mounts because the grasses are unpalatable to the horses, and the underbrush can quickly turn a rider's legs into raw meat without proper protection. Even the horses are susceptible to scratches and cuts from the razor grasses that grow here. Bandits occasionally hide out in the Shaarwood for brief periods, some to avoid capture and others to rest between raids on the caravan route just to the south of the woodland.

The sharawood

Sometimes referred to as the Drakewood, the Sharawood sits between Azulduth to the northwest and the Toadsquat Mountains to the south. Thick and overgrown with tropical vines and flowering creepers, the Sharawood holds many secrets, since few sentient beings have ventured into its murky interior. The nomads of the plains occasionally come to the edge of this forest to gather herbs, hunt for food, or hide from their enemies, but they rarely venture deeper into the woods because of the many sword spiders that dwell there. These dangerous predators hunt any creature that enters the forest, and occasionally they come out as far as the edge of the woods to prey on herd animals that stray too close to the trees.

As if the spiders didn't present enough danger, a traditional story says that a terrible undead creature that steals people's bodies and turns them into zombie slaves haunts the Sharawood. In fact, this tale is not far removed from the truth. An extremely old and powerful dracolich known only as the Everlasting Wyrmling inhabits the darkest, deepest part of the Sharawood, ruminating on its nefarious plots and slowly collecting a brood of minions. Though it keeps to itself and tries to remain unnoticed by the nomads of the plains, it does not hesitate to enslave any tribesfolk who discover its existence. The dracolich's worst enemies are the Knights of the Eternal Dragon, a group of undead stalwarts hidden away in the ruins of the Castle of Al'hanar, just south of the Sharawood. Once every century, the knights arise and charge into the woods to do battle with the dracolich and its horde of living spawn. Though the knights always destroy the dracolich and all its minions, this battle seems doomed to play out over and over until the end of time because true to its name, the Everlasting Wyrmling simply reforms over a decade or two and begins its machinations again.

The uthangol mountains

This chain of peaks stretches eastward from the tip of the Chondalwood, forming an effective barrier between the Shaar on the south side and the Black Ash Plain and the Green Lands of Unther to the north. Windswept and relatively barren of vegetation, the Uthangols serve as the northern boundary of the territory claimed by the gold dwarves of the Great Rift, who have followed and expanded on the endless tunnels and caverns that stretch from their canyon all the way beneath the heart of the mountains. Over the years, the gold dwarves have tunneled up into the mountains from below, riddling the Uthangols with mines.



The Knights of the Eternal Dragon battle the Everlasting Wurm

On the surface, black-skinned stone giants that migrated here from the Black Ash Plain dwell on the mountainsides. They fight for habitable spots on the lower slopes with gnolls and phase spiders, and avoid the hippogriffs, wyverns, and copper dragons that dwell in the higher reaches.

people of the shaar

The people native to the Shaar share one very prominent feature—an indomitable spirit that lets them survive against unfavorable odds. Though the various races and cultures of the grasslands differ in dress, traditions, and outlook toward one another, they have all learned to overcome the harshest weather, terrain, and enemies that Faerûn has to offer, and to persevere in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

Races and cultures

Of all the regions of the Shining South, the Shaar is perhaps the most complex in terms of its great variety of races and cultures. Some races—such as the gold dwarves of the Great Rift, the sedentary humans in the trading centers, or the reclusive wild elves and ghostwise halflings of the various forests—are firmly entrenched in their ancestral homes. Many others—including

humans, wemics, centaurs, and others—roam the grasslands as nomadic tribes, coexisting in a never-ending cycle of hunting and gathering. Still other races visit the Shaar only occasionally, yet their presence impacts every native creature's way of life in profound ways. Few outsiders fully understand the delicate balance that maintains the Shaar, but the grassy sea has been the same for many centuries, and all who are part of it accept it as an intrinsic element of their very existences.

CENTAURS

While most centaurs in Faerûn inhabit the great forests, some tribes roam the Shaar alongside other nomads. Like the other natives of the Shaar, centaurs hunt the grasslands, taking only what they need from the great herds that graze there. They either ally or squabble with one another and with other nomads, just as the humans do, though they are less savage overall than either humans or wemics.

A typical centaur stands 7 to 8 feet tall from front hoof to crown and measures 6 to 8 feet long from chest to tail, and weighing in at nearly 1,000 pounds. The horse portion of a centaur's body resembles a zebra—a trait that distinguishes him from the centaurs elsewhere in Faerûn—and his face is decidedly fey in appearance, with swept-back, angular features and somewhat pointed ears. He has golden bronze skin, light brown or golden

hair, and eyes in any of a wide variety of shades. Shaaryan centaurs prefer to wear their hair long, though they usually tie it back and weave decorative tokens into it. The number and kind of decorations a centaur wears indicate his rank in the tribe, though such distinctions are usually lost on outsiders.

Male centaurs generally do the hunting, while females tend to the camp and the young. During times of danger, both genders fight equally well. In general, centaurs keep to themselves, though they occasionally join the humans in ceremonies at Council Hills, and they sometimes trade in the towns on the fringes of civilization. The centaurs get along best with the wemics, and they respect the loxo, though they typically give the elephant folk a wide berth.

DRAGONS

Not many dragons are native to the great plains of the Shaar, but many of the winged terrors from all over Faerûn visit the plains on occasion to feed on the great herds. Though a number of different wyrms live in isolated parts of the mountains, swamps, and forests in and around the Shaar, others visit from as far away as the Sword Coast. A feeding dragon might make two or three passes across a stretch of the plains, swooping low and scooping up wild horses, rothé, and other herd beasts, then flying off to feed in peace.

Most of the time, these dragon visits are isolated events, and the wyrms that frequently use the Shaar as a hunting ground arrive at specific times of day dictated by their own preferences. Some prefer to come in low from the east at dawn, and others like to dive down from overhead, as though falling out of the noonday sky. Still others hunt only at night. Occasionally, two dragons cross paths while hunting, and a frightening battle above the grassy plains often results. The nomads' tales even speak of a handful of legendary sky-battles involving three, four, or even

half a dozen huge wyrms at once. While such spectacles might be awesome to behold, the nomads know better than to stick around and wait to see which drake winds up the victor, since the winner is not likely to be in a good mood afterward.

GNOLLS

Of all the savage humanoids that roam the Shaar, only the gnolls have the numbers to qualify as a formidable group. Though they have carved out traditional homes throughout the hills and on lower mountain slopes of every range across the Shaar, they are most common in the western half, especially along the various ridges north of the Channath Vale. The gnolls have historically preyed upon human settlements along the shores of Lake Lhespen and on the caravans that move through that region. The Lapaliiyans to the southwest have tried to eradicate the gnolls several times in the past. All those efforts were in vain, and the gnolls continue to plague the nomads in the western Shaar and the cities where they trade.

GOLD DWARVES

The Great Rift has been the traditional home of the gold dwarves for untold centuries. Since they first reclaimed the huge canyon and the tunnels and caverns beneath and around it from the drow after the fall of Telantiwar, they have proudly and unfalteringly stood their ground, never relinquishing control of their homeland. With the onset of Moradin's Thunder Blessing, the gold dwarves have actually begun to overfill their domain, and some have started to seek out other locales in which to found new colonies. They plan a great western migration to the caverns of Old Shanatar, with an army of crusaders to serve as its vanguard.

The average gold dwarf stands about 4 feet tall, but her stocky build gives her almost the same weight as an adult human. Her skin is a deep tan or brown color, and her eyes are usually brown

human tribes of the shaar

Although the tribes of the Shaar share many features—including ethnic heritage, common enemies, and a nomadic lifestyle—they are as different in other ways as a merchant from Waterdeep is from an assassin in Thesk. Some tribes maintain good relations with others, and some allow bad blood that has passed down for many generations to divide them from other tribes.

Below are a few details about the largest and best-known tribes that roam the Shaar. Several smaller and more isolated tribes exist, but they are less visible to outsiders visiting the plains than those detailed below.

Ankheg: The Ankheg Tribe roams the region of the Shaar that lies between the Firesteap Mountains and the Shaarwood, stretching from the Duskwood to the Landrise. The people of this tribe have adopted the ankheg as their animal symbol, and their raiders have adopted elements of its fighting style.

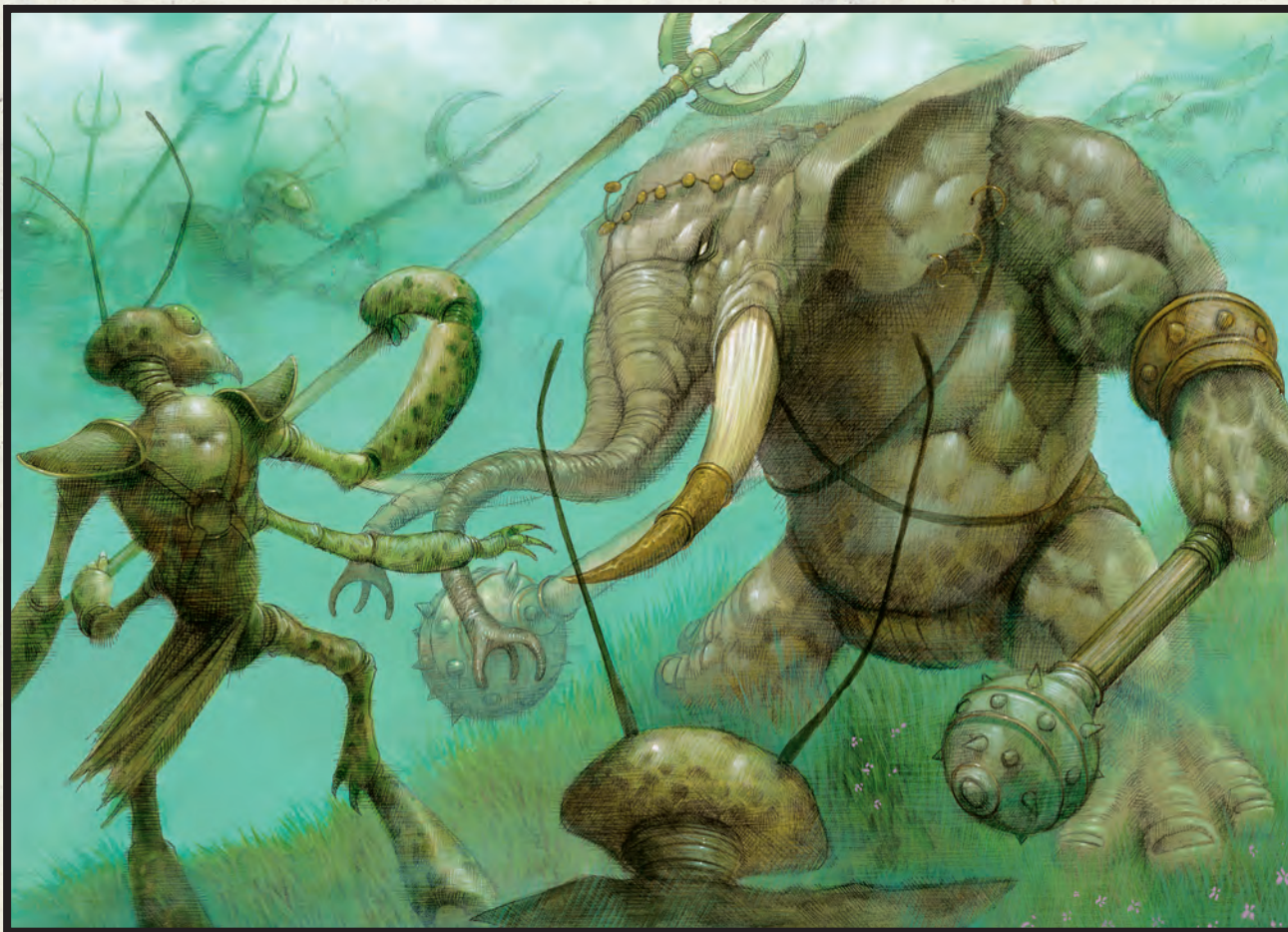
Cheetah: The Cheetah Tribe claims the territory between the Uthangol Mountains and the Great Rift, as far east as Council Hills. The raiders of this tribe have trained themselves to run like the cheetahs that roam the grasslands.

Eagle: The Eagle Tribe reveres the giant eagles that soar overhead, and its raiders take pride in the superior vision and leaping ability they have cultivated in imitation of the great birds. The tribesfolk wander the territory in the far western part of the Shaar, between the Shining Sea and Lake Lhespen.

Hyena: The Hyena Tribe controls all the land south of Council Hills between the Riftwood and the Sharawood. Like their namesake creature, the tribe's raiders employ hiding and tripping attacks in battle.

Lion: The members of the Lion Tribe roam the plains from Lake Lhespen to the Landrise, south of the River Shaar. Its raiders imitate the great lion when they attack, entering a slashing frenzy when they charge opponents.

Rhinoceros: The Rhinoceros Tribe wanders the area between the Great Rift and the Landrise, and from the Chondalwood to the Amtar. Like the horned beasts from which they take their name, Rhinoceros raiders have learned how to heighten damage when charging.



A territorial dispute on the plains of the Shaar

or hazel. Hair color is usually black, gray, or brown. Both genders wear their hair long, and most males (as well as some females) also wear carefully groomed moustaches and beards.

The gold dwarves of the Great Rift share a proud but suspicious nature. They claim all the area that lies a full day's ride by pony in any direction from the canyon, and they do not suffer the presence of bandits or explorers lightly. Nondwarves are rarely permitted inside their homes. They have established the city of Earthheart (see *Cities and Sites*, below) for dealing with outsiders.

See page 11 of *Races of Faerûn* for more information on gold dwarves.

LOXO

The loxo of the Shaar are nomadic hunter-gathers who live side-by-side with the other great tribal races of the plains. The other nomads tend to leave them alone because an angry loxo is fearsome to behold—or to battle. Though their numbers are small, the loxo roam vast tracts of land, sating their huge appetites with grass, vegetables, and occasionally fruits and nuts.

A loxo is an elephantine humanoid that stands about 7 or 8 feet tall and easily weighs 1,500 pounds or more. He has blue-gray, wrinkled skin covered with rough, sparse hair, and his stout body has elephantine appendages, including thick, round limbs, flat feet, and pudgy fingers. His ears are large and swept

back, but his most striking features are his twin trunks, which protrude from his face just above the mouth and are flanked by long, curving tusks. Each trunk is about 2 feet long and ends in three small, fingerlike digits.

The loxo organize by clans, each of which is little more than an extended family. All the members of a particular clan wear similar rustic clothing, with special designs woven into the fabric. Two or more clans might travel together in a herd.

Occasionally, loxo come to the edges of human civilization, bringing rustic works of art crafted from animal bones, wood, or stone to trade for food and supplies. Though the Shaaryan humans are wary of the strange-looking loxo, the elephant folk are not adversarial unless threatened. The loxo do not interact with the other nomadic tribes of the grassland on a regular basis. Unlike the wemics and centaurs, the loxo do not make a habit of venturing to Council Hills for the human gatherings, though in extraordinary circumstances, they have been known to send a delegate.

SHAARANS

The humans who roam the plains of the Shaar are known as Shaarans. They have wandered the grasslands as nomads since before the area's recorded history began, enduring the hardships of an inhospitable environment, dangerous enemy tribes, and a host of predators from both the plains and the surrounding

areas. This constant struggle has honed them into a tough, proud people who are loath to give up their ways, even in the face of conquest.

The typical Shaaran is long-faced and yellow-skinned, but not very tall (about 5-1/2 feet, on average). Her hair and eyes are usually black or dark brown. On rare occasions, a Shaaran is born with bright green eyes—a sign of good luck among the nomads. Few Shaaran males wear facial hair, and both genders cut their hair short.

Nomads: A Shaaryan nomad's most prized possession is her horse—a magnificent animal that thrives on the grasses of the plains where the nomads roam. In fact, Shaarans refuse to take their horses out of the Shaar because the animals never seem to fare well elsewhere. Almost invariably, they grow weak and eventually die if denied the opportunity to feed on their native grasses. A Shaaran carries everything she owns on her own horse or, if she is wealthy, on a pack horse. Children are practically born in the saddle.

The dozen or so tribes of Shaarans share a common culture, but each also maintains separate elements of its own tradition. Outsiders have difficulty distinguishing among the different tribes, but the nomads can readily identify one another's tribal affiliation by the differences in dress, horse coloration, dwelling styles, weapon styles and decorations, and traditional roaming territories. Some tribes view women as equal to men, and a few have elected female chiefs.

No one has ever tried to unify the Shaarans. Some regions of the Shaar (particularly in the western half) have been conquered on occasion, but in each case, the Shaarans simply waited until the conqueror's power base vanished, then resumed their way of life as though nothing had happened. Occasionally, two tribes form a close bond, usually through a marriage between a powerful family from each tribe. Such a relationship allows the tribes to reap the benefits of mutual protection, share water, and avoid territorial disputes with one another for several generations. Over time, though, intertribal relationships always change, as new bonds form and old alliances fade away.

Townpeople: The humans who dwell in the communities scattered across the Shaar are most often Shaarans who preferred a settled way of life to the nomadic lifestyle of their ancestors. Most of these towns and cities arose as a result of trade meets between various tribes, usually in prime locations where natural resources were abundant. Others were founded when nations and empires attempted to conquer or settle certain regions of the Shaar. The most significant settlement effort occurred during the Shoon Imperium, when the Shoonach held all the territory from the Shining Sea to the Landrise. The settlements founded during that period still exist, though they no longer owe anyone allegiance. Regardless of how and why they formed, the various urban centers in the Shaar have always remained small by Faerûnian standards, and they subsist primarily on the trade that passes through their markets and the sale of the few meager resources (such as fish, salt, lumber, or worked goods made from animal parts) that they have available.

While the majority of the people in these towns and cities are Shaaran, other ethnicities are also represented. Most often, such individuals arrive via trade caravans that wind their way

through the grassland on a regular basis and simply decide to stay. Some locals are descendants of traders who came from as far away as Durpar, Turmish, and Amn. Whatever their origin, the residents of these towns live together in relative harmony and share two common purposes: survival and prosperity.

THRI-KREEN

The strange, insectlike thri-kreen are perhaps the most bizarre of the hunter nomads native to the Shaar. The thri-kreen roam the plains just as the humans and other nomadic races do, following herd animals for sustenance. Unlike the humanoids that call the Shaar home, the thri-kreen are built for the hot, arid conditions of the grasslands, and they thrive in this environment. Because of their alien nature and their skill with camouflage and surprise attacks, many other inhabitants of the Shaar fear the thri-kreen and give them a wide berth.

A thri-kreen looks like a bipedal praying mantis with six limbs—two for standing and four more for manipulating tools and weapons. The carapace of a typical specimen might be any shade from sandy brown to pale green, whichever blends in best with the surroundings. Thri-kreen wear harness belts, to which they attach various tools and small weapons, but no other clothing.

The thri-kreen exist in relatively small numbers, and their territory is limited to the lowlands and the hills just north of the Toadsquat Mountains. They make occasional forays farther north, though they try to avoid confrontations with the humans, so they usually stay clear of Council Hills. Wemics and centaurs dislike thri-kreen, but they rarely go out of their way to engage them. Loxo, perhaps because they too are considered alien by most inhabitants of the Shaar, accept the thri-kreen and sometimes trade with them.

WEMICS

Wemics might be the most skillful and savage hunters in the entire Shaar. Strongly tribal, they possess no writing skills and no interest in recorded history. Wemics have had to fight to maintain their traditional hunting grounds since they arrived in the Shaar—before the recorded history of any of the other races of the area—and they don't intend to let anyone take their territory away from them.

A wemic is a centaurlike creature with the body of a lion, the upper torso of a human, and a head with a mixture of human and leonine features. An average specimen stands about 6-1/2 to 7 feet tall from his forepaws to the top of his head and measures about 12 feet long from head to tail tip. An adult can weigh as much as 600 pounds. A wemic's body is covered with golden or golden-brown fur, and the tip of his tail is always darker in color than the rest of his body. He has ears that sit high on his head and eyes like a cat's, with golden irises and narrow, slitted pupils. All six of his limbs end in claws, though the ones on his humanoid hands and front paws are retractable. A mane the same color as his tail tip frames a male wemic's face.

Wemics are proud creatures and fierce nomadic hunters. They are not adversarial to other creatures that accept their ways and do not try to steal their territory. A wemic that feels threatened, however, fights tooth and claw to his dying breath to keep his way of life intact.

For the most part, the wemics get along well enough with the human tribes of the Shaar, sometimes joining them at Council Hills for the biannual gatherings. The feline hunters are not so tolerant of the settled humans who live in the small communities scattered throughout the Shaar, though they occasionally enter these towns to trade. The wemics get along best with the centaurs with whom they share the grasslands, and they have a healthy respect for the loxo, though the two races rarely interact. In times of trouble—particularly when dragons appear overhead for feasting—any wemics, centaurs, and loxo in the area come together in joint defense.

See page 149 of *Races of Faerûn* for more information on wemics.

WILD ELVES AND GHOSTWISE HALFLINGS

Both the wild elves (who live primarily in the Forest of Amtar on the south side of the Shaar and the Misty Vale along its southwestern border) and the ghostwise halflings (who live in the Channathwood and the area where the southeastern tip of the Chondalwood borders the Shaar) are strong isolationists. Neither race is interested in interacting with others, and both prefer to be left alone in their respective woodland domains. In fact, the wild elves of the Misty Vale are so xenophobic that they drive back any human incursions into their territory with fatal efficiency. Though the other races that roam the grasslands know of the elves and the hin, they respect their privacy and give their woods a wide berth.

Life and society

The inhabitants of the Shaar share several characteristics. Most notably, they have adapted to the harsh terrain and climate, established many centuries' worth of traditions, and developed a mutual—if sometimes grudging—respect for one another based on their shared experiences. In other ways, however, they are quite dissimilar. Tradition might be an important aspect of life for all who live in the endless grasslands, but specific traditions differ greatly from group to group, tribe to tribe, and race to race.

ECONOMY

The economy throughout most of the Shaar is not based on money. No coins are minted here, and they are of little use in areas other than towns.

City Dwellers: The folk who live in the urban centers have a slightly more developed economy than the nomads. While city dwellers are willing to barter with the tribesmen who come to their markets, they also accept coins, particularly from merchants passing through the Shaar from one nation to another. In fact, the trading communities of the Shaar have effectively become currency exchange centers, since caravans often trade not only in goods, but in coinage as well. A merchant from Durpar might arrive with goods to sell and be more than willing to accept currency from Chondath in exchange, since he intends to head there next. While in the Shaar, the same merchant might purchase some local crafts and pay in Durpari coin. The next merchant, perhaps from Calimshan, is happy to take the Durpari coin for her goods, since she can use it at her next stop in Estagund.

Gold Dwarves: The gold dwarves of the Great Rift simply mine their currency, digging precious metals and minerals out of the earth beneath their homeland and fashioning them into exquisite jewelry or ingots for trade with merchants. In exchange for their silver, gold, gemstones, and the magic items they sometimes craft, the gold dwarves acquire food (fruit, vegetables, and cheese), textiles, lamp oil, and other worked goods.

Nomads: For the most part, the tribes (human and otherwise) that roam the grasslands get everything they need from the land, using the animals they hunt for food, clothing, tools, and sometimes mounts. When they slay an animal, they use every part of it, wasting nothing. They have no commerce, and few have ever seen a coin, much less had any use for one. When the nomads wish to exchange goods, they simply barter with one another or with the merchants in the towns, who are used to this arrangement and don't mind trading goods for goods. The only items not needed for survival that the nomads consider valuable are pieces of jewelry (usually necklaces, bracelets, and hair adornments) made of animal bones or particularly beautiful rocks and crystals. They occasionally use such jewelry as a kind of currency, particularly when trading with other tribes that roam different regions and thus do not have access to the same materials.

Wild Elves and Ghostwise Halflings: The races that dwell in the forests of the Shaar rarely participate in trade of any sort. They are completely self-sufficient within their wooded homelands and for the most part, they have neither the need nor the desire to venture outside those domains—nor do they wish merchants to visit them. Only the ghostwise halflings of the Channathwood ever deign to trade with outsiders, and they leave their woodland homes to do so rather than allowing others to enter.

LAW AND ORDER

Those native to the Shaar have different approaches to law and order depending upon their races and lifestyles.

City Dwellers: In the cities and towns, law and order are much more structured than in the plains because the citizens face different dangers than the nomads. The constant presence of settled people with property and valuables is an irresistible draw for gnolls and other monsters, as well as bandits. Nomads frequent the towns, and occasionally members of adversarial tribes attempt to resolve their differences in the middle of the marketplace. Furthermore, the urban centers are natural targets for any enemy nations that wish to conquer tracts of the Shaar. Thus, every community elects a chief from a Council of Elders, just as the tribes do in the wild, and maintains a standing militia or defense force of some kind to protect the citizens. The chief, with the backing of the militia, deals with any and all trouble, from within or without.

Gold Dwarves: The laws and customs that govern gold dwarf society have been in place for millennia. Respect for clan elders is paramount, but beyond that, few outsiders know anything about their social traditions. Their laws pertaining to outsiders, however, are well publicized and quite strict. Gold dwarves see little value in the magic-lust of humans, the foolishness of elves, or even the tolerant nature of their cousins, the shield dwarves, so they regulate the activities of such folk quite rigorously. First

and foremost, they strictly limit how far any other being can venture into gold dwarf territory. Merchants must stick to the roads heading into and out of Eartheart, but they may not enter the city proper. They must conduct their business in the market town known as Hammer and Anvil, just outside Eartheart's walls. Those caught violating this rule of sanctity are usually never seen again. In addition, anywhere within the boundaries of the Great Rift (a one-day ride on ponyback in any direction from an edge of the canyon), all the traditional laws of peace and fairness apply (no violence except in self-defense, no theft, and so forth). These laws are enforced by the dwarf watchguards—about seventy stern and dour warriors who keep an eye on everything and suspect everyone of some kind of mischief.

Nomads: Shaarans have traditional laws that regulate their conduct on the open plains. Raiding is so common between tribes that it has become an accepted fact of life. A raiding party made up of fewer than twenty individuals is considered acceptable, and the targets of such a raid might return the favor in kind. However, any attack by a force greater than twenty is defined as an act of war, and other tribes quickly band together to defend themselves against the aggressor. Often, such events become topics of discussion at the spring and fall gatherings at Council Hills. Since that place is considered sacred ground and violence and bloodshed are prohibited there, it is a logical place for warring tribes to meet and resolve their differences. Shaaryan history is filled with instances of one tribe ambushing another to prevent just such an occurrence, hoping to prolong a war.

Within each tribe, traditional respect for the elders dictates how problems are resolved. The tribal elders may choose a chief, order penance for wrongdoings, or cast out an offending member of the tribe. The laws of any given tribe are somewhat fluid because the Shaarans believe it is more important to consider the tribe's current needs and values than to worry about what has occurred before. If a former enemy of the tribe is named a friend, then all members of the tribe must put aside any personal vendettas they have against that person and respect the new relationship.

DEFENSE AND WARCRAFT

The defensive needs of the Shaar's natives differ depending on their lifestyle.

Gold Dwarves: The gold dwarves defend the Great Rift staunchly and stubbornly, and they take great pains to deal with all potential threats, whether they arrive overland, by air, or via subterranean pathways. The rim of the canyon is surrounded by sixty structures known as riftedge towers. These stone towers are accessible only via tunnels from below, and each houses a deadly array of catapults and ballistae, as well as a unit of sixty gold dwarf warriors armed with heavy crossbows and dwarven axes. Any unauthorized being or vehicle approaching the Great Rift is greeted with a single warning shot. If the intruder fails to retreat, a deadly hail of missile fire follows.

In addition to the troops stationed inside the riftedge towers, a special unit called the Peacehammers—a collection of hippogriff-mounted dwarf skyriders armed with throwing axes and lances—patrols the skies overhead, above both the Great Rift itself and the plains beyond the edge of the canyon. Some of these skyriders carry magic lances that can fire bolts of flame or magic

missiles upon command. Any dwarf sentry or lookout stationed anywhere within the gold dwarves' realm—on the canyon floor, in a niche set into one of the canyon walls, or on patrol out on the grasslands—can sound a horn and have a corps of Peacehammers flying her way in a matter of moments. (See the Great Rift skyrider prestige class in *Races of Faerûn* for more information on the Peacehammers.)

In addition to these specialized forces, the gold dwarves also maintain a police force known as the Steel Shields, which is stationed inside the religious temple-fortress of Eartheart on the surface. The Steel Shields are 14,000 strong, and their leader is elected annually by the Deep Lords of the Deep Realm. The current Lord Scepter is Mariochar Bladebeard (LG male gold dwarf cleric 10 of Clangeddin Silverbeard/dwarven defender 7), an insightful tactical genius who has held the position for the last thirty-five years. Mariochar has devoted his life to the defense of the Great Rift.

The main entryway into the subterranean tunnels beneath the Great Rift is a broad passage sealed by 70-foot-tall, solid-gold doors. Known simply as the Gates, these great valves are further protected by magical wards and runes to ensure their stability. The Gates bar entry into a large cavern designed to overawe any visitors—though such are exceedingly rare. Beyond this chamber is the great dwarven city of Underhome. The Gates are kept closed except in times of war, when they part to allow the armies of the gold dwarves to march forth to battle. Most traffic passes through the Gates by means of small sally doors set into the bases of the huge portals. One popular legend among the gold dwarves states that shortly after their construction, the Gates withstood a full-on attack from a great wyrm, which attempted to hurl itself against them at full flying speed. The Gates stood strong, and the dragon was no more.

The last defense of the gold dwarf nation is its standing army, which is commanded by a duke selected from among the Deep Lords. All told, the army can muster nearly 60,000 troops, broken down into an elite ducal bodyguard (600), axe wielders (29,000), light crossbow troops (16,000) heavy crossbow troops (6,000), and regulars (4,000–5,000). While this army might seem inordinately large, the Deep Lords know that a force of immense size is the only way to protect the vast amount of territory claimed by the gold dwarves and guard the many approaches from which enemies could close in.

Nomads: For those who roam the plains, the best defense is enough speed to escape any threat. The mobility that is so vital for following the herds serves the tribes in many other ways. Mounted combat with ranged weapons, which provides a means of damaging the enemy while remaining out of harm's way, is as much a part of the nomads' culture as sleeping inside tents. Raiding works as a combat style because battles are rapid and the raiders can be gone almost before their targets become aware of them.

In true combat, most of the tribes (whether human, wemic, centaur, thri-kreen, or otherwise) use the same tried-and-true technique, in which the males form a defensive line while the females move the children off to safety. Thereafter, the females and males join together to fight whatever threatens them. Almost every race that roams the Shaar employs simple weapons such as slings and spears, which can be easily constructed out of animal

parts and the scattered vegetation native to the plains. A chieftain or great warrior might have a bow of some sort, though such weapons are prized more as status symbols than as tools of war, since arrows are difficult to come by except in the trade centers.

RELIGION

The deities venerated in the Shaar are as varied as the nomads who roam there. Each race pays homage to a handful of deities, but no single religion holds sway everywhere.

Centaurs: As a group, the centaurs of the Shaar are not terribly devout. Those who do follow a deity most often venerate Solonor Thelandria of the Seldarine, though a few offer their devotion to Silvanus. Sages speculate that the veneration of this latter deity might be a carryover from ancestors who once dwelled in more verdant parts of Faerûn.

Gold Dwarves: The dwarves of the Great Rift honor the entire dwarven pantheon in much the same way as their northern kin, though Moradin and Clangeddin Silverbeard are venerated above all others. Moradin's popularity stems not just from his status as Father of the Dwarves, but also from the Thunder Blessing that he granted to all dwarves. This monumental event has allowed the gold dwarves to enjoy greater prosperity and advancement than they have seen in several centuries. Clangeddin holds a special place for those who defend the Great Rift and anyone else who ventures to the surface frequently.

In addition to those two deities, many gold dwarves of both genders are favorably disposed toward Haela Brightaxe. The Lady of the Fray's love of no-holds-barred, unadulterated battle appeals to many of the gold dwarves, who enjoy nothing more than a good battle against old enemies deep in the Underdark. Lastly, because they face relatively few challenges compared with their shield dwarf kin, some gold dwarves have the time to develop their creativity and their philosophical nature. These individuals, who often prefer to venerate Dugmaren Brightmantle, spend their days contemplating the deeper mysteries of dwarven life and applying what they've learned to crafting, shaping, and sculpting new and wondrous items.

Humans: Most Shaarans pay homage to Tempus, since his devotion to protection and strength reflects the values they have cultivated over the centuries to ensure their survival on the harsh plains. Others, who glory in the hunt rather than in war, choose to follow Malar. Those few nomadic tribes that serve Akadi make it a point to gather at the hallowed hill of Blaskaltar (see *Cities and Sites*, below) every midsummer to revere her.

In the cities of the Shaar, the influence of the deities is somewhat less obvious. A wide variety of cultures and faiths cross paths in these places, and none holds an appreciable upper hand. But in certain portions of the urban centers where thieves and worse are numerous, Shar and Mask hold sway. Since no strong, organized religious presence exists in the Shaar, these shadowy forces operate virtually unchecked.

Wemics: The vast majority of the wemics follow their own deity, Nobanion, the patron of their druids and rangers. A few of the more savage individuals—particularly those who enjoy the thrill of the hunt—choose to follow the Beastlord instead.

Other Races: Neither loxo nor thri-kreen are religious by nature.

Adventurers

Most inhabitants of the Shaar could care less whether adventurers enter the plains or not. Since the nomads don't assign ownership of the land to any one group of people, they do not feel any territorial jealousy toward strangers—though this attitude does not mean that adventurers have nothing to fear from them. More than a few members of the various tribes—particularly the more bloodthirsty among the humans, wemics, and thri-kreen as well as the vast majority of the gnolls—don't hesitate to attack strangers on sight, just for the sake of killing. Certainly, such behavior is common among the wild elves of the Misty Vale. In other places, adventurers must be wary of more insidious evils, such as the yuan-ti that hide in the ruins of Lhesper, grabbing explorers to use in their searches (see *Lhesper*, below).

Within the cities, the merchants are happy to send adventurers off into the wilderness well equipped with supplies purchased from their carts and stores. The shopkeepers truly hope to see these intrepid heroes return with pouches full of newfound coin, which they might be willing to spend on more goods. On the outskirts of civilization, bandits also appreciate seeing adventurers, since their presence means more opportunities to take coin and equipment by force.

politics and power

No centralized power base exists among the peoples of the Shaar, with the possible exception of the gold dwarves in the Great Rift, who keep to themselves, anyway. The nomadic tribes constantly skirmish with one another—both verbally at Council Hills and on the field of battle—over territory, water, and food. When planning attacks, the chief of each tribe must balance the desire for greater glory against the wisdom of making enemies of too many other tribes. Some chiefs are more charismatic than others, but none are powerful enough to unite all the tribes under a single ruler, or even to command superiority at the biannual meeting at Council Hills.

For the most part, the city-dwellers of the Shaar desire nothing more than to pursue trade. A few assertive folk might have designs on dominating a trade route or a marketplace, either financially or militarily, but no location is so strategically valuable that trade could not continue without it. Were one area to fall under the control of a tyrant, trade would simply continue somewhere else. The Shaar simply was not made to be conquered or ruled.

The gold dwarves, on the other hand, practice enough politics for all the races combined. For many centuries, the Great Rift and its immediate subterranean surroundings were awash in royalty. These petty, decadent rulers squabbled incessantly, and with the drow and duergar growing in power, their endless feuds, bickering, and private wars began to threaten the survival of all the gold dwarves. To end the infighting and bring peace and stability to the realm, the ruling body known as the Deep Lords was created some 700 years ago. Today, although the gold dwarves' homeland is still ruled by a monarch (currently a queen), the Deep Lords make policy for the realm.

history of the great rift and the shaar

The Shaar has little formal history. Nomads have roamed its plains since before recorded history began, and they have changed little, though the outer world has disturbed them numerous times.

TIMELINE

Year	Event
c. -8800	The Great Caverns of Bhaerynden collapse, creating the Great Rift.
c. -6000	Human nomads start to roam the Shaar in numbers. Trade with the gold dwarves of the Great Rift begins.
-1064	A two-way <i>portal</i> between the Kingdom of Ashanath and Council Hills is opened. The village of Shandaular is founded around the southern terminus.
-946	The two-way <i>portal</i> in the Council Hills area is shut down, cutting off the remaining people of Shandaular from the north.
-373	Year of Whispering Stones: The town of Lhesper is founded.
-304 to -189	Yuan-ti slavers regularly raid the western end of the Shaar, taking newly captured slaves back to Serpentes.
-54	Year of Tomes: A lost tribe of Illuskans begins arriving through the <i>portal</i> in Council Hills. Eventually, these people merge with the Nar to create the Arkaiuns.
211	Year of Spoiled Splendors: Arkaiun tribes flee the Council Hills region to escape the invading Untheric and Mulhorandi armies. The Arkaiuns migrate southwest.
297	Year of Wailing Mothers: Forces of the Shoonach Imperium conquer and claim all the lands between the Shining Sea and the Landrise.
316	Year of the Vibrant Land: The city of Khôltar is founded by the dwarves for humans to trade with them and each other.
435	Year of Willing Sacrifice: Several towns along Lake Lhespen and the River Shaar rebel against their distant rulers, the Shoon.
437	Year of Silver Holly: The Seven Burnings campaign kills many native Shaarans and brings the western portion of the Shaar back under Shoon control.
451	Year of Unleashed Fears: The Shoon Imperium is finally driven out of the Shaar.
640	Year of the Fanged Beast: Gnoll tribes raze Lhesper. The survivors found Shaarmid.
1018	Year of the Dracorage: Gargauth arises from a pit at Peleveran, which is later destroyed by a horde of dragons, dracoliches, and members of the Cult of the Dragon.
1306	Year of Thunder: Moradin grants the gold dwarves the Thunder Blessing.
1373	Year of Rogue Dragons (current year).

government

Since it is not a nation, the Shaar has no single, unifying government. Each of its major population groups—the nomadic tribes, the citizens of the settled communities, and the gold dwarves of the Great Rift—operates independently of the others and has its own kind of government.

City Dwellers: Though more structured within the towns and cities, the government of Shaaryan towns is minimal compared to many of the urban centers elsewhere in Faerûn. Usually, the leader is a mayor or similar officeholder—often the wealthiest merchant or the most powerful warrior. This leader works with a council of the most influential people to meet the community's critical needs, such as building a wall, raising military forces for defense, deciding the level of taxation needed to pay for services, and so forth. In most cases, the citizens want as little control and restriction on their activities as possible, and they rely on the governing body to do only what is necessary to keep trade flowing.

Gold Dwarves: In the surface portion of the gold dwarves' realm, the government focuses on the military, with officers in command of various defenses and police forces acting as nominal governors. Underground, the situation is more political. The affairs of the Deep Realm are administered by the Deep Lords, the governing council of the gold dwarf clan elders, which consists of four representatives from each clan. This body dispenses justice, commands the dwarf armies, and decides matters of policy. The council answers to Queen Karriva of the Simmerforge clan (LG female gold dwarf aristocrat 13).

Nomads: Government is least formal among the human tribes. Though not anarchistic, the tribes accept only enough government to ensure survival and promote prosperity. Each tribe functions under the watchful eye of a group of elders, generally men and women at least thirty years old. These elders select a chief from among their number, typically by secret vote. Male chiefs rule most of the tribes, but a few have elevated women to that position. The chief, in consultation with the elders, makes decisions that affect the tribe as a whole, such as movements, trading, warfare and raiding, and punishments for crimes committed by tribal members and enemies. In some cases, the chief is part of a powerful, charismatic family that has held the seat of power in the tribe for many years.

enemies

For the most part, the tribes vie with one another for territory, horses, and food to so great an extent that they need no external enemies. When beset by threats from beyond the edges of the Shaar, however, they manage to band together and fend off attacks by outsiders. Though the gold dwarves do their best to remain aloof and separate from the rest of the peoples of the Shaar, they too are ready and willing to fight to maintain the sanctity of their homeland.

LAPALIYA

This coastal nation has a long history of attempting to cultivate and colonize the interior of the Shaar. On more than one occasion, its citizens have settled towns along the Shaar's riverfronts and attempted to tame the barbaric nomads by a variety of means. Also, Lapaliya has sometimes been under the thumb of some other nation with designs on civilizing the plains, including the yuan-ti of Serpentes (see *Serpent Kingdoms* for more information) and the old Shoon Imperium. Every time conquerors arrived, however, the tribesfolk simply vanished or avoided the invaders, then returned to their traditional lands as soon as the troops were recalled. Past failures are no insurance against future attempts—perhaps even in the near future.

MULHORAND

Though this aggressive theocracy has not made any untoward movements into the Shaar as yet, it has a history of dominating the regions surrounding it. The invasion of neighboring Unther has given the tribes that wander closest to the Shaar's border with Mulhorand pause. If the time comes for the Mulhorandi clergy to consider invading the plains—perhaps to control the trade routes there—the nomads will face a formidable foe, indeed.

UNDERDARK RACES

The ancient enemies of the gold dwarves, especially the drow and the duergar, are scattered throughout Great Bhaerynden and are never far from the Deep Realm. Any one of these fell races could renew its hostilities with the gold dwarves at any time. The drow cities of Lurth Dreir and T'lindhet are both within striking distance and bear constant watching. (See *Underdark* for more information on these races and their plans.)

YUAN-TI

The serpent people are closer than most folk of the Shaar realize, and they present a constant threat. Most recently, the yuan-ti have returned to the ruins of Lhesper, where they have begun to dig for ancient artifacts from the long-forgotten kingdoms of the sarrukh, their creator race. Serpentfolk have also begun to awaken in and around Azulduth, the Lake of Salt. Tribes roaming close to either of these locations might become pawns in the yuan-ti's nefarious schemes. (See *Serpent Kingdoms* for more information on the yuan-ti and their plans.)

cities and sites

Most communities in the Shaar are little more than trading centers. Each is close to a reliable source of water, since potable water is such a prized commodity in the plains. Because of the concentration of valuable commodities that accumulates in such places, almost all the Shaar's towns and cities have walls to protect their citizens from the raiders and bandits who roam the grasslands. The gold dwarves have their own cities, only a few of which are on the surface. These urban centers tend to be markedly different from the rest of the plains communities, since the races do not share ideas readily.

Blaskaltar

Blaskaltar is nothing more than a broad, low mound of grassy earth warmed by the baking sun of the Shaar. Though rumor says that a city once stood on this site, no records of it exist, and no remnants of it are left—not even ruined stonework.

The followers of Akadi refer to this mound as the First Shrine of the Queen of Air and consider it the most important holy site of their faith. Every midsummer, followers of the Lady of the Winds gather here to worship her, swelling the nearby communities of Shaarmid and Kormul for several days.

delzimmer (small city)

Four powerful merchant families control this free-trade city: the Harlhauns, the Jathlets, the Belarks, and the Olaundrans. Though they are rivals in business, the families have managed to find enough common ground to establish some level of law and order for the town, using their private militias to keep the peace. The families all run businesses associated with serving caravans, including storage warehouses, outfitters, and financial services (moneylenders and moneychangers), but they are not costers themselves.

The stone walls surrounding the heart of Delzimmer have long since outlived their usefulness. The city has grown considerably since the walls were built, and shops, dwellings, and warehouses have spilled out into the open ground beyond their perimeter. Roads have been cut through the walls to provide access to the businesses outside, and the remaining portions are in poor repair, sporting cracked mortar and holes of various sizes.

Delzimmer's citizens are all in the business of providing services, either for the caravan traffic or for the other locals. The rest of the people in the city on any given day are caravan masters, their escorts, and the merchants who hire them.

Delzimmer (Small City): Nonstandard; AL NE/LN/LE/CN; 15,000 gp limit; Assets 4,661,250 gp; Population 6,215; Integrated (halfings 42%, human 37%, half-elf 10%, dwarf 6%, gnome 3%, other races 2%).

Authority Figures: Oldyle Belark (NE male human fighter 8/rogue 5), head of the Belark merchant family; Maraunt Harlhaun (LN male human aristocrat 16/expert 4), head of the Harlhaun merchant family; Elsræa Jathlet (LE female human aristocrat 6/rogue 4), head of the Jathlet merchant family; Gauthklaun Olaundran (CN male human aristocrat 8/fighter 4/expert 3), head of the Olaundran merchant family.

Important Characters: Malthorn Jathret (NE male human aristocrat 6/necromancer 14), a reclusive elder member of the Jathret clan; Flospin Ralmathun (LN male human warrior 2/expert 5), the most influential caravan master in the city; Hupert Three-teeth (CN male strongheart halfing rogue 14), head of the most powerful thieves guild in Delzimmer and a master of confidence games.

Nagra (Four Families' Police/Militia): Fighter 14, fighter 12 (3), fighter 10 (5), fighter 5 (34), fighter 2 (67), fighter 1 (213), warrior 13, warrior 11, warrior 7 (4), warrior 6 (17), warrior 5 (29), warrior 4 (62), warrior 3 (78), warrior 2 (114), warrior 1 (387).

The rest of Delzimmer's citizens are too numerous to describe here.

earthheart (metropolis)

The dwarven city of Earthheart is actually separated into two major sections. Earthheart proper is a walled fortress-city with soaring towers and ramped, multilevel streets. Outside its walls is the tent-city of Hammer and Anvil (see below), where outsiders come to trade. Earthheart is only partially visible from the plains around the Great Rift, since many of its levels are belowground, accessible only via spiraling staircases.

The Lord Scepter of Earthheart, Mariochar Bladebeard (LG male gold dwarf cleric 10 of Clangeddin Silverbeard/dwarven defender 7), rules the city on behalf of the Deep Lords. Aided by the troops known as the Steel Shields, he runs the place like a military compound, though the city contains far more civilians than soldiers.

Earthheart serves as the gold dwarves' connection with the rest of the world—a place where they can store trade goods and provisions and also maintain an army that can deal with outside threats before they ever reach the Great Rift. Many dwarves—both gold and shield—who come and go from the Great Rift prefer to live in Earthheart rather than elsewhere in the canyon or its subterranean environs.

AVIARIES

The Peacehammers, the Great Rift's aerial defense forces, house their hippogriffs in great roosts high in the city. Numerous grooms, trainers, and even some druids are on hand in the aviaries to care for these creatures. Though the skyguards take their mounts out on regular patrols and allow them to feed on

the wild herd animals that roam the plains, an incredible amount of fresh meat must be brought to the aviaries each day. Most of it is obtained in Hammer and Anvil from the hunters of the plains tribes who come there to trade.

STEEL SHIELD HEADQUARTERS

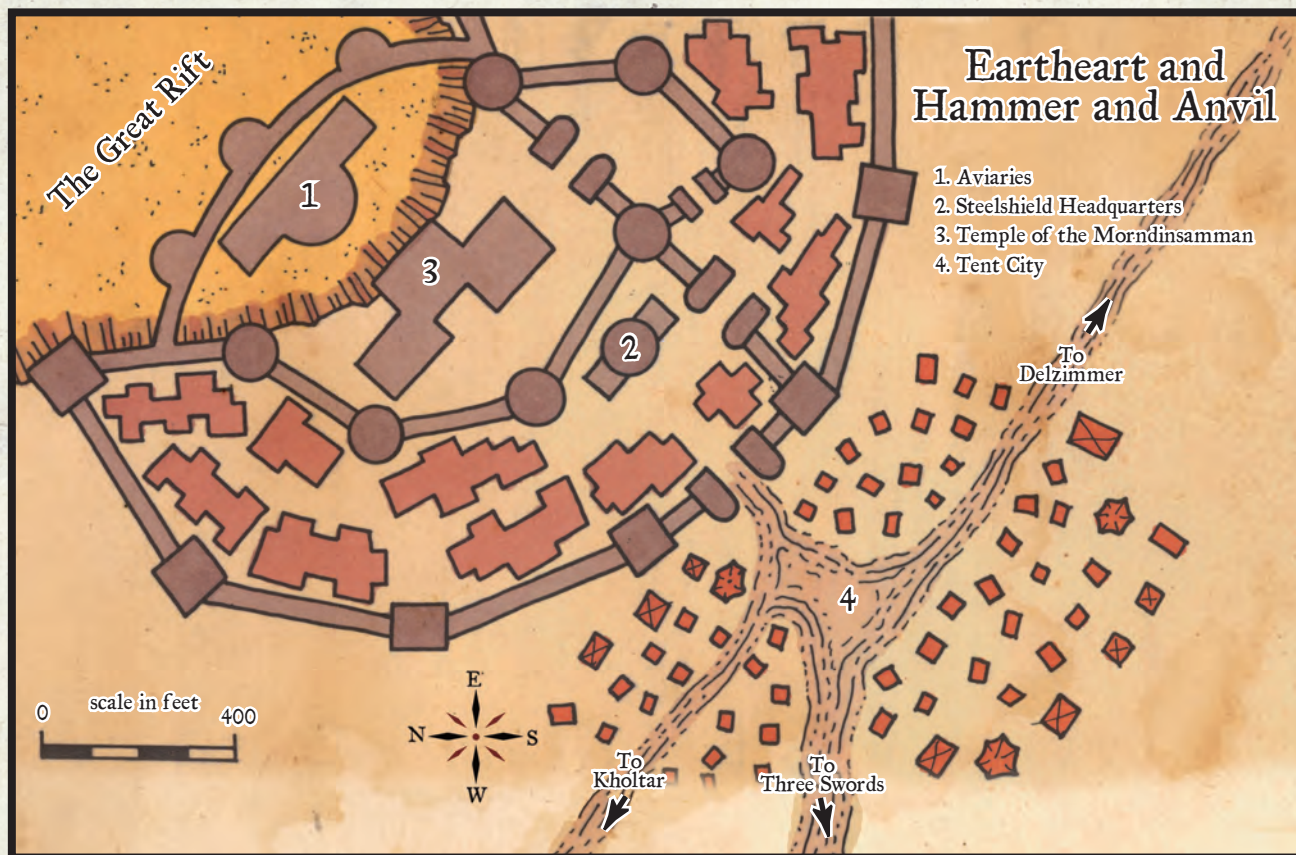
The Steel Shields are stationed in an immense, walled compound near the gate that leads to the tent-city known as Hammer and Anvil. Since the Steel Shields organization boasts more than 14,000 troops, including officers, the compound takes up enough room to be another small city in its own right. The headquarters houses barracks, mess halls, training facilities, and armories.

Earthheart (Metropolis): Conventional; AL LG; 100,000 gp limit; Assets 220,040,000 gp; Population 44,008; Isolated (dwarves 97%, gnomes 2%, other races 1%).

Authority Figures: Lord Scepter Mariochar Bladebeard (LG male gold dwarf cleric 10 of Clangeddin Silverbeard/dwarven defender 7).

Important Characters: Vorn Steeleye (LG male gold dwarf fighter 8/Great Rift skyguard 10), commander of the Peacehammers; Gwarr Stouthammer (LG male gold dwarf cleric 11 of Moradin/divine disciple 4 of Moradin), High Priest of the Temple of Morndinsamman; Keshil Darkettle (LG female gold dwarf warrior 4/expert 7), highest-ranking trade broker and quartermaster of trade goods.

Typical Steel Shield Patrol: Fighter 3/cleric 3 of Clangeddin Silverbeard (6), fighter 6/dwarven defender 4, fighter 5/dwarven defender 3 (2), fighter 5/dwarven defender 1 (6).



Typical Peacehammer Patrol: Fighter 6/Great Rift skyguard 5, fighter 6/Great Rift skyguard 3 (2), fighter 5/Great Rift skyguard 1 (7).

The rest of Eartheart's citizens are too numerous to describe here.

TEMPLE OF THE

MORNDINSAMMAN

Actually a collection of individual temples gathered together in the center of the city, the Temple of Morndinsamman occupies the central point of Eartheart. Each building is dedicated to a different deity of the dwarven pantheon, with the Temple of Moradin in the center and the others forming a circle around it. Though impressive enough when viewed from the surface, the temples' true stature can be fully appreciated only by those who descend into their lowest levels, where the most powerful and revered servants of the dwarven deities show their respect deep within the earth.

hammer and Anvil (small city)

Built against the western outer wall of Eartheart is Hammer and Anvil, a sprawling tent-city consisting primarily of moveable workshop-huts and tents. Numerous watchful dwarf guards are posted within the town to ensure that those who come to trade cause no trouble. Most nondwarves are not welcome beyond Hammer and Anvil, but in the tent-city, the gold dwarves are more than happy to meet with all comers and trade their gold, silver, and forged goods for foodstuffs, textiles, and other items in short supply on the plains and underground. Of the roughly 8,000 people in Hammer and Anvil at any time, about half are nondwarves who have stopped briefly to trade, and the other half are dwarves who live in Eartheart and come here daily to barter on behalf of the Deep Realm or sell their services (primarily blacksmithing, armor repairs, and so forth).

hardcastle (small town)

Founded in the days of the Kingdom of Peleveria, Hardcastle is not much more than a fortified trading camp (population 1,316) that sits at the crossroads of three major caravan routes. One road comes in from Delzimmer and the Great Rift to the south, one from Unther, and the third from the Vilhon Reach. After Mulhorand invaded Unther, the folk of Hardcastle expected the trade from that region to dry up, but the traffic on the road to Unther has actually increased over the last year because the Mulhorandi forces have required a healthy supply of goods—particularly food, weapons, and healing magic—to keep their armies supplied.

The reigning lord of Hardcastle is Frego Cordwell (LE male human fighter 4/rogue 9), a former caravan master out of Chondath who decided that he could make more money with less road time by taking over one of the most lucrative stops. Since assuming control of the trading camp, he has enticed numerous small business owners to set up shop in Hardcastle, where they can cater to the caravan traffic.

Borrowing an idea from the Durpari people, with whom he once had business dealings, Cordwell has contracted private organizations to provide all the town services, including law enforcement—though he made certain to hire a former business associate for that job to ensure some measure of loyalty. Thus, Frego is free to administer the usage fees he charges without having to actually worry about the logistics of providing the services.



The city of Eartheart

khôltar (small city)

Known as the Iron City because of its unusual, iron-covered walls, Khôltar (population 7,643) is a muddy, smoky community with lots of stout but squat stone buildings, cobbled streets, and minimal greenery. Its 100-foot-tall, double outer walls stand in two concentric rings around the city, with a 30-foot-wide, poorly drained trench in between. The trench is filled with rotting garbage, iron waste from the forges, and the occasional corpse. On the north, west, and south sides of the city, gates pierce the walls, and a bridge spans the trench at each of these points.

Originally founded by the gold dwarves, Khôltar is a city of forging—a place where those who don't wish to pay the higher prices in Hammer and Anvil can come to purchase everything from arms and armor to ladles, scoops, belt buckles, and andirons. The sky over Khôltar is always black and sooty by day and a hazy, glowing orange by night.

In the center of the city sits High Khôltar, the center of law and government. The ruler of the city, known as the Munificent Belarkh, is ostensibly a supreme merchant and an absolute overlord. The truth is that merchant families with extensive investments in various businesses run the city, and the belarkh simply acts as their mouthpiece. The current belarkh is Enklaevur Rostigror (CN male human expert 4/fighter 3/rogue 6), a former caravan merchant, thief, and vagabond trader.

Lhesper

In the heart of the Shaar, at the northern tip of Lake Lhespen, lies the ruined town of Lhesper. Destroyed by gnoll raiders in 640 DR, it has lain in ruins ever since. Currently, several yuan-ti arcane spellcasters, all of whom are members of an organization known as the Coiled Cabal, are searching for something in Lhesper. Recently, they have begun enlisting the unwilling aid of local tribesfolk and travelers to help with that search. Humanoids taken to Lhesper are usually either sacrificed to the yuan-ti deity or transformed into broodguards and tainted ones. (See *Serpent Kingdoms* for more information on the yuan-ti and the Coiled Cabal.)

peleveran

The ruins of this ancient city are built into the side of the Landrise, very near the point where the River Shaar emerges from the subterranean portion of its journey. Peleveran was once the capital of an ancient kingdom called Peleveria, which stretched across the plains connecting the Landrise, the Firesteaps, and the Shaarwood. The city was destroyed in the Year of the Dracorage (1018 DR), when it became the site of a devastating conflict between two warring factions of the Cult of the Dragon.

A temple known as the Dark Pit of Maleficence, dedicated to the demigod Gargauth, is hidden deep in the tunnels and caverns beneath the city, inside an immense cavern that once served the city as a granary. At the very bottom of the temple is a nearly bottomless pit that sages suspect connects directly to Baator via a *portal*.

shaarmid (large city)

Shaarmid is a free trading city with a population of about 23,500. Its stout walls and formidable defensive forces make the city a safe haven for merchants, who flock here from all points in the region for protection from raiding tribes, bandits, and monsters of the grasslands.

Shaarmid's citizens claim no connection with or allegiance to the tribes of the surrounding plains, though many are descended from them. In fact, some privately embrace their heritage, but they prefer that others not view them as biased in favor of their former clans. A slight majority of the population is ethnically pure Lapalian, and therefore closely related to the Tashalans. The ancestors of these folk migrated here to found Shaarmid after the fall of Lhesper in 640 DR.

Despite the refusal of Shaarmid's citizens to show favoritism, the tribes accept them as long-time allies because of their reputation for brokering the best deals possible with traders from other lands. The markets of Shaarmid have become a little less wholesome of late because of the illicit trade that has been trickling down from Innarlith since Ransar Pristoleph came to power there (see Innarlith in Chapter 12), but this change has attracted little attention so far.

Heroes and monsters

Characters of many races can hail from the Shaar. Among the nomadic tribes, Shaarans, centaurs, wemics, loxo, and thri-kreen are all possibilities. Other human ethnicities, as well as half-elves, elves, gnomes, halflings, dwarves, and half-orcs could originate in any of the trading cities scattered across the grasslands. Most gold dwarf characters hail from the Great Rift, as does the occasional gnome, though the Rathgaunt Hills are a more likely place of origin for gnome characters. A gnoll character could have grown up in and around the Dun Hills, and under extraordinary circumstances, even a wild elf from the Misty Vale might go adventuring.

The Misty Vale region, the Loxo region, and the Thri-Kreen region are all new for the Shaar. Many of the new feats, including the various rage-based and tribal membership feats, are appropriate for characters originating from this area.

Among the prestige classes detailed in Chapter 2, The Great Rift deep defender is appropriate for gold dwarves. The Great Rift skyguard (see *Races of Faerûn*) is also quite suitable for a gold dwarf character from this region. A rock gnome character might be attracted to the breachgnome prestige class (see *Races of Faerûn*), and a human might want to become a Shaaryan hunter (see *Player's Guide to Faerûn*).

The Shaar is teeming with all sorts of dangerous creatures. Of the new monsters detailed in Chapter 5, beguilers, cyclopes, loxo, mantimeras, rattleyrs, starsnakes, and thri-kreen are appropriate for this area. Other common monsters include gnolls, behirs, ankhegs, wemics, centaurs, wyverns, perytons, and manticores.



BORDER AREAS

The Shining South cuts a broad swath across Faerûn, stretching for more than 2,000 miles along the coast of the Great Sea and covering nearly 1,000 miles from north to south at its widest point. The lands of Dambrath, Durpar, Estagund, the Great Rift, Halruaa, Luiren, the Shaar, Var the Golden, and Veldorn are bordered by numerous kingdoms, forests, and mountain ranges that the people of the Shining South trade with, war with, or just eye warily. To the east, Ulgarth looms as both a longtime threat and a potential trading partner, and beyond that is the Utter East. To the north lie the Firesteap Mountains and the Chondalwood, the warring nations of Unther and Mulhorand, and the desolation known as the Plains of Purple Dust. To the west, the Shining Sea, the kingdom of Lapaliiya, and the mysterious Mhair Jungles form a line that serves as a boundary for the area known as the Shining South.

The border kingdoms and the lake of steam

Just north of the Shaar's far western end is a stretch of coastline along the Lake of Steam that is occupied by a handful of small realms known as the Border Kingdoms. Despite the name, these realms don't truly border on anything except one another, and their boundaries are constantly in flux because the local rulers (mostly adventurers) rise and fall with the changing of the seasons. The common folk who dwell in this area make their livings by logging, mining, and fishing. They don't pay much attention to who the local lord is, since they know full well that the ruler who arises today might well be replaced tomorrow.

The nomads of the Shaar rarely ride this far west because the Border Kingdoms offer nothing that can't be obtained more easily deeper in the grasslands. The barrier formed by the River Scelptar makes the area an even less inviting target for raids. Still, a healthy level of trade passes through the Border Kingdoms from both directions, since caravans moving between the Shining

South and Calimshan, Tethyr, and beyond often stop here. Some of these traders follow the road around the shore of the Lake of Steam—crossing the Strait of Storms between Theymarsh and Thuldolphor—while others brave the stinking yellow waters and foul inhabitants of the lake itself, crossing to the north shore to trade with the cities there.

On a regular basis, adventurer lords from the Border Kingdoms ride out from their small keeps and fortresses into the Shaar, seeking adventure to further whatever long-range goals they espouse. In most cases, the nomads leave them be, since they are usually on their way elsewhere and not worth confronting. Sometimes, however, adventurers are drawn into one of the tribal skirmishes or territorial wars that frequently rage across the grasslands. In such a case, the more heroic adventurers usually feel compelled to take sides, while the less savory ones provide weapons and magic to both sides in hopes of prolonging the conflict. Typically, the tribesfolk eventually grow tired of the adventurers' meddling and resolve their differences on their own, then turn on the interlopers and chase them out of the Shaar.

The duskwood and the querth forest

A significant portion of the land encompassed by the Border Kingdoms is shrouded in forest, and nomads from the Shaar have long been gathering herbs and hunting for food and water in these regions. In recent years, however, some woodland-oriented adventurers visiting the Border Kingdoms have begun to settle the fringes of these forests. The Shaarans consider the Duskwood and the Querth Forest part of their traditional lands and do not look

happily upon the encroachment of druids, rangers, and reclusive sorcerers in those areas. The more adventurers who settle there, the more volatile the situation becomes, and a number of major skirmishes have occurred in recent years.

The chondalwood

This long stretch of forest runs from the north side of the Shaar past the north end of the Landrise and behind the Firesteap Mountains, extending all the way to the coast of the Vilhon Reach. Though much of this woodland is beyond the area known as the Shining South, the southern end of it flanks the Old Road, a trade route that connects Chondath with many locales throughout the Shaar. At the very southern tip of the grasslands, the Old Road and the Road of Dust merge at Hardcastle.

The denizens of the Chondalwood actively discourage outsiders from entering its deep, dark interior. In addition to the usual dangerous animals—such as snakes, spiders, tigers, and so forth—the forest houses numerous dangerous plants and plant creatures. Various fungi and mushrooms, as well as mistletoe and other parasitic plants, are prominent along the forest floor. Shambling mounds, tendriculoses, assassin vines, and other evil vegetable creatures also sprout here from time to time. But the true menaces to foreigners traveling these woods are the satyrs, centaurs, wild elves, and feral ghostwise halflings. In addition, rumors that a sizable contingent of giants has settled here have been drifting through the nearby towns of late.

The druids who live in the Chondalwood jointly watch over the woodland and keep it healthy. Their enclave, which is even more secretive and aloof than most such groups, has assembled various kinds of creatures into patrols and instructed them to watch for and be wary of any groups other than trade caravans that pass along the Old Road. When evidence of adventurers or loggers comes to light, the creatures begin a campaign of terror against the encroachment, making menacing sounds and displaying strange lights in hopes of scaring off intruders before they set foot beneath the forest canopy. When that doesn't work, the creatures do not hesitate to take more aggressive action.

Ruthien-Thau

The legend of an ancient elf city hidden deep inside the Chondalwood has been told around campfires for centuries. The stories vary as to exactly where the city is, but most versions have a few common threads. The elves lived openly in the forest for several millennia in a number of tree-cities. They traded with the humans who were settling along the forest's fringes at first, but when logging began in earnest, the elves tried to stop it. After a terrible defeat against a united force of humans, the remaining elves retreated deep into the middle of the forest, supposedly to the hidden city of Ruthien-Thau. Some say that this city was abandoned during the Elven Retreat, while others claim it never existed in the first place. No one has been able to find any evidence of this ancient city so far, though many have looked.

The firesteap mountains

The Firesteap Mountains stretch from the tip of the Lake of Steam eastward to the Landrise and the Chondalwood, then continue along the northern boundary of the Shaar to connect with the lands beyond. As mountains go, the Firesteap range is not terribly forbidding or monster-infested, nor are its peaks particularly high. On the south side, Shaaryan tribes have claimed the foothills as sacred burial grounds, and the tombs of their ancestors are thickly scattered throughout the entire stretch of ridges there.

The nomads do not tolerate anyone entering these mountains—not even members of rival tribes that do not claim traditional rights to the site. Anyone they find trespassing in the region is attacked on sight and driven off or killed. On the north side, bandits and intelligent monsters such as hobgoblins and ogres make a nuisance of themselves by attacking caravans along the various trade routes that snake through the area. The Old Road from Chondath skirts the northern boundary of the mountains, squeezing between the Firesteaps and the Chondalwood, while the Golden Road out of Sespech actually runs right through a narrow pass on the western end of the ridge. The militias of both Torsh in the east and Innarlith in the west send out regular patrols to prevent raiders from completely overrunning the roads.

Innarlith (metropolis)

Innarlith occupies the far eastern tip of the Lake of Steam, just north of the Firesteap Mountains. For the right price, any commodity can be purchased here, including illegal goods such as poison, narcotics, and slaves.

The recent ascension of Ransar Pristoleph (LE male Chondathan human wizard 12) to rulership of the city has brought about some fundamental changes in the dynamics of the region. First and foremost, Ransar likes his creature comforts, and he vehemently dislikes anything that prevents caravans from getting into or out of his city. Thus, he has taken an aggressive approach to dealing with the raiders who hide in the Firesteaps and attack the trade traffic on the Golden Road. Ransar has begun sending large military forces into the mountains to hunt down and kill any sentient being that doesn't have a legitimate reason for being there—and a few that do, just to be on the safe side. Furthermore, because of Pristoleph's secret ties to Cyric and his efforts to subvert most of the major trading houses to his cause, more and more of Innarlith's illicit trade has been spreading southward, to Shaarmid.

Lapaliiya

Lapaliiya is a confederation of city-states along the southeastern shore of the Shining Sea. It stretches from the eastern end of the Delphin Mountains to the Sheir Peninsula, and from the shores of the Shining Sea to the northern edge of the Mhair Jungles, the Walls of Halruaa, the western edge of the Bandit Wastes, and the peaks of the Dun Hills. Loosely ruled by the Overking of Sheirtalar, these small realms are sometimes known as the Lapal League or the Cities of the Seabreeze, though the latter name technically also includes Narubel, Tashluta, Ormpur, and the ruins of Procalith. But the city-states that compose this nation are a fractious lot, and conflict among them (both overt political confrontations and covert machinations) is more prevalent than disputes with neighboring countries.

Each city-state in Lapaliiya has a civic deity, and its citizens discourage all other faiths. The dark deity of Lapalian myth is Amphisbaena the World Serpent, who has wrapped the world in his coils and is slowly crushing it into pulp as he devours himself.

Today, Lapaliiya is inhabited mostly by Shaaryans and Calishites, and Tashalans make up only a small minority. Regardless of their ethnicity, Lapaliiyans are zealous warriors and industrious merchants who place tremendous value on personal honor and propriety. Duels and feuds over slights that folk of other lands might readily dismiss are common. Clerics and monks enjoy positions of respect and authority in Lapaliiya, while arcane spellcasters are viewed with some suspicion—an attitude that dates back to the Rage of Wizards (1142 DR).

Lapaliiyans consider serpentfolk the greatest threat to their lives and property. Such creatures are slain on sight if they reveal themselves as such, and overt dealings with them are punishable by death. Nevertheless, the yuan-ti wield considerable influence in Lapaliiya, and officials routinely overlook suspicious dealings involving persons with significant political strength.

In centuries past, Lapaliiya was a nation in name only, ruled by an essentially powerless Grand Council composed of the satraps of the five most powerful city-states. The union of the ruling houses of Sheirtalar and Lushpool in the Year of Glad Tidings (1147 DR), occurring as it did in the immediate aftermath of the Rage of Wizards, led to the installation of a ruler—the Overking of Lapaliiya. In addition to ruling the cities of Sheirtalar and (through the heir to the throne) Lushpool, the overking theoretically governs all Lapaliiya with the consent of the Grand Council, which can vote on the policy he sets forth but cannot initiate its own decrees. In practice, however, the overking must still secure unanimous consent from the representatives of Sammaresh, Ithmong, Lushpool, Sheirtalar, and Uzurr for any new policies, and this process usually involves negotiating with the reigning Shoonsar of Ithmong and the Satraps of Lushpool.

Ormpur (large city)

Also known as Ormpar in the local vernacular, the City of Saffron (population 24,612) lies at the head of Ormpur Bay on the

eastern end of the Shining Sea. Ruled by High Suikh Helbareim “the Storm Wind” Alanasker, the city is known for its production of saffron. In fact, Ormpur Bay is the only spot in Faerûn where the crocus flower needed to produce this rare spice grows in abundance. Unlike Lapaliiya to the south, the majority of the human population here is of Tashalan origin. The difference in ethnicity stems from the fact that Ormpur has never been conquered by Shaaryan nomads—primarily because those folk have always been welcomed in the city’s markets.

Ormpur has long been a powerful and independent city-state, thanks to a long-standing alliance with a clutch of chromatic wyrmlings. Even during the era of the Shoon Imperium, Ormpur retained its nominal independence via careful diplomatic maneuvering in the court of the qysars and the unspoken threat posed by its wyrmiling-mounted cavalry. In recent times, however, bloody infighting among the royalty of the city combined with a number of other unfortunate events has reduced Ormpur from a great city to the lesser realm that it is today. Although it still retains its nominal independence, Ormpur is increasingly falling under the sway of the Overking of Lapaliiya.

sheirtalar (metropolis)

The Shining City by the Sea (population 52,135) sits at the head of Sheir Bay on the northern end of the much larger Talar Bay, which is located at the foot of the Sheir peninsula. The land slopes sharply down to meet the waters, allowing those arriving on ships to see almost all the city at once. The city’s apt nickname arises from the fact that most of the prominent buildings are domed and leafed in silver and gold.

Sheirtalar is the capital of Lapaliiya and the largest and most powerful of the confederated city-states. Its ruler is the Overking of Lapaliiya, Shaliim Wyrm Slayer (CN male Tashalan human fighter 5/sorcerer 5/eldritch knight 7). The Domed Palace of the Overking, the most prominent of Sheirtalar’s landmarks, sits atop a granite outcropping in the upper third of the city. The Gilt House of Gleaming Coins, the temple dedicated to Waukeen, the city’s civic deity, is also incredibly opulent. Because most trade goods exiting the Shaar for western Faerûn pass through this port, it has become one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the South.

For more information on Lapaliiya, see *Serpent Kingdoms*.

The mhair jungles

The Mhair Jungles lie between the Lapal Sea and the West Wall of Halruaa. This expanse of dark, tropical forest contains all manner of plant, animal, and monster life—most of it unknown anywhere else, and much of it deadly. The yuan-ti, who consider these jungles sacred, come here to hunt, scour the ancient ruins of their ancestors, and drive off intruders. The northern Mhair Jungles are also the preserve of dire tigers, digesters, and many nomadic tribes of wild dwarf hunters. The wetter southern reaches eventually give way to vast mangrove swamps hunted by solitary sword spiders and nagahydras.



Many yuan-ti lair in the Mhair Jungles

Illustration by Ralph Horsley

Yuan-ti dwell in and among the ruins of Mhairshaulk, and other major ruins are claimed by solitary Faerûnian ha-nagas and nagahydras. Lesser ruins are uncommon on the surface because the jungle growth has wholly devoured them over the course of millennia. Scattered sinkholes throughout the Mhair Jungles lead into the Serpent Deeps, and explorers are advised to watch out for sinkhole traps set by dwarf hunters.

For more information on the Mhair Jungles, see *Serpent Kingdoms*.

mulhorand

Once a sprawling empire that included much of eastern Faerûn, Mulhorand is now but a shadow of what it was at its height. Despite its general decline and the fact that mortal leaders have replaced its former deific rulers, Mulhorand is still a mighty nation and a potential threat to any country in its vicinity. Fortunately for the nomads of the Shaar, most of Mulhorand's attention has been turned north and west, rather than south. Thay was once a part of the Mulhorandi Empire, and the Mulan of both nations still remember that fact. Mulhorand has also been a traditional enemy of Unther, and Mulhorandi forces have recently invaded that country and nearly conquered it.

Because so much time, attention, and resources have been devoted to other interests, Mulhorand's leaders have given little consideration to the possibility of southward expansion. In fact,

the nomads have benefited from the current situation, since Mulhorand requires a steady stream of trade goods to equip and feed its armies in Unther. The flow of goods and coin back and forth between Mulhorand and the Golden Water region would be even greater if not for the monster problem in Veldorn, and the Mulhorandi are sure to address that issue at some point in the future.

The dragonsword mountains

This narrow band of mountains divides Mulhorand from the Plains of Purple Dust. Since its peaks are infested with sphinxes, griffons, yrthaks, and several blue dragons, it serves as an effective barrier between those two regions. The mountains jut down into the fringes of the Shaar, and the only navigable route from the Golden Water to Mulhorand and back again passes between the tip of the range and Azulduth, the Lake of Salt.

The small city of Mishtan, which serves as a gateway to the City of the Dead, marks the end of the trade road from parts south. Ruled by clergy dedicated to Osiris—the Mulhorandi deity of the dead—Mishtan serves as a base of operations for the continual construction of the City of the Dead. Mishtan houses the workers who build the tombs, and its warehouses store supplies and food, a substantial portion of which comes from the south.

The City of the Dead, where the Mulhorandi have traditionally buried their honored dead, lies a little east of Mishtan,

nestled in the foothills at the southern end of the Dragonsword Mountains. Tombs, obelisks, and other grand features jut up from the low hills here, and such structures would be inviting targets for tomb robbers and adventurers if not for the swarms of zombies and skeletons housed in the finished tombs. The few brave souls who do try to steal the riches sealed in the graves often inadvertently release undead to roam the foothills, and occasionally these creatures venture west into Mishtan or south toward the trade route.

The plains of purple dust

Like Raurin, the Dust Desert, the Plains of Purple Dust consist of a vast wasteland marked by blowing sand and buried ruins. Reputedly formed when deities of Unther and Mulhorand battled one another, the sand is said to be faintly magical, though no one can agree on its exact properties. Despite the rumors of fell magic and the perils of a wind-torn desert, the plains are not completely uninhabited. Hardy nomads roam along the far western fringe, staying just close enough to the foothills of the Dragonsword Mountains to find water and game, but far enough away to avoid the worst of the predators that live on the mountain slopes.

In fact, the dangers of the Plains of Purple Dust go far beyond the scorching sun, lack of water, and blinding sandstorms. Mammoth purple worms lair in the sands, rising up like massive snakes to devour anything and everything that comes within range. These behemoths can easily best any creature except the largest and most cunning dragons of the region.

Once part of the Imaskar Empire, the Plains of Purple Dust still hide many of that ancient nation's secrets. Numerous ruins are scattered across its surface, and abundant routes lead down through the sand and rock into the Underdark below. Wedged between the Earthroot region and Deep Raurin, the area of the Underdark below the Plains of Purple Dust is home to several fierce and cruel tribes of lizardfolk—creatures that haven't seen the light of day in centuries, if not millennia. These scaly beings routinely bring old Imaskari magic to bear in defense of their caverns, utilizing items of power unheard of in modern-day Faerûn.

The shining sea

Except for the Sea of Fallen Stars, the Shining Sea supports the most merchant traffic of any body of water in or around Faerûn. A significant portion of its commerce runs directly to the eastern tip of the sea, to Lapaliiya and the independent city-state of Ormpur. Those ports function as staging points between the seagoing traffic and the overland caravans, which transport goods throughout the Shining South. As a result, goods from the Chultān Peninsula, Calimshan, and as far away as the Sword Coast make their way into the western end of the Shaar, through the Talath Pass into Halruaa, and into still other areas of the Shining South. Even vessels that have ventured as far away as Maztica often bring strange and exotic items to the markets of the Shining South via the Shining Sea.

Ulgarth

Though geographical proximity might lead some to consider Ulgarth part of the Golden Water region, the marked differences between this nation and the others on the bay are significant enough to merit its classification as a separate realm. In many ways, Ulgarth is an isolated nation, bounded on the north by the Dustwall, on the west by Durpar and the Golden Water, on the south by the Great Sea, and on the east by the vast plains of the Utter East. Like the other offspring countries of the Raurin Empire, Ulgarth endured centuries of dark barbarism after that great nation was destroyed. Little technological or commercial development occurred here while rival tribes from the Shining South and beyond waged countless small wars on this region. Finally, after the bloodshed had reduced the local population to a fraction of its previous size, the people of the Ulgarth region grew tired of war and turned to agrarian pursuits. The nation developed a highly structured caste system consisting of lords who owned the land and peasants who worked it on the lords' behalf.

Today, Ulgarth is a traditional monarchy ruled by King Drasna Bluemantle (LG male human aristocrat 6/fighter 8) and divided into six distinct baronies. The barons who oversee these sections must provide troops to aid in the defense of the country, and they engage in heavy trade to pay for the support these armies.

As with its neighbors on the bay, much of Ulgarth's wealth and prosperity stems from the trade on the Golden Water. The nation has become a strong exporter of crops, shipping foodstuffs to many other regions along the southern coast of Faerûn. Ulgarth's proximity to the ocean moderates the inland temperatures, and the almost daily rain and generally humid climate result in rich, fertile cropland.

The rulership and governmental policy in Ulgarth are very localized. The barons oversee most of the law enforcement, trials, and punishment of criminals. Religion is not as dominant in Ulgarth as it is elsewhere in the Golden Water area, and priests do not play as active a role in making and enforcing the laws. The people strongly believe in a clear separation of secular and spiritual roles, and they feel that a person's worldly behavior should not be the purview of the temples. But even so, those who dispense justice recognize the value of a good truth-seeking spell, and they often call on priests or mages who can wield such magic.

Ulgarth's criminal system is quite strict. Any citizen found guilty of a capital crime is usually sentenced to a quick death and executed. For a lesser crime, the guilty party can choose between enforced service in the army, working a baron's fields, or serving a prison sentence. Few choose prison, though service in the army often means patrolling the eastern border of Ulgarth and watching for invading hordes of barbarians from the Utter East. Once a criminal has served her sentence, her record is clean, and she is free to resume her position in society with no stigma of any kind.

The population of Ulgarth is overwhelmingly human, though other races are more than welcome here. Few elves, dwarves, gnomes, or halflings feel comfortable in the feudal society of Ulgarth, though, so those who do visit tend to attract attention from the locals. A few dwarves live in the local mountain ranges

and work the mines there, but they are distinctly separate from the rest of Ulgarth's society and rarely mingle with the humans except to trade. Other humanoid are not welcome in Ulgarth, particularly since the country has had a history of trouble with incessant raiding by the gray orcs of the Dustwall. Most of the time, humanoids other than those noted above are slain on sight.

Ulgarth and Durpar have a hostile history that has only recently been put to rest in favor of peaceful relations. Though the two nations have finally found a means of understanding one another, the Ulgarthans still maintain a strongly fortified border with their neighbor to the northwest.

kelazzan (large town)

Kelazzan (population 5,000) is both the southernmost and the westernmost community in Ulgarth. Because the country's naval shipyards are based here, the port is much larger than a city its size would normally support. Most of the residents make their livings constructing and maintaining ships, but a considerable number work in government operations.

The baron of this region is Larid Herokimal (LG male human paladin 13), a war hero and devoutly religious man. He does not foist his beliefs on his people, but he does insist that those who would live within in his barony abide by what he considers a just and fair system of laws. He does not tolerate criminal activity, and he devotes an unusually high level of resources to rooting out and eliminating thieves and other miscreants. On the brighter side, the baron also wishes to see everyone partake of the fruits of his own labor as much as possible. This attitude does not stem from any noble notion that all people are equal in station—Herokimal just feels that no one should be allowed to take unjust advantage of another or prevent another from taking advantage of opportunities. As a result, trade is brisk, and the living conditions within Kelazzan are uncommonly pleasant.

orvytlar (large city)

Situated on Copper Bay (so named because its water does not appear quite as golden as that of the larger bay to the north), the capital of Ulgarth is also the site of King Bluemantle's vast estates. Orvytlar (population 21,000) is also Ulgarth's primary trade link with the rest of the world, and commercial sea traffic is very heavy through its port, which is defended by nearly two dozen warships. In addition to its strong naval presence, Orvytlar maintains a sizable standing army, and three massive towers protect its harbor, each equipped with a huge ballista that can fire a quarter-mile out into the bay.

Sizable quantities of foodstuffs and precious metals leave the port each day, and luxury goods of similar value arrive. The marketplace in central Orvytlar is not quite as large as those in the Durpari cities, but the trade is just as vigorous. Ulgarthans are happy to conduct business with the Durpari these days, and though their neighbors to the northwest still get the better of most deals, the Orvytlarans have become commercial masters in their own right.

unther

Once just as mighty and proud as Mulhorand to the east, Unther is now a nation divided—a broken image of its former glory torn apart by civil unrest and invasion. After the fall of Gilgeam and the military invasion by Mulhorand, Unther's people are both terrified of what the future holds and hopeful that a new way of life is on the horizon. Resentful of the decades of division between the haves and have-nots, commoners have turned on the clergy. Law and civility have fallen by the wayside as people struggle to take what they need to survive by force or theft. The resulting chaos has driven many refugees out of Unther ahead of the approaching Mulhorandi armies.

Those refugees who have fled down into the Shaar have discovered that the journey across the open grasslands to other places is both long and perilous. Many of those who have not succumbed to the elements have either been captured by tribal raiding parties and sold as slaves or slain outright for trespassing on sacred lands. Others have managed to reach nearby trading communities, where they struggle to find work or hope to join caravans heading elsewhere.

The war has also served as a boon for traders moving up into Unther from the south. Initially, Untherian soldiers needed supplies to defend their homeland, and after they were driven back, the Mulhorandi forces needed the same sorts of goods. Weapons from the Great Rift, food from Var the Golden, and even some magic from Halruaa has made its way into the war-torn regions of southern Unther to aid in the conflict and feed the refugees.

The black Ash plain

Named for the thick layer of volcanic detritus that constantly showers down from the Smoking Mountains to the north, the Black Ash Plain is home to sizable populations of brown dragons and ash giants (stone giants with black, dusty skin). A number of refugees from the Untheric-Mulhorandi conflict were forced to flee through this area, and those who managed to get through unscathed insist that they saw several ruined buildings jutting up from the ashy ground. Those who claim to have taken refuge in those ruins almost universally claim that substantial works exist below the surface of the ground. No one, however, was brave (or foolish) enough to venture into the subterranean levels to find out more.

The green lands

In normal seasons, the fertile fields in this region of Unther are magically enhanced to produce crop yields sufficient to feed a good portion of the nation. During the invasion, however, the Green Fields were churned to mud and the crops ruined. To avoid widespread famine and possible rioting among the locals, the Mulhorandi forces imported large quantities of food from the south, particularly the Shining Lands and Luiren. As a result, trade in foodstuffs has been more brisk than usual throughout the Shining South.



ADVENTURE SITES

Places of interest to adventurers abound in and around the lands of the Shining South. From the ancient ruins of forgotten cultures to vibrant city streets in every port along the coast, opportunities for heroism can be found without much difficulty. The influx of treasure and magic from newly discovered monster hoards, abandoned cities, and forgotten tombs have as much impact on the local economies as commerce and trade. The region is as well known for its adventure as its harsh environments and unique cultures.

This chapter details three short, site-based adventure areas. “The Astral Inn” depicts a Halruaan tavern and inn, its proprietor, and his unusual pastime. “Bandit Camp” describes a hidden encampment of highway robbers in the Forest of Amtar and its denizens. “Dwarven Crypt” details a forgotten gold dwarf burial chamber.

The Astral inn

At the main crossroads of the farming village of Eichul in Halruaa sits a popular pub and hostel—the Astral Inn. Owned by Pirsnil Fireleap (whose statistics are at the end of this section), the Astral Inn is a cozy place where one can find a fine drink or meal and get a room for the night. Of course, being in Halruaa, the Astral Inn is also filled with all manner of unusual and (in the eyes of some outsiders) frivolous magic. Pirsnil has made a point of taking advantage of every possible comfort, installing a variety of magic enhancements in his inn to attract customers. For the most part, his efforts have worked. The taproom is filled every afternoon and evening until closing, and nearly every room is rented on most nights.

Prices for food and lodging at the Astral Inn are double those listed on Table 7–8: Goods and Services, page 128 of the *Player’s Handbook*; meals and inn stays rate as “good.” However, Pirsnil prices the drinks and common food more cheaply (the same price as on Table 7–8) to keep the locals coming, and he discounts rooms 10% when a patron wants to rent by the week. Pirsnil also hires himself out for spellcasting on occasion.

The ground floor

The main floor of the Astral Inn includes the common room, the bar, the kitchens, and the storage rooms off the kitchen. They are all described below.

1. COMMON ROOM

The common room, or taproom, is filled with both wooden trestle tables with matching benches and round tables with chairs. Unlike most taverns in the northerly climes of Faerûn, which are often dark, fire-warmed affairs with deep shadows and plenty of lantern smoke, the Astral Inn’s main room is open and airy. Every wall is set with wide windows that let in plenty of light, and they’re kept open to allow breezes in when the weather is mild. To keep the insects out at such times, the windows are covered with wire mesh screens fashioned by the gold dwarves of the Great Rift.

During the long, hot part of the year, the windows stay shut. Instead of natural cooling, Pirsnil uses a magical system built into his twin fireplaces (which are just for show; they never actually get used for fires). Each chimney can be cooled on command with a *Darsson’s chilling chamber*. Another command activates a *Darsson’s cooling breeze*, sending a slight draft down the flue and out into the room. In this way, the temperature is pleasantly cool all day long, and the taproom is a popular place to spend the heat of the day.

An iron golem named Clang stands stoically in full view, serving as the Astral Inn’s bouncer. Constructed with the help of gold dwarves and an *iron golem manual*, Clang is dwarflike in appearance—only 4 feet tall and much broader than would be proportional for a human figure. The golem’s imposing form is a reminder that Pirsnil brooks no trouble in his inn, but Clang

has been instructed not to use lethal force unless someone deals it real damage. It simply escorts offenders out the doors and bars them further entry. In the history of the inn, Clang has only removed a single patron who was too drunk to control himself (or to think rationally about facing an iron golem).

The interior of the room is lit at regular intervals along the walls, ceiling, and at each table with different gems upon which *continual flame* has been cast. These magical lights stay soft and low during the day, but the lights begin to rise as dusk nears. When darkness falls fully, the inn is illuminated with a rainbow of colored light.

Once in a while, a patron tries to steal a *continual flame* gem or two, but Pirsnil can tell when the lighting dynamics of the room change. A shouted warning, including a reminder of Clang's presence, always sees the stone returned to its proper place.

Clang: Medium Iron golem; hp 129; see page 136 of the *Monster Manual* and adjust statistics for the golem's size.

2. BAR

The bar stretches across the wall next to the doors leading into the kitchen and under the stairs leading to the second floor. Pirsnil spends most of his time here, keeping an eye on his establishment. He has several small iron compartments beneath the bar, which are permanently imbued with *Darsson's chilling chamber* spells, where he keeps beverages cool and ice on hand.

Above the bar, on the back wall, Pirsnil has installed a special display case. The entire case is made of 1-inch-thick glassteel (hardness 20, 40 hit points—see page 158 of *Races of Faerûn* for more information) and protected by a lock of the highest quality

(Open Lock DC 40). In addition, the case itself is a wondrous item that radiates an *antimagic field* to protect its contents and radiating 1 foot in every direction. (As a magic item, the case has a +7 bonus on Fortitude saves against any blow that might break it.)

Inside the case, Pirsnil has one of his most prized possessions on display—a *zarangan* that dates back to the time of Netheril (its unique properties are described in a separate entry at the end of this section). Furthermore, Pirsnil places an audible version of the *alarm* spell on the *zarangan* each day, which goes off if anyone other than him touches the item. Of course, the alarm won't sound immediately, since the *zarangan* is inside the influence of the *antimagic field*, but it sounds loud and clear once the stone is taken out of that zone.

3. KITCHEN

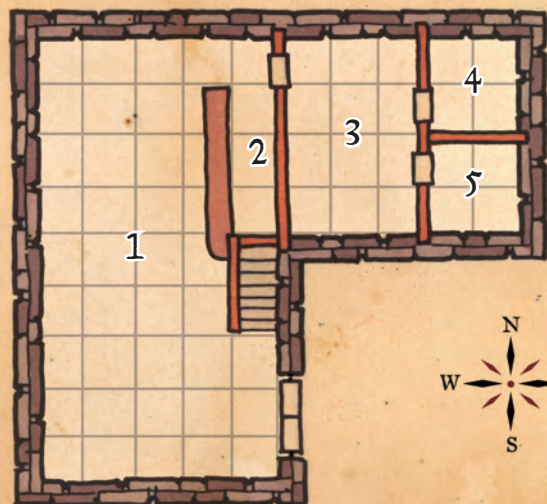
The food that the Astral Inn serves is prepared here. The room is equipped with several tables, as well as a large stone oven that has *Darsson's fiery furnace* cast on it each morning. Pirsnil employs three cooks and two serving girls, but all five can do either job. Much of the fare of the Astral Inn includes smoked fish from the coast, cuts of meat from the herds in the Nath, and a wide assortment of pickled fruits and vegetables imported from Luiren.

4. PANTRY

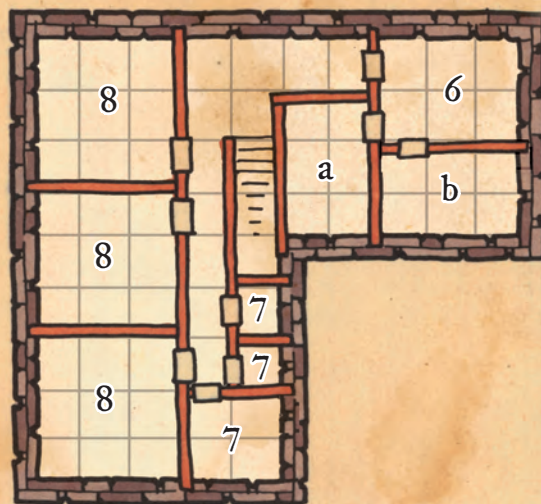
Food items that do not need any special preservation are kept here. Such items include dried and smoked meats, sacks of flour, herbs, some vegetables, crockery, and pots and pans for cooking.

The Astral Inn

Ground Floor



Second Floor



One square equals 5 feet

5. COOLING CHAMBER

This room has thick, insulated walls and has been augmented with a permanent *Darsson's chilling chamber* spell to keep a variety of food cold and fresh. Eggs, meat, poultry, fish, extra barrels of beverages, cheeses, and other vegetables can be found here.

6. PIRSNIL FIRELEAP'S

QUARTERS

Pirsnil occupies these chambers. The door is secured with an amazing lock (Open Lock DC 40), which is also a wondrous item crafted using an *arcane lock* spell. The arcane lock allows Pirsnil to pass, and he has a key for the mechanical one. Every window has been enhanced with *arcane lock* as well, and the whole room is warded with a permanent *alarm* (mental version). Finally, Pirsnil keeps a pet Halruaan behir here—a beautiful, topaz-yellow specimen named Shaprak that likes to snooze on a throw rug in the center of the room.

The main sitting room holds a pair of chairs, a writing desk and stool, and numerous shelves with books, displays, and knickknacks. A few wall hangings liven up the place. None of Pirsnil's really valuable items are out in his rooms; he keeps those safely secured in a *Heward's handy haversack* that he keeps on himself at all times.

Pirsnil has a cooling system in his room, much like that found in the guest rooms (see area 8).

A. Closet and Washroom: Pirsnil keeps his personal belongings, clothing, and so forth in here. He also maintains a washstand, bath, and privy.

B. Bed Chamber: Pirsnil's bed is here, along with a nightstand, more bookshelves, and a 2-foot by 4-foot dressing mirror of polished silver (1,000 gp).

Shaprak: Halruaan behir; hp 55; see page 61.

7. STORAGE CLOSETS

Each of these compartments has clean linens, pillows, comforters, towels, and so forth for the guest rooms. The cabinets are not locked.

8. GUEST ROOMS

These personal guest rooms are available for rent by the night or the week. Each contains two beds, a writing table and one chair, a washbasin and mirror, and a nightstand with a lantern.

The doors are secured with average locks (Open Lock DC 25), but the locks are also wondrous items imbued with *arcane lock* spells. Each magic lock has a command word that allows Pirsnil to give it a password. The password negates the *arcane lock* for



The Astral Inn

10 rounds, or until the password is spoken again, and each lock's password can be changed by Pirsnil (only he knows the method to change a lock's password). When a guest rents the room, she is given a key and a password to bypass the magic lock on her room. Pirsnil changes the password after each guest checks out, providing a new one to the next guest.

In the rafters, Pirsnil has installed small wooden ducts that function much like the fireplaces in the taproom. When the weather is hot, Pirsnil can activate the ducts so that chilled air flows into the rooms each day. The ducts are small enough that only a Tiny creature could fit through them, and steel grills cover the openings into each room.

The game

Most folks don't know that Pirsnil has a twin brother named Librad who lives halfway across Halruaa in another small town. The two are currently playing a game. Each brother tries to steal the *zarangan* and keep it from the other for the most time over the span of a year. When one of the two succeeds in swiping the item, the victim must wait at least a month before trying to steal it back, to give the new owner time to devise security. The lone caveat to the whole competition is that the *zarangan* cannot be hidden in an extradimensional place, but it must be kept in an accessible location and openly displayed by whomever has possession of it.

Since Pirsnil currently has the *zarangan* in the Astral Inn, Librad must steal it. The player characters might be visiting the Astral Inn when the attempted theft takes place, or the party could be hired by Librad to help him steal the item.

The theft

Librad arrives inside the inn via *teleport* and under the effect of *greater invisibility*. He releases a rust monster (see page 216 of the *Monster Manual*) to attack Clang and distract the customers and Pirsnil. The aberration is charmed via *charm monster* (from days ago) and invisible (thanks to an *invisibility* spell Librad casts on it before they arrive). While the rust monster drama plays out, Librad approaches the case, pours very strong acid into the lock, is rendered temporarily visible by the *antimagic field*, grabs the *zarangan*, moves away from the case, and then uses *teleport* to escape. If all goes well, he is home with the *zarangan* before the alarm has sounded for more than a moment or two. Should luck be against him, Librad tries everything in his power to get the *zarangan* and flee without harming Pirsnil's customers. Anyone who attacks Librad with lethal force, however, loses the protection of the would-be thief's limited scruples.

PIRSNIL AND LIBRAD FIRELEAP

Born to farmers in the agricultural region near Talath Pass, Pirsnil and Librad grew up with about as good an understanding of magic as anyone. They both excelled in Halruaa's arcane tests, surpassed expectations in their formal tutoring in magic, and probably would have ended up serving on the Council of Elders if either had any inclination to do so. Unfortunately, these twin brothers were too busy having a good time to worry about politics. They both love practical jokes, especially at each other's expense.

The pair has spent most of their lives getting one over on each other, coming to the point where heavy doses of magic have become the norm in their elaborate games. Neither seems to care who else gets caught in the crossfire, though they certainly don't intend to hurt anyone. Other powerful mages in the region, especially a few who sit on the Council, frown deeply at Pirsnil and Librad's antics. Neither brother has yet caused severe enough damage to person or property to make anyone take action.

Pirsnil Fireleap: Male human wizard 14; CR 14; Medium humanoid; HD 14d4+14; hp 50; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d4+1/19–20, +1 *weakening dagger*); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+1/19–20, +1 *weakening dagger*); SQ +2 bonus on saves against illusions, familiar, familiar benefits (Alertness, empathic link, share spells); AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +14; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +12, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (Halruaa local) +15, Listen +4*, Profession (innkeeper) +17, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +17, Spot +7*, Alertness*, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Familiar, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell^B, Scribe Scroll^B, Silent Spell, Spellwise, Still Spell^B.

Languages: Common, Durpari, Elven, Halruaan, Shaaran, Sylvan.

Familiar: Pirsnil's familiar is a starsnake named Umrad. The familiar uses the better of its own and Pirsnil's base save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

Umrad: Starsnake familiar; CR —; Medium magical beast; HD 14; hp 25; Init +9; Spd 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 26, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +5; Grp +4; Atk +10 melee (1d4–1 plus poison, bite); SA poison, spell-like abilities, static discharge; SQ deliver touch spells, dream shield, improved evasion, share spells, speak with master, spell resistance 19; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 9, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 26.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +18, Listen +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Halruaan, Sylvan.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 12, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Dex. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*charm person* (DC 19), *hold person* (DC 21); 3/day—*charm monster* (DC 22), *suggestion* (DC 21); 1/day—*eyebite* (DC 24), *hold monster* (DC 23). Caster level 12th.

Static Discharge (Ex): Umrad constantly generates electricity within its body while sleeping. If it is asleep, any creature that touches it or makes a successful melee attack against it with a natural or metal weapon takes 1d4 points of electricity damage from the discharge.

Deliver Touch Spells (Su): Umrad can deliver touch spells for Pirsnil (see Familiars, page 52 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Dream Shield (Su): While asleep, Umrad generates an aura that absorbs spells and spell-like abilities. Any targeted spell directed at Umrad is absorbed and instantly converted into electrical energy. This energy is discharged back at the original caster in a bolt that deals 1d10 points of electricity damage per level of the spell absorbed.

The bolt is 5 feet wide with a maximum range of 200 feet, and a DC 20 Reflex save halves the damage. It can set fire to combustibles and damage objects in its path. If the damage caused to an interposing barrier breaks through that barrier, the bolt may continue if range permits. Otherwise, the bolt stops at the barrier. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Improved Evasion (Ex): If Umrad is exposed to any effect that normally allows it to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, it takes no damage with a successful saving throw and half damage if the saving throw fails.

Speak with Master (Ex): Umrad can communicate verbally with Pirsnil. Other creatures do not understand the communication without magical help.

Familiar Benefits: Pirsnil gains special benefits from having a familiar.

Alertness (Ex): *Umrad grants its master Alertness as long as it is within 5 feet.

Empathic Link (Su): Pirsnil can communicate empathically with Umrad at a distance of up to 1 mile. He has the same connection to an item or a place that Umrad does.

Share Spells (Su): Pirsnil may have any spell he casts on himself also affect Umrad if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. He may also cast a spell with a target of "You" on Umrad.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 14th): 0—*detect magic, mage hand, message, prestidigitation*; 1st—*alarm, burning hands* (DC 16), *disguise self, magic missile* (2), *Tenser's floating disc*; 2nd—*alter self, cloud of bewilderment*† (DC 17), *Darsson's fiery furnace*†, *invisibility, knock*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, gaseous form, suggestion* (2) (DC 18); 4th—*detect scrying, dimension door, fire shield, sparkles*‡, *stoneskin*; 5th—*sending, teleport, telekinesis* (2) (DC 20); 6th—*antimagic field, mass suggestion* (DC 21), *stone body*‡; 7th—*ethereal jaunt, Mordenkainen's sword*.

Spellbook: as above plus 0—all; 1st—*comprehend languages, Darsson's cooling breeze*†, *endure elements, expeditious retreat, feather fall, grease, hold portal, identify*; 2nd—*arcane lock, Darsson's chilling chamber*†, *locate object*; 3rd—*illusory script, nondetection*; 4th—*arcane eye, scrying*; 5th—*permanency, Leomund's secret chest, symbol of sleep*; 6th—*analyze dweomer*; 7th—*Drawmij's instant summons, greater teleport*.

†: New spell described in Chapter 3 of this book.

‡: Spell found in *Player's Guide to Faerûn*.

Possessions: Bracers of armor +3, +1 *weakening dagger*, ring of protection +2, cloak of resistance +3, Heward's handy haversack, 3 potions of cure moderate wounds, potion of mage armor, potion of shield of faith +3, scroll of *analyze dweomer*, scroll of *Drawmij's instant summons*, scroll of *identify*, scroll of *locate object*, 3 thunderstones, diamond dust (2,000 gp), gold dust (200 gp), gold loop with ruby lens (1,700 gp), keys, 4 pearls (100gp each), sapphire (1,000 gp), platinum necklace with sword token (platinum, copper, and zinc; 500 gp).

Librad Fireleap: Male human rogue 4/wizard 5/arcane trickster 5; CR 14; Medium humanoid; HD 4d6+4 plus 5d4+5 plus 5d4+5; hp 53; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d8+2/19–20, +2 *longsword*) or +10 ranged (1d4+1/19–20, +1 *dagger of returning*); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d8+2/19–20, +2 *longsword*) or +10 ranged (1d4+1/19–20, +1 *dagger of returning*); SA impromptu sneak attack, sneak attack +4d6; SQ +2 bonus on saves against illusions, familiar, familiar benefits (+3 on Climb checks, Alertness, empathic link; share spells), ranged legerdemain; AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +5, Balance +9, Bluff +8, Climb +8 (+10 when climbing ropes), Concentration +10, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +16, Escape Artist +9 (+11 involving ropes), Gather Information +10, Hide +15, Jump +7, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (Halruaa local) +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Open Locks +14, Search +9, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +14, Spot +7*, Tumble +10, Use Rope +7; Alertness*, Great Fortitude, Improved Counterspell, Improved Initiative,

Reactive Counterspell, Scribe Scroll^B, Silent Spell^B, Spellwise, Still Spell.

Languages: Common, Durpari, Elven, Halruaa, Shaaran.

Impromptu Sneak Attack (Ex): Once per day, Librad can declare one sneak attack an impromptu sneak attack. The target of an impromptu sneak attack loses any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, but only against that attack. The power can be used against any target, but creatures that are not subject to critical hits take no extra damage (though they still lose any Dexterity bonus to AC against the attack).

Familiar: Librad's familiar is a lizard named Phylosil. The familiar uses the better of its own and Librad's base save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

Phylosil: Lizard familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast (augmented animal); HD 14; hp 26; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +0; Grp –12; Atk +4 melee (1d4–4, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SQ deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells, speak with master; AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +12, Hide +10, Listen +3, Spot +3; Weapon Finesse.

Deliver Touch Spells (Su): Phylosil can deliver touch spells for Librad (see Familiars, page 52 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Improved Evasion (Ex): If Phylosil is exposed to any effect that normally allows it to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, it takes no damage with a successful saving throw and half damage if the saving throw fails.

Speak with Master (Ex): Phylosil can communicate verbally with Librad. Other creatures do not understand the communication without magical help.

Familiar Benefits: Librad gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants Librad a +3 bonus on Climb checks (included in the above statistics).

Alertness (Ex): *Phylosil grants its master Alertness as long as it is within 5 feet.

Empathic Link (Su): Librad can communicate empathically with Phylosil at a distance of up to 1 mile. He has the same connection to an item or a place that Phylosil does.

Share Spells (Su): Librad may have any spell he casts on himself also affect Phylosil if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. He may also cast a spell with a target of "You" on Phylosil.

Ranged Legerdemain: Two times per day, Librad can perform Disable Device or Open Lock at a range of 30 feet. The DC of the check increases by 5, and Librad cannot take 10. Any object to be manipulated must weigh 5 or fewer pounds.

Wizard Spells Prepared (caster level 10th): 0—*detect magic, mage hand, open/close, prestidigitation*; 1st—*disguise self, expeditious retreat, magic missile, obscuring mist, protection from law*; 2nd—*alter self, invisibility, rope trick, see invisibility, spider climb*; 3rd—*dispel magic, gaseous form, haste, protection from energy*; 4th—*confusion* (DC 18), *dimension door, greater invisibility, rainbow pattern* (DC 18); 5th—*teleport* (2).

Spellbook: as above plus 0—all; 1st—*animate rope* (+2 ranged touch), *charm person*, *detect secret doors*, *feather fall*, *grease*, *identify*, *jump*, *reduce person*; 2nd—*darkvision*, *knock*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *nondetection*; 4th—*charm monster*, *screaming*; 5th—*overland flight*, *passwall*, *sending*.

Possessions: Bracers of armor +3, +2 longsword, +1 dagger of returning, amulet of natural armor +2, ring of freedom of movement, cloak of elvenkind, Heward's handy haversack, 2 potions of bull's strength, 3 potions of cure moderate wounds, scroll of *darkvision*, scroll of *identify*, scroll of *knock*, scroll of *overland flight*, 3 vials of acid, 5 thunderstones, 200-ft. silk rope, bullseye lantern, 30 caltrops, crowbar, grappling hook, flint and steel, masterwork thieves tools, sledge, spade, 5 torches, pearl (100 gp).

PIRSNIL'S AND LIBRAD'S ZARANGAN

The Fireleaps' *zarangan* is a translucent purple color, like an amethyst. In addition to standard *zarangan* powers, the stone can generate a *cone of cold* effect once per hour, and it provides *spell immunity* against *shocking grasp* and *suggestion*. The designated "home" of this particular *zarangan* was one of the flying cities of Netheril and no longer exists, so the *word of recall* power simply deposits the wielder in the middle of the Anauroch desert, as close to the former site of the city as the stone can manage.

Bandit camp

The route that runs between the Channath Vale and the Great Rift passes between a line of mountains and woodlands on one side and the great Forest of Amtar on the other. It is a path heavily used by caravans. Slow-moving groups of wagons are easy prey for the bandits that hide in the fringes of the Amtar. When such scoundrels spot a caravan that appears weak enough to hit, they strike fast and melt away into the trees when their raid is concluded.

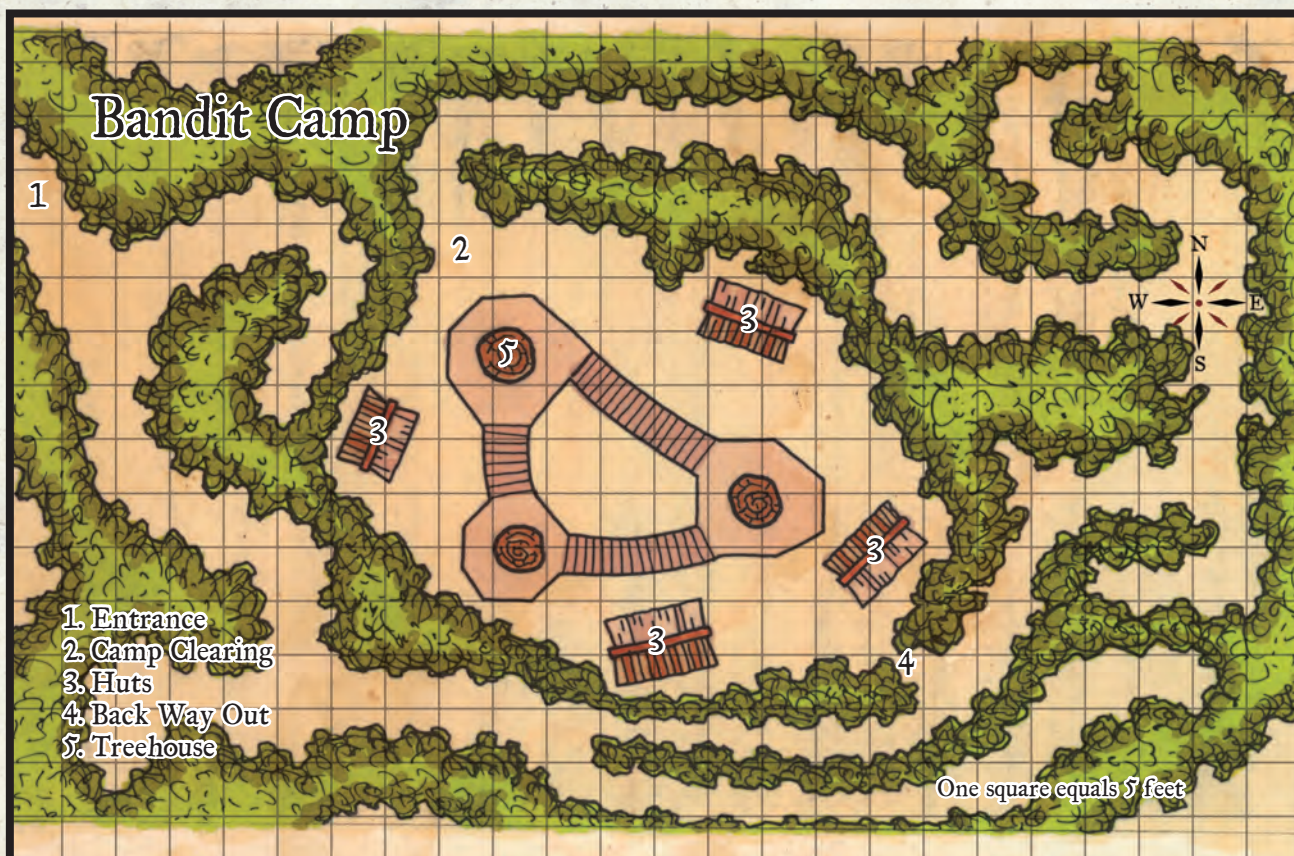
These bandits maintain camps in the forest where they can hide from patrols, count their loot, and wait until the next opportunity for plunder arises. What follows is a sample group of bandits and their hidden locale. It can be placed anywhere along the edge of the Forest of Amtar's north side (or in the fringes of any forest region that parallels a trade route).

The reavers

The members of the Reavers are:

TANUSHK "THE GRIM ONE" VERSIX

Tanushk is a bitter creature, the product of his wild-elf mother and a demon that found its way into the Forest of Amtar. His fiendish heritage manifested itself as shiny green wings, feral red



eyes, and sharp fangs. He vents his hatred and self-loathing on others by engaging in primal bloodletting. This ferocious attitude suits his companions just fine.

Tanushk: Male half-fiend wild elf ranger 5 of Malar; CR 7; Medium outsider (native); HD 5d8+10; hp 32; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +10; Atk +11 melee (1d6+5/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +10 melee (1d4+5, claw) or +11 ranged (1d8+4/×3, masterwork composite longbow); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+5/19–20, masterwork short sword) and +9 melee (1d4+2/19–20, masterwork dagger) or +10 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +10 melee (1d6+2, bite) or +9/+9 ranged (1d8+4/×3, masterwork composite longbow); SA combat style (ranged), favored enemy elves +4, favored enemy humans +2, smite good 1/day, spell-like abilities; SQ animal companion (Medium viper; link), darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/magic, low-light vision, resistance to acid, cold, electricity, and fire 10, spell resistance 15, wild elf traits, wild empathy +9 (+5 magical beasts); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Climb +9, Handle Animal +8, Hide +10, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (nature) +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Search +12, Spot +10, Survival +8 (+10 to avoid getting lost and to track, +2 aboveground), Swim +9, Use Rope +8; Endurance^B, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot^B, Track^B, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Common, Elven, Gnoll, Dambrathan, Sylvan.

Favored Enemy (Ex): Tanushk gains a +4 bonus on his Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against elves. He gains the same bonus on weapon damage rolls. Against humans, he gains a +2 bonus on these skill checks and on weapon damage rolls.



Tanushk, the half-fiend

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Tanushk may attempt to smite good with one normal melee attack. He deals 5 additional points of damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—darkness; 1/day—desecrate, unholy blight (DC 16). Caster level 5th.

Animal Companion (Ex): Tanushk has a Medium viper named Sin-eater as an animal companion. The companion's abilities and characteristics are summarized below. Tanushk and Sin-eater enjoy the link special quality.

Link (Ex): Tanushk can handle Sin-eater as a free action. He also gains a +4 circumstance bonus on all wild empathy checks and Handle Animal checks made regarding his viper.

Sin-eater: Viper animal companion; CR —; Medium animal; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +0; Atk +4 melee (1d4–1 plus poison, bite); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4–1 plus poison, bite); SA poison; SQ scent, tricks; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1 (+3 again enchantments); Str 8, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +11, Hide +12, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +7; Weapon Finesse.

Poison (Ex): Injury (bite), DC 11, initial and secondary damage of 1d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Tricks: Attack, come, down, stay.

Wild Elf Traits: Wild elves have immunity to magic sleep effects. An elf who merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if she were actively looking for it.

Possessions: +1 studded leather, masterwork composite longbow (+4 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, masterwork short sword, masterwork dagger, ring of protection +1, 2 potions of cure light wounds, potion of cat's grace.

BLACKTEETH

Blackteeth doesn't know how he gained his sorcerous powers, and he doesn't care. Spells give him an edge in combat that few gnolls possess, and they are part of the reason Blackteeth is the leader of the Reaver gnolls. He thinks Tanushk is too gloomy, but he enjoys sharing bouts of bloodlust with Vaujer. (Blackteeth's familiar recently met a cruel end.)

Blackteeth: Male gnoll fighter 2/sorcerer 2; CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2 plus 2d10+2 plus 2d4+2; hp 31; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +8 melee (1d12+4/×3, masterwork greataxe) or +5 ranged (1d6+2/×3, masterwork composite shortbow); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +3, Listen +4, Spot +4; Cleave^B, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Power Attack^B.

Language: Gnoll.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/5 per day; caster level 2nd; 10% arcane spell failure): 0—*detect magic*, *flare*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost* (+4 ranged touch), *touch of fatigue* (+7 melee touch; DC 12); 1st—*magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+4 ranged touch).

Possessions: +1 mithral shirt, masterwork battleaxe, masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +2, *potion of haste*, 2 *potions of endure elements*, *wand of sleep* (30 charges).

VAUJER GASHE

Vaujer considered it a blessing from Garagos when the Reavers attacked the caravan on which he rode. He immediately turned on the caravan crew and fought alongside the bandits, letting his battle rage do the talking for him. When it was all over, Tanushk let the cleric join the Reavers, and Vaujer has been the most enthusiastic member of the group ever since.

Vaujer: Male human barbarian 2/cleric 3 of Garagos; CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 2d12+2 plus 3d8+3; hp 29; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d8+3/19–20, +1 *longsword*); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+3/19–20, +1 *longsword*) and +5 melee (1d6+2, +1 *spiked heavy steel shield*); SA rage 1/day, rebuke undead 2/day (+1, 2d6+2, 3rd); SQ fast movement, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Concentration +6, Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +5, Spellcraft +3, Survival +6, Swim +0; Combat Casting, Improved Shield Bash, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Common, Dambrathan, Gnoll.

Rage (Ex): Once per day, Vaujer can enter a state of fierce rage that lasts for 6 rounds. The following changes are in effect as long as he rages: hp 39; AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+5/19–20, +1 *longsword*); Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+3/19–20, +1 *longsword*) and +7 melee (1d6+3, +1 *spiked heavy steel shield*); SV Fort +9, Will +8; Str 18, Con 17; Climb +6, Swim +2. At the end of his rage, Vaujer is fatigued for the duration of the encounter.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Vaujer retains his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class even when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen

foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Cleric Spells Prepared (caster level 3rd): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic*, *purify food and drink*; 1st—*bane* (DC 14), *cause fear* (DC 14), *cure light wounds*, *enlarge person*^D; 2nd—*bull's strength*^D, *cure moderate wounds*, *death knell* (DC 15).

D: Domain spell. Domains: Destruction (smite 1/day, +4 on attack, extra 3 damage); Strength (1/day gain +3 bonus to Str for 1 round).

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, +1 heavy steel shield with +1 shield spikes, +1 *longsword*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Human Reavers (7): Human warrior 2; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1/19–20, short sword) or +3 ranged (1d6/×3, shortbow); SA —; SQ —; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Heal +2, Jump +4, Listen +2, Spot +2, Survival +2, Swim +3; Alertness, Self-Sufficient.

Languages: Common, Dambrathan.

Possessions: Leather armor, heavy wooden shield, short sword, shortbow with 20 arrows.

Gnoll Reavers (5): CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk +3 melee (1d8+2/×3, battleaxe) or +1 ranged (1d6/×3, shortbow); SA —; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +3; Power Attack.

Language: Gnoll.

Possessions: Leather armor, heavy wooden shield, battleaxe, shortbow with 20 arrows.

When the gang is not out on a raid, they can usually be found in camp. Refer to the following descriptions for the members' locations. If the heroes attack the camp, leave, and return for a second assault later, half of the human and gnoll reavers lost in the previous battle have been replaced by new gnolls. The order of the characters given above is the order of command for the group, and the order of ascension to power should anyone higher up on the list be killed.

Tactics: When attacking a caravan, the Reavers are straightforward, hiding in a flanking position until the quarry arrives, then hitting their foes hard with magic and ranged attacks before charging. When pursued, the bandits use their winding trails (see area 1 below) to outflank enemies.

The camp

The Reavers' camp consists of a hidden hollow in a dense thicket of brambles, vines, underbrush, and such trees that create an effective screening barrier 30 to 40 feet high. The thicket is interspersed with twisting paths, many of which switch back and dead end. Only one path leads to the interior of the camp,

and it is no wider or more easily discernible than the false ones.

1. MEANDERING TRAILS

To ensure that pursuers cannot track the bandits too quickly, Tanushk has the gnolls and warriors walk the fake paths two or three times a week, leaving footprints and keeping the plants trampled and clear. Thus, only a DC 30 Survival check by someone with the Track feat reveals the differences between the real trail and the false ones.

2. CAMP ENTRANCE (EL 11)

The path empties into a small clearing with three very tall zalantar trees, each with a treehouse built in the midst of its eight trunks. Four crude huts are scattered about the clearing beneath the trees. In the center of the hollow, the bandits have set up a large, open fire pit for cooking.

When interlopers enter the encampment, the bandits likely have an ambush prepared. Vaujer, the gnolls, and the warriors hide behind the huts, the gnolls and warriors ready with ranged weapons and Vaujer with spells. Tanushk and Blackteeth attack from the treehouses with spells, ranged attacks, and magic items. Only after the bandits have exhausted their ranged attacks do they engage in melee combat. If things go badly for the Reavers, some slip out of the camp by means of the secret path (area 4, below)—Tanushk might just fly off.

3. HUT

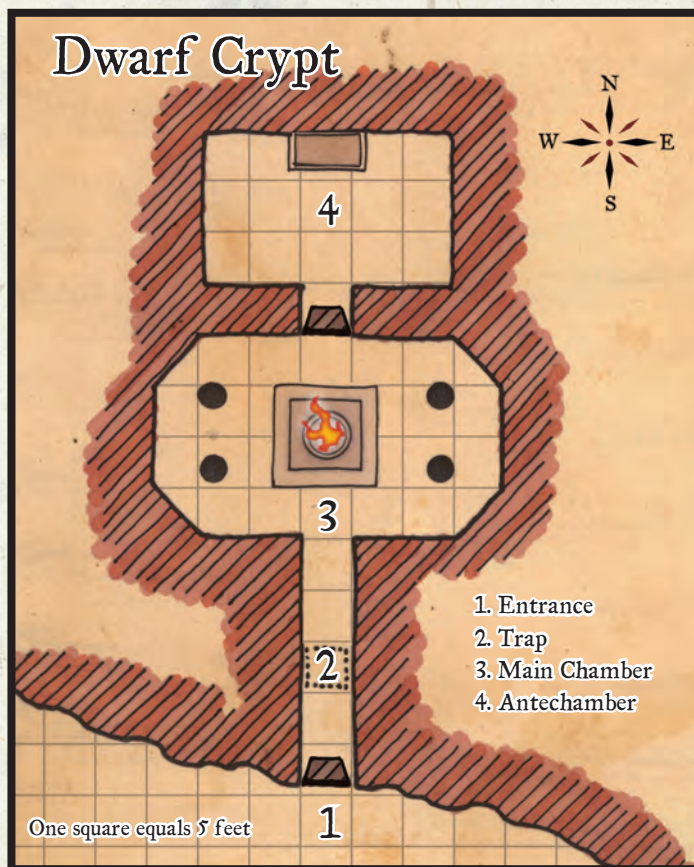
Each of these four huts is made of crudely hewn logs filled with mud. They are dank and smelly inside, with dirt floors and little furniture. The humans share two huts, while the gnolls get the other two. Hidden in shallow holes in the floor or tucked in chinks in the walls of each hut are 1d4 personal hoards, the shares of treasure belonging to the warriors and gnolls. Each of these collections can be found on a DC 15 Search check and consist of a 1st-level treasure as generated on Table 3–5: Treasure, page 52 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

4. ESCAPE ROUTE

At this point in the "wall" of brambles and underbrush, a Medium creature can squeeze through by crawling on hands and knees. The Reavers use this escape route if the fight in the camp begins to turn against them. Once through the escape route, they get out into the forest and use the foliage to hide and evade until pursuit lags behind.

5. TREEHOUSES

Each of the treehouses sits high in the branches of the zalantar tree in which it is built, 20 feet off the ground. The main construction is a flat, octagonal platform with a half wall on almost every side, and a flat roof overhead. A rope ladder leads to a hole in the middle the platform, allowing someone to climb into the treehouse and to pull the ladder up afterward. Rope bridges connect the three treehouses, and there are no half walls where they attach.



dwarf crypt

This long-forgotten and tightly sealed tomb of a gold dwarf aristocrat is a prime example of the exquisite craftsmanship and superior efforts taken by that race to honor their dead. It has remained undisturbed for untold centuries, well hidden by both skilled stonework and abjuration magic. The heroes might be the first living creatures to enter the hallowed chambers in almost a millennium.

This tomb is designed to be used practically anywhere. In the Great Rift, it could be placed in an out-of-the-way area, perhaps as part of an entire clan's sacred burial vaults. Alternatively, it could be located in any remote spot in any of the mountain ranges in the Shining South. Maybe miners, who abandoned a petering vein shortly after burying their comrade, built it. Conceivably it was covered by a rockslide, and recent tectonic activity has exposed it again. Whatever reasons for the tomb's past lack of discovery, it has spent its existence as a secret, undisturbed by graverobbers.

The crypt

The crypt was cut out of solid stone, a site of seamless granite divined at the time of construction. The dwarves wanted to be able to use a single piece of rock, rather than simply dig into a segmented section and have to shore it up with supports. The angles and measurements of every face, corner, and column are nearly perfect—any flaws, if some exist, cannot be seen with the naked

eye. No additional stone was quarried elsewhere and brought into this crypt. Dwarven craftsmen who built the tomb simply cut away what didn't belong and left everything else. Thus, the columns, the dais, and the ceremonial offering bowl in the main chamber, as well as the actual sarcophagus, were not placed there, but "revealed" as everything around them was removed. In this way, the gold dwarves who built the crypt believed they were honoring the stone in which they intended to lay their companion to rest.

1. ENTRY TUNNEL

This passage has been bored into the rock face so precisely that the plug that fills it is the same stone that was removed to create the passage in the first place. The plug weighs more than 10 tons and fits so tightly in the passage that the seal is airtight—it can only be found with a DC 30 Search check. Laid upon the stone is a permanent *nondetection* spell.

The tunnel beyond the plug is only 5 feet wide and 5 feet high for its entire length, tall enough to accommodate dwarven stonemasons. The walls are perfectly smooth and unadorned by any carvings or other decorations. The dwarves who tunneled out the burial chamber almost certainly used magical means to replace the plug and seal the tomb.

2. STONE TRAP (EL 8)

At this point in the passage, a stone trap spell has been set to hold up a large (5 feet by 5 feet, 6 inches thick, weighing 2,100 pounds) panel of granite right against the ceiling. Since the panel is made invisible by the spell, it cannot be seen, but it hangs down 6 inches below the top of the tunnel, allowing someone to strike a forehead on it before actually passing underneath. The spell triggers when any living creature passes beneath the panel, causing it to fall.

Stone Trap: CR 8; spell; spell trigger (stone trap); no reset; spell effect (*stone trap*, 13th-level cleric); Atk +13 melee (10d6); Search DC 16 (half normal due to poor placement of the stone); Disable Device DC 32.

3. MAIN CHAMBER

The entry passage ends at a second plug of stone after 25 feet. This plug is not very thick and only weighs 500 pounds. It can be moved aside only by shoving it into the room beyond, which requires a DC 15 Strength check. Once the passage is cleared, the tunnel opens into a well-lit room. Read the following aloud to the players:

This chamber glows brightly from the fire burning in what appears to be a large stone bowl sitting atop a dais in the middle of the room. Two steps high, the dais is

apparently cut from the same stone as the entry tunnel and its two plugs. Around the dais are carved intricate runes and patterns.

The chamber is about twice as wide as it is deep, with a ceiling approximately ten feet overhead. Four stone columns stand near the four corners, which are tapered rather than square. Every surface of every wall has been carved in runes—long passages of text, interspersed with superbly rendered portraits of dwarven faces.

Along the back wall, opposite of the entrance, is yet another stone plug.

The flames burning in the bowl in the center of the room are actually four adjacent *continual flame* spells, arranged to appear like one larger fire. The text running along the walls and around the dais is carved in Dwarven with Dethek runes. Around the dais are engraved prayers to Dumathoin for the protection of the interred dwarf. The passages on the walls include a history and genealogical lineage of the deceased, describing his exploits, as well as those of his father, brothers, uncles, and cousins. Each individual has a portrait, a set of guardians to watch over their honored kin.

The curious can glean some information from the runes carved into the walls of the chamber. The

dwarf buried in this tomb was named Rindorn Starhelm. He served as a defender of the Great Rift, but he was on a mission away from home when he was killed by mountain trolls (and refused the call of his cousin's *resurrection* spell). His cousin (a cleric of

Dumathoin), two brothers, and two friends spent three months carving out this set of chambers before burying Rindorn here.

The third stone plug is as large and heavy as the first, completely filling the 5-foot-long passage beyond.

4. CRYPT (EL 9)

Before the heroes can get a decent look at the room, a mantimera zombie attacks them. A mantimera was killed, brought here, and animated by the Rindorn's cousin. The gruesome creature is the room's only guardian.

Mantimera Zombie: CR 6; Large undead; HD 18d12+3; hp 116; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (clumsy); AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +9; Grp +18; Atk +13 melee (2d6+5, bite); Full Atk +13 melee (2d6+5, bite), +13 melee (1d8+5, bite), +13 melee (1d8+5, gore), and +8 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA —; SQ single actions only; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 21, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 10; Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: None; Toughness.



Guardian of the crypt of Rindorn Starhelm

Illustration by Ralph Horsley

Single Actions Only (Ex): Zombies have poor reflexes and can perform only a single move action or attack action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round, but only if it attempts a charge.

Once the mantimera zombie has been dealt with, the characters can examine the chamber. It is almost completely featureless, with seamless walls and a ceiling only 7 feet tall. Set against the far wall of the chamber is a large sarcophagus.

Carved directly from the rock, the coffin was simply cut off at the top and hollowed out, Rindorn's body was placed inside and a *make whole* spell was used to fuse the top back together with the base. It is engraved with glittering runic patterns, and the lid has been carved with an image of the dead dwarf inside, along with his name and a blessing. Any who would see the inside of the sarcophagus must devise a way to get inside through 1 foot of solid stone on all sides (hardness 8, 180 hp, break DC 45). Unfortunately, the runic patterns on the stone casket contain a trap, triggered when the sarcophagus is touched.

Blade Barrier Trap: CR 7; magic device; touch trigger (alarm); automatic reset; spell effect (*blade barrier*, 13th-level cleric, 13d6 slashing, Reflex DC 19 half); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

Treasure: Interred with Rindorn are his +1 *anchoring full plate of comfort*, a +1 *heavy steel shield*, a masterwork dwarven waraxe, and a single red tear gem (900 gp).

Tomb robbers (EL 10)

When the heroes finally emerge from the crypt with the treasures of Rindorn's sarcophagus, read or paraphrase the following text:

Exiting the crypt, you see six beady-eyed bugbears grasping morningstars. They stand in a semicircle outside the crypt entrance, their faces twisted into sneers. A gruff voice from some unseen source calls out to you. "You have violated the crypt of Rindorn Starhelm. Well done. His treasures, if you please."

A sly gold dwarf treasure-hunter named Vurak Shadowshield has come to rob the PCs of their hard-earned treasure. Vurak works for the church of Abbathor. With the aid of some divination spells, Vurak has located the crypt and ascertained the easiest means of acquiring the treasures within (robbing another group of tomb robbers). Vurak stands 10 feet behind the line of bugbears and has cast *invisibility*, *mage armor*, *shield*, *bear's endurance*, and *stoneskin* (from a scroll) on himself. He uses a *ventriloquism* spell to throw his voice, making it difficult for PCs without see invisibility spells to pinpoint his location. He has also cast *magic weapon* on his club and *bull's strength* on the 21-hp bugbear. During the first round of combat, he casts *haste* on himself and the bugbears.

Of the items in Rindorn's sarcophagus, Vurak is most interested in the masterwork dwarven waraxe. It doubles as a key that unlocks a sealed vault built by the Starhelm clan deep in the Great Rift. The Starhelms and Shadowshields are rivals, and Vurak seeks to loot the secret Starhelm trove. Ironically, the greedy dwarf is less interested in Rindorn's magic items. If the PCs stubbornly cling

to their hard-earned treasures, Vurak tries to bargain for the masterwork waraxe, claiming it belongs to his clan.

Vurak employs six surly bugbear mercenaries called the Rift-reavers. If four of them fall in battle, Vurak flees via *dimension door*. However, he doesn't go far; rather, he shadows the PCs as best he can until an opportunity arises to snatch Rindorn's axe.

Vurak appears as a broad-shouldered dwarf of typical height draped in heavy robes. His toad familiar perished on a recent expedition, and Vurak hasn't replaced it.

Vurak Shadowshield: Male gold dwarf transmuter 9; CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 9d4+36 plus 3; hp 60 (78 with *bear's endurance*); Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 20 (includes *mage armor* and shield); Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, +1 club) or +5 ranged; SA spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., gold dwarf traits, summon familiar; AL LE; SV Fort +8* (+10 against poison) with *bear's endurance*, Ref +4*, Will +6*; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 18 (22 with *bear's endurance*), Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +10 (+12 with *bear's endurance*), Craft (stonemasonry) +8, Decipher Script +8, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (history) +8, Search +4 (unusual stonework, secret doors, or secret compartments), Spellcraft +10, Survival +2 (while underground); Brew Potion^B, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll^B, Toughness, Spell Mastery (*baste*, *knock*), Spell Mastery (*mage armor*, *shield*).

Languages: Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Undercommon.

Gold Dwarf Traits: Gold dwarves have stonemasonry, which grants them a +2 racial bonus on Search checks to notice unusual stonework. A gold dwarf who merely comes within 10 feet of it can make a Search check as if actively searching.

When standing on the ground, a gold dwarf is exceptionally stable and has a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped. Gold dwarves have a +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against aberrations and a +4 racial bonus to Armor Class against giants.

*Gold dwarves have a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.

Wizard (Transmuter) Spells Prepared (caster level 9th; prohibited schools enchantment and necromancy): 0—*acid splash* (+5 ranged touch), *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *read magic*; 1st—*expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*, *magic weapon*, *shield*, *summon monster I*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow* (+5 ranged touch), *misdirection*, *summon monster II*; 3rd—*baste*, *rockburst** (DC 15), *slow*, *summon monster III*; 4th—*dimension door*, *stone shape*.

Spellbook: As above plus 0—all; 1st—*arcane sensitivity**, *feather fall*, *jump*; 2nd—*cat's grace*, *spider climb*; 3rd—*brittle skin**, *dispel magic*, *fly*; 4th—*polymorph*, *stoneskin*.

*New spell described in Chapter 3 of this book.

Possessions: *Ring of protection* +2, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of fly*, scroll of *stoneskin*, scroll of *water breathing*, heavy robes, +1 club (club with *magic weapon* spell cast on it), spellbook, pouch of diamond dust (250 gp; material component for *stoneskin* spell).

Bugbears (6): hp 21, 19, 17, 16, 16, 13; see page 29 of the *Monster Manual*.



WEMIC CAMP

The Shining South is filled with information for players and Dungeon Masters whose campaigns feature adventures in the south of Faerûn—particularly in Dambrath, Estagund, the Shining Lands, the Shaar, the Great Rift, Halruaa, Luiren, and the Border Kingdoms. These exotic and mysterious lands are ripe with adventuring possibilities, and their cultures are rich and deep.

You need not set an entire campaign in the Shining South to make use of this product. Characters can travel the length and breadth of Faerûn via *portal* networks and more conventional means, and adventures can take characters to multiple locations before resolution.

Wemic Camp is an adventure site that can be dropped into any adventure that takes place within the vast expanse of the Shaar. Taking on the entire camp is a serious challenge (at least CR 12), and each of the wemic leaders constitutes a CR 6 or 7 encounter. As always, feel free to adapt the material presented here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

preparation

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks—the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*—as

well as *The Shining South*—to use this adventure site. This information presented here utilizes the D&D v.3.5 rules.

To get started, print out the adventure site, including the map. Read through it at least once to familiarize yourself with the situation, site, and major NPCs (particularly their motivations). You must decide what kind of action takes place—whether the PCs simply stumble upon the wemics' campsite or have a reason to visit.

Finally, review the information on wemics in *Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn* and *Races of Faerûn*. Monster and NPC statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form.

Background

The wemic pride known as the Golden Mane roams throughout the plains of the Shaar, but its movements are far from random. The pride has established several campsites that it can use in rotation during its travels. It shares some of these sites with other wemic prides that move on a different schedule and occasionally with a *loxo* herd as well.

The Golden Mane Pride stays in each of its campsites for periods varying from a week to two months, depending upon the prevalence of game in the area. Upon moving into a site, the shaman reads the

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signs left by the last occupants—most of which detail new dangers or competing predators in the area, as well as the movements and relative abundance of game. The females and young clear the site of any debris that has collected during its vacancy, while the males scout the surrounding area.

Upon leaving a site, the shaman leaves offerings for Nobanion, plus signs to inform the next pride of the conditions encountered. The males police the site, taking care to leave no signs of the direction they have taken that enemies could follow.

The campsite

This campsite is on the open plain in an area blanketed with tall grasses. Low brambles and occasional hardy but twisted trees dot the landscape as well. A few creeks crisscross the area, and water holes here and there provide enough water to support the herd animals and predators of the plains.

The campsite is approximately 160 feet long by 110 feet wide. It is bounded by three rocky outcroppings, each 15–20 feet high (Climb DC 12) and a thorn barrier that connects them. Some of the pride's males stand guard at night atop these rocks, which offer an excellent view of the surrounding grasslands. The remainder patrol the perimeter of the camp, just outside the thorn barrier.

The barrier was grown by one of the pride's shamans some years ago, and the shamans of the prides that use the area still tend it lovingly. It stands approximately 10 feet high and is about 10 feet wide in most places. The barrier functions like heavy undergrowth (see page 87 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), except that thorns tear at anyone trying to pass through it. For every 5 feet so moved, the barrier makes a melee attack (attack bonus +3 melee) and deals 1d4 points of damage on a successful hit.

Inside the barrier is a watering hole about 15 feet in diameter and 8 feet deep at the center. The wemics use it to drink and bathe, and they sometimes scoop water from it to clean the blood from their weapons.

Nine scraggly trees provide some shade during daylight hours. Six of them surround the watering hole, and the rest are near the perimeter of the campsite. The trees range from 30 to 40 feet high and are deciduous.

The wemics sleep on mats of woven grass placed on the ground. A wemic sleeping on one of these mats (or on the ground) has total concealment unless the viewer is taller (or up higher) than the surrounding grass, which stands about 7 feet high.

The wemics usually enter and exit the camp via the rocky outcroppings, jumping up on top of them and then down again, rather than pushing their way through the brambles. At times, however, they find it more convenient to simply jump the thorny barrier. A female bringing back a kill usually either leaves it outside the camp for others to feed on, or places it in Wrokeen's *Heward's handy haversack* so that she can bring it into camp easily.

The pride

The Golden Mane Pride currently consists of four adult males, ten adult females, and five noncombatant cubs. The leader is Shaq'ar, the strongest male in the group. His mate, Wrokeen, is the lead hunter, and Kretnor is the shaman of the pride. Shaq'ar's rival for leadership is Beren, a wemic with dark powers that most of his kind do not even suspect.

➤ **Shaq'ar:** Male wemic barbarian 4; CR 7; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 5d8+10 plus 4d12+8; hp 66; Init +2; Spd 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +9; Grp +20; Atk +17 melee (2d8+12, +2 *greatclub*) or +11 ranged (2d6+5/[TS]3, +1 *composite longbow* [+4 Str bonus]); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (2d8+12, +2 *greatclub*) and +10 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws) or +11/+6 ranged (2d6+5/[TS]3, +1 *composite longbow* [+4 Str bonus]); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA rage 2/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, illiteracy, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 24, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Hide +4, Intimidate +5, Jump +21, Listen +10, Move Silently +7, Spot +6, Survival +8, Alertness, Leadership, Spirited Charge, Stealthy.

Rage (Ex): Twice a day, Shaq'ar can enter a state of fierce rage that lasts for 7 rounds. The following changes are in effect as long as he rages: hp 84; AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; Grp +22; Atk +19 melee (2d8+15, +2 *greatclub*) or +11 ranged 2d6+5/[TS]3, +1 *composite longbow* [+4 Str bonus]; Full Atk +19/+14 melee (2d8+12, +2 *greatclub*) and +12 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws) or +11/+6 ranged 2d6+5/[TS]3, +1 *composite longbow* [+4 Str bonus]; SV Fort +9, Will +7; Str 27, Con 19; Climb +12, Jump +23. At the end of his rage, Shaq'ar is fatigued for the duration of the encounter.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Shaq'ar retains his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class even when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Possessions: +2 *silent moves* *hide armor*, +2 *greatclub*, +1 *composite longbow* (+4 Str bonus), *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *potion of bull's strength*, gold pectoral (worth 750 gp).

Description: Shaq'ar has a fabulous russet mane with gold streaks, and his face and chest sport several battle scars. He wears an elaborate pectoral of beaten gold and dragon teeth, which he fashioned to show off his trophies from a fight with a blue dragon in the company of some adventurers. He still uses a composite longbow that he carried during that battle, despite the fact that his abilities have advanced beyond its limitations.

As a leader, Shaq'ar tries to be fair but authoritative. He won his position within the pride from his uncle in fair combat when the latter became too old to lead. Wrokeen is Shaq'ar's designated mate and true love, and she often advises him on local conditions and appropriate movements. Smarter than the average wemic, Shaq'ar realized early that the younger male known as Beren had a black heart and constituted a threat to the pride, so he encouraged the youngster to go adventuring. Since his return, Beren has been too secretive for Shaq'ar's liking, and the leader watches him closely.

➤ **Wrokeen:** Female wemic barbarian 2/ranger 2; CR 7; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 7d8 plus 2d12; hp 44; Init +4; Spd 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +9; Grp +19; Atk +16 melee (2d6+11/[TS]3, +2 *battleaxe*) or +15 ranged (2d6+8/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+6 Str bonus]); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (2d6+11/[TS]3, +2 *battleaxe*) and +9 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws) or +15/+9 ranged (2d6+8/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+6 Str bonus]); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA rage 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, favored enemy animals +2, uncanny dodge, wild empathy +3; AL NG; SV Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +6; Str 22, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Jump +21, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Spot +8, Survival +10; Alertness, Nomadic Trekker*, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track, Trample.

*New feat described in *The Shining South*.

Favored Enemy (Ex): Wrokeen gains a +2 bonus on her Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against animals. She gains the same bonus on weapon damage.

Rage (Ex): Once per day, Wrokeen can enter a state of fierce rage that lasts for 5 rounds. The following changes are in effect as

Example Wemic Camp



long as she rages: hp 62; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Grp +21; Atk +18 melee (2d6+14/[TS]3, +2 *battleaxe*) or +15 ranged (2d6+8/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+6 Str bonus]); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (2d6+14/[TS]3, +2 *battleaxe*) and +11 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws) or +15/+9 ranged (2d6+8/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+6 Str bonus]); SV Fort +9, Will +8; Str 26, Con 14; Jump +23. At the end of her rage, Wrokeen is fatigued for the duration of the encounter.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Wrokeen retains her Dexterity bonus to Armor Class even when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (she still loses her Dexterity bonus/penalty if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Possessions: *Amulet of natural armor* +1, +2 *battleaxe*, +2 *composite longbow* (+6 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *lesser bracers of archery* (composite longbow), *Heward's handy haversack*, 3 *potions of cure light wounds*, 10 gp.

Description: The acknowledged mother of the pride, Wrokeen enjoys her position as lead hunter for the group and Shaq'ar's favored mate. She has borne Shaq'ar seven cubs, four of which are still with the pride today. The most recent cub is still below the age of maturity, so she spends some of her time caring for him. When she hunts, however, she leaves the cub in the care of one of her own daughters.

Wrokeen has long, dark hair that she keeps tied back with a simple leather thong. Her face is considered lovely and exotic by humans, largely because of her elegant features and catlike green eyes. She is the fastest member of the pride, and her skill with the bow is already legendary.

It is Wrokeen who always acts as the scout for the pride, tracking food animals and potential enemies, seeking out fresh sources of water, and blazing new trails for the pride's annual movements. Her talent for reading the signs of nature keeps the pride well informed about potential adverse weather, recent battles between creatures of the plains, and new threats to the territory.

➤ **Kretnor:** Female wemic druid 4 of Nobanion; CR 7; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 9d8+18; hp 58; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Grp +16; Atk +12 melee (1d8+7, +1 *club*) or +9 ranged (1d6, masterwork sling); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+7, +1 *club*) and +6 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws) or +9/+4 ranged (1d6, masterwork sling); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ animal companion (hawk), animal companion benefits, darkvision 60 ft., nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, woodland stride; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +8, Handle Animal +7, Heal +9, Hide +2, Jump +15, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Ride +3, Spot +7, Survival +7, Alertness, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Stealthy.

Animal Companion (Ex): The companion's abilities and characteristics are summarized below. Kretnor and Silvin enjoy the link and share spells special qualities.

Silvin: Male hawk companion; CR —; Tiny animal; HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +8; Spd 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +2; Grp —8; Atk or Full Atk +8 melee (1d4–2, talons); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SQ evasion, low-light vision, tricks (attack, come, defend, down, guard, heel, seek, stay); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 7, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +12, Listen +4, Spot +14; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Animal Companion Benefits (Ex): Kretnor has a hawk named Silvin as an animal companion (see *Monster Manual*, page 273). Kretnor and Silvin enjoy the link and share spells special qualities.

Link (Ex): Kretnor can handle Silvin as a free action. She also gains a +4 circumstance bonus on all wild empathy checks and Handle Animal checks made regarding her hawk.

Share Spells (Ex): Kretnor may have any spell she casts on herself also affect her animal companion if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. She may also cast a spell with a target of "You" on her animal companion.

Resist Nature's Lure (Ex): Kretnor gains a +4 bonus on saving throws against the spell-like abilities of fey.

Trackless Step (Ex): Kretnor leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

Woodland Stride (Ex): Kretnor may move through natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain at her normal speed and without damage or other impairment. However, thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that are magically manipulated to impede motion still affect her.

Druid Spells Prepared (caster level 4th): 0—*create water*, *cure minor wounds*, *know direction*, *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *goodberry*, *speak with animals*; 2nd—*barkskin*, *delay poison*, *hold animal* (DC 15).

Possessions: *Bracers of armor* +2, +1 *club*, masterwork sling with 10 stones, *ioun stone* (clear spindle), *Keoghtom's ointment*, *ring of animal friendship*, *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of hide from animals*.

Description: Kretnor is a red-haired beauty with tattoos of various beasts on her face and arms. She has produced three cubs for the pride, all male, and all now living with prides of their own. Beren has been actively courting her for some time, and she is flattered by his attention, but she senses something dark about him and has thus far resisted his advances.

Kretnor is a dedicated follower of Nobanion. As shaman for the pride, she keeps the worship of Nobanion alive and vital, ensuring proper sacrifices and observation of his holy days.

As the tribe's only healer, Kretnor spends much of her time making healing potions and unguents. She sometimes participates in territorial battles, but Shaq'ar prefers to hold her in reserve so that she can heal the rest of the combatants. Kretnor chafes somewhat under such restrictions because she feels that she can more than hold her own in combat. Thus, after she provides the required post-battle healing, she often disappears for a few days to hunt alone. When she returns, she invariably has a sizable kill—often some dangerous creature.

Despite Kretnor's misgivings, she is appreciated by the rest of the pride for her varied talents as well as her combat ability. She serves as spiritual advisor to the pride as a whole, and to Shaq'ar in particular. Kretnor looks forward to the day when she will be able to assume the forms of animals, but for now she relies on her hawk companion Silvin for reconnaissance information about the surrounding area.

➤ **Beren:** Male wemic rogue 2/sorcerer 1; CR 6; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 5d8+5 plus 2d6+2 plus 1d4+1; hp 39; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +15; Atk +11 melee (1d8+8/19–20, +1 *short sword*) or +11 melee (1d6+6/19–20, *dagger of venom*) or +9 ranged (2d6+1/19–20, +1 *heavy crossbow*); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+8/19–20, +1 *short sword*) and +5 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws) or +11/+6 melee (1d6+6/19–20, *dagger of venom*) and +5 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws) or +9 ranged (2d6+1/19–20, +1 *heavy crossbow*); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, familiar (snake), familiar benefits (Alertness, empathic link, share spells), trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +4, Concentration +5, Escape Artist +7, Hide +8, Jump +16, Listen +8, Move Silently +15, Search +6, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +7, Spot +8, Survival +4, Alertness*, Combat Casting, Dodge, Stealthy.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Beren deals 1d6 extra points of damage on any successful attack against flat-footed or flanked targets, or against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up

to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sneak attacks. Beren may choose to deliver nonlethal damage with his sneak attack, but only when using a weapon designed for that purpose, such as a sap (blackjack).

Evasion (Ex): If Beren is exposed to any effect that normally allows him to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, he takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Familiar: Beren's familiar is a snake named Slick. The familiar uses the better of its own and Beren's base save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

Slick: Male snake familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD 8d8; hp 19; Init +3; Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp -5; Atk or Full Atk +11 melee (1-3 plus poison, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA poison; SQ improved evasion, low-light vision, scent; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +10, Will +7; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +9, Concentration +4, Escape Artist +7, Hide +22, Jump +0, Listen +11, Move Silently +13, Search +2, Sense Motive +5, Spot +11, Swim +9; Weapon Finesse.

Poison (Ex): Injury; Fort DC 10; initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con.

Improved Evasion (Ex): If Slick is exposed to any effect that normally allows him to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, he takes no damage with a successful saving throw and half damage if the saving throw fails.

Familiar Benefits: Beren gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants him a +3 bonus on Bluff checks (included in the above statistics).

Alertness (Ex): *Slick grants his master Alertness as long as he is within 5 feet.

Empathic Link (Su): Beren can communicate telepathically with his familiar at a distance of up to 1 mile. The master has the same connection to an item or a place that the familiar does.

Share Spells (Su): Beren may have any spell he casts on himself also affect his familiar if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. He may also cast a spell a target of "You" on his familiar.

Trapfinding (Ex): Beren can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC of 20 or higher. He can use the Search skill to find, and the Disable Device skill to disarm, magic traps (DC 25 + the level of the spell used to create it). If his Disable Device result exceeds the trap's DC by 10 or more, he discovers how to bypass the trap without triggering or disarming it.

Sorcerer Spells Known (caster level 1st): 0—*detect magic, mage hand, read magic, touch of fatigue* (+10 melee touch, DC 11); 1st—*charm person* (DC 12), *true strike*.

Possessions: *Bracers of armor* +2, *wand of magic missile* (1st), +1 *short sword, dagger of venom*, +1 *heavy crossbow* with 10 bolts, *dust of disappearance*.

Description: Beren has always known he was different from other wemics. Born with the shadow of evil upon his soul, he has always been greedy and cruel, though he has learned to hide such feelings well and mouth the platitudes that his fellow wemics wish to hear.

Concerned about Beren's unhelpful attitude, Shaq'ar encouraged him to go forth from the pride and find adventure in his youth, and he did so. Beren ventured closer to human civilizations than most of his kind do, and he was quickly adopted by an avaricious adventuring group. From this association, he learned the ways of thievery, and he made an excellent thug on the streets of outlying cities. He also discovered the spark of magic within himself and decided to develop it as best he could.

When he returned to the pride after a particularly unprofitable season in the city, Beren hid his magical abilities as well as his roguish skills, knowing that neither fit the pride's barbarian image. Since then, he has used his sneak attack ability liberally in battle, though he always tells his fellow wemics that his blow was "a piece of good luck."

For some time now, Beren has nursed a secret desire to take over the pride. He plots and schemes constantly against Shaq'ar, planning to weaken him in subtle ways while undermining his credibility within the pride. Beren has also sought alliances outside the pride—with both rival leaders who would like to meld the Golden Mane with their own prides, and with thri-kreen, loxo, and even Sharryan humans who covet the pride's territory.

Beren appears as a golden-furred wemic with a midnight-black mane and a cruel glint in his yellow eyes. Thin and lithe, he lacks the musculature of most males, but his magic and rogue abilities make him just as deadly in combat.

A Typical Day in camp

While the Golden Mane Pride is in residence here, the males guard the perimeter by night and drive off intruders while the females and cubs sleep. During the day, the males sleep while some of the females hunt and others keep an eye on the camp, and the cubs romp and learn to use weapons. The elder members of the tribe who are not as fast as they once were make themselves useful by fashioning and repairing weapons and shields, caring for the young, and making tools, sleeping mats, shelters, and medicines for the pride.

During inclement weather, those wemics not on guard duty often take shelter under half-tents—tanned hides supported at one end by poles. The wemics rarely use fire because they prefer their meat raw and understand the dangers that fire can present in the grasslands.

The females travel considerable distances to track herds of food animals. Wrokeen often uses her *Heward's handy haversack* to bring back single kills. She also does her best to drive the herds closer to the wemic camp, so that other females need not carry their kills so far.

Adventure options

The PCs could visit the wemic camp for many reasons. As DM, you know best how to work a particular site into your storyline, but you can use the ideas below as inspiration.

- The PCs happen upon the camp while traversing the Shaar.
- The characters encounter Wrokeen hunting herd animals in the plains or charting a new course for the pride's fall migration. They may accidentally interfere with her efforts, or aid her in some way. If she learns from the PCs that some new threat hangs over the Shaar, she may take the characters back to the pride to discuss the issue with Shaq'ar.
- Shaq'ar is concerned about a band of thri-kreen that has been hunting outside its normal territory of late. A few skirmishes have already taken place, but Shaq'ar is considering taking a few of the males from the pride and seeking out the renegade thri-kreen. At present, he is considering whether to involve the local loxo herd, but the presence of adventurers may convince him to seek their aid instead.

- Beren is about to make a bid for power. For some time, he has been using his spells to degrade the leader's authority within the pride while slipping plant-based poison that deals Strength damage into his food. When Shaq'ar is sufficiently weak, Beren plans to challenge him to combat, using his spells to enhance his own abilities and his *dagger of venom* to ensure the leader's death. The PCs arrive just as the combat is starting.

About the Author

Penny Williams joined the roleplaying game industry as Game Questions Expert for TSR, Inc. in the 1980s. Since then, she has served as RPGA network coordinator, *Polyhedron Newszine* editor, and senior editor and coordinating editor for the RPG R&D Department at Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Now a busy freelancer, Penny edits for several game companies and runs the online playtesting program for Wizards products. When not enhancing the cruelty of designers' creations, Penny puts up jam, works jigsaw puzzles, and tutors students in math and science.

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WEMIC CAMP

The Shining South is filled with information for players and Dungeon Masters whose campaigns feature adventures in the south of Faerûn—particularly in Dambrath, Estagund, the Shining Lands, the Shaar, the Great Rift, Halruaa, Luiren, and the Border Kingdoms. These exotic and mysterious lands are ripe with adventuring possibilities, and their cultures are rich and deep.

You need not set an entire campaign in the Shining South to make use of this product. Characters can travel the length and breadth of Faerûn via *portal* networks and more conventional means, and adventures can take characters to multiple locations before resolution.

Wemic Camp is an adventure site that can be dropped into any adventure that takes place within the vast expanse of the Shaar. Taking on the entire camp is a serious challenge (at least CR 12), and each of the wemic leaders constitutes a CR 6 or 7 encounter. As always, feel free to adapt the material presented here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

preparation

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks—the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*—as

well as *The Shining South*—to use this adventure site. This information presented here utilizes the D&D v.3.5 rules.

To get started, print out the adventure site, including the map. Read through it at least once to familiarize yourself with the situation, site, and major NPCs (particularly their motivations). You must decide what kind of action takes place—whether the PCs simply stumble upon the wemics' campsite or have a reason to visit.

Finally, review the information on wemics in *Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn* and *Races of Faerûn*. Monster and NPC statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form.

Background

The wemic pride known as the Golden Mane roams throughout the plains of the Shaar, but its movements are far from random. The pride has established several campsites that it can use in rotation during its travels. It shares some of these sites with other wemic prides that move on a different schedule and occasionally with a *loxo* herd as well.

The Golden Mane Pride stays in each of its campsites for periods varying from a week to two months, depending upon the prevalence of game in the area. Upon moving into a site, the shaman reads the

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signs left by the last occupants—most of which detail new dangers or competing predators in the area, as well as the movements and relative abundance of game. The females and young clear the site of any debris that has collected during its vacancy, while the males scout the surrounding area.

Upon leaving a site, the shaman leaves offerings for Nobanion, plus signs to inform the next pride of the conditions encountered. The males police the site, taking care to leave no signs of the direction they have taken that enemies could follow.

The campsite

This campsite is on the open plain in an area blanketed with tall grasses. Low brambles and occasional hardy but twisted trees dot the landscape as well. A few creeks crisscross the area, and water holes here and there provide enough water to support the herd animals and predators of the plains.

The campsite is approximately 160 feet long by 110 feet wide. It is bounded by three rocky outcroppings, each 15–20 feet high (Climb DC 12) and a thorn barrier that connects them. Some of the pride's males stand guard at night atop these rocks, which offer an excellent view of the surrounding grasslands. The remainder patrol the perimeter of the camp, just outside the thorn barrier.

The barrier was grown by one of the pride's shamans some years ago, and the shamans of the prides that use the area still tend it lovingly. It stands approximately 10 feet high and is about 10 feet wide in most places. The barrier functions like heavy undergrowth (see page 87 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), except that thorns tear at anyone trying to pass through it. For every 5 feet so moved, the barrier makes a melee attack (attack bonus +3 melee) and deals 1d4 points of damage on a successful hit.

Inside the barrier is a watering hole about 15 feet in diameter and 8 feet deep at the center. The wemics use it to drink and bathe, and they sometimes scoop water from it to clean the blood from their weapons.

Nine scraggly trees provide some shade during daylight hours. Six of them surround the watering hole, and the rest are near the perimeter of the campsite. The trees range from 30 to 40 feet high and are deciduous.

The wemics sleep on mats of woven grass placed on the ground. A wemic sleeping on one of these mats (or on the ground) has total concealment unless the viewer is taller (or up higher) than the surrounding grass, which stands about 7 feet high.

The wemics usually enter and exit the camp via the rocky outcroppings, jumping up on top of them and then down again, rather than pushing their way through the brambles. At times, however, they find it more convenient to simply jump the thorny barrier. A female bringing back a kill usually either leaves it outside the camp for others to feed on, or places it in Wrokeen's *Heward's handy haversack* so that she can bring it into camp easily.

The pride

The Golden Mane Pride currently consists of four adult males, ten adult females, and five noncombatant cubs. The leader is Shaq'ar, the strongest male in the group. His mate, Wrokeen, is the lead hunter, and Kretnor is the shaman of the pride. Shaq'ar's rival for leadership is Beren, a wemic with dark powers that most of his kind do not even suspect.

➤ **Shaq'ar:** Male wemic barbarian 4; CR 7; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 5d8+10 plus 4d12+8; hp 66; Init +2; Spd 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +9; Grp +20; Atk +17 melee (2d8+12, +2 *greatclub*) or +11 ranged (2d6+5/[TS]3, +1 *composite longbow* [+4 Str bonus]); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (2d8+12, +2 *greatclub*) and +10 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws) or +11/+6 ranged (2d6+5/[TS]3, +1 *composite longbow* [+4 Str bonus]); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA rage 2/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, illiteracy, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 24, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Hide +4, Intimidate +5, Jump +21, Listen +10, Move Silently +7, Spot +6, Survival +8, Alertness, Leadership, Spirited Charge, Stealthy.

Rage (Ex): Twice a day, Shaq'ar can enter a state of fierce rage that lasts for 7 rounds. The following changes are in effect as long as he rages: hp 84; AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; Grp +22; Atk +19 melee (2d8+15, +2 *greatclub*) or +11 ranged 2d6+5/[TS]3, +1 *composite longbow* [+4 Str bonus]; Full Atk +19/+14 melee (2d8+12, +2 *greatclub*) and +12 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws) or +11/+6 ranged 2d6+5/[TS]3, +1 *composite longbow* [+4 Str bonus]; SV Fort +9, Will +7; Str 27, Con 19; Climb +12, Jump +23. At the end of his rage, Shaq'ar is fatigued for the duration of the encounter.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Shaq'ar retains his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class even when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (he still loses his Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Possessions: +2 *silent moves hide armor*, +2 *greatclub*, +1 *composite longbow* (+4 Str bonus), *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *potion of bull's strength*, gold pectoral (worth 750 gp).

Description: Shaq'ar has a fabulous russet mane with gold streaks, and his face and chest sport several battle scars. He wears an elaborate pectoral of beaten gold and dragon teeth, which he fashioned to show off his trophies from a fight with a blue dragon in the company of some adventurers. He still uses a composite longbow that he carried during that battle, despite the fact that his abilities have advanced beyond its limitations.

As a leader, Shaq'ar tries to be fair but authoritative. He won his position within the pride from his uncle in fair combat when the latter became too old to lead. Wrokeen is Shaq'ar's designated mate and true love, and she often advises him on local conditions and appropriate movements. Smarter than the average wemic, Shaq'ar realized early that the younger male known as Beren had a black heart and constituted a threat to the pride, so he encouraged the youngster to go adventuring. Since his return, Beren has been too secretive for Shaq'ar's liking, and the leader watches him closely.

➤ **Wrokeen:** Female wemic barbarian 2/ranger 2; CR 7; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 7d8 plus 2d12; hp 44; Init +4; Spd 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +9; Grp +19; Atk +16 melee (2d6+11/[TS]3, +2 *battleaxe*) or +15 ranged (2d6+8/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+6 Str bonus]); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (2d6+11/[TS]3, +2 *battleaxe*) and +9 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws) or +15/+9 ranged (2d6+8/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+6 Str bonus]); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA rage 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, favored enemy animals +2, uncanny dodge, wild empathy +3; AL NG; SV Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +6; Str 22, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Jump +21, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Spot +8, Survival +10; Alertness, Nomadic Trekker*, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track, Trample.

*New feat described in *The Shining South*.

Favored Enemy (Ex): Wrokeen gains a +2 bonus on her Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against animals. She gains the same bonus on weapon damage.

Rage (Ex): Once per day, Wrokeen can enter a state of fierce rage that lasts for 5 rounds. The following changes are in effect as

Example Wemic Camp



long as she rages: hp 62; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Grp +21; Atk +18 melee (2d6+14/[TS]3, +2 *battleaxe*) or +15 ranged (2d6+8/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+6 Str bonus]); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (2d6+14/[TS]3, +2 *battleaxe*) and +11 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws) or +15/+9 ranged (2d6+8/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+6 Str bonus]); SV Fort +9, Will +8; Str 26, Con 14; Jump +23. At the end of her rage, Wrokeen is fatigued for the duration of the encounter.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Wrokeen retains her Dexterity bonus to Armor Class even when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (she still loses her Dexterity bonus/penalty if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Possessions: *Amulet of natural armor* +1, +2 *battleaxe*, +2 *composite longbow* (+6 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *lesser bracers of archery* (composite longbow), *Heward's handy haversack*, 3 *potions of cure light wounds*, 10 gp.

Description: The acknowledged mother of the pride, Wrokeen enjoys her position as lead hunter for the group and Shaq'ar's favored mate. She has borne Shaq'ar seven cubs, four of which are still with the pride today. The most recent cub is still below the age of maturity, so she spends some of her time caring for him. When she hunts, however, she leaves the cub in the care of one of her own daughters.

Wrokeen has long, dark hair that she keeps tied back with a simple leather thong. Her face is considered lovely and exotic by humans, largely because of her elegant features and catlike green eyes. She is the fastest member of the pride, and her skill with the bow is already legendary.

It is Wrokeen who always acts as the scout for the pride, tracking food animals and potential enemies, seeking out fresh sources of water, and blazing new trails for the pride's annual movements. Her talent for reading the signs of nature keeps the pride well informed about potential adverse weather, recent battles between creatures of the plains, and new threats to the territory.

➤ **Kretnor:** Female wemic druid 4 of Nobanion; CR 7; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 9d8+18; hp 58; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Grp +16; Atk +12 melee (1d8+7, +1 *club*) or +9 ranged (1d6, masterwork sling); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+7, +1 *club*) and +6 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws) or +9/+4 ranged (1d6, masterwork sling); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ animal companion (hawk), animal companion benefits, darkvision 60 ft., nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, woodland stride; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +8, Handle Animal +7, Heal +9, Hide +2, Jump +15, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Ride +3, Spot +7, Survival +7, Alertness, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Stealthy.

Animal Companion (Ex): The companion's abilities and characteristics are summarized below. Kretnor and Silvin enjoy the link and share spells special qualities.

Silvin: Male hawk companion; CR —; Tiny animal; HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +8; Spd 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +2; Grp —8; Atk or Full Atk +8 melee (1d4–2, talons); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SQ evasion, low-light vision, tricks (attack, come, defend, down, guard, heel, seek, stay); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 7, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +12, Listen +4, Spot +14; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Animal Companion Benefits (Ex): Kretnor has a hawk named Silvin as an animal companion (see *Monster Manual*, page 273). Kretnor and Silvin enjoy the link and share spells special qualities.

Link (Ex): Kretnor can handle Silvin as a free action. She also gains a +4 circumstance bonus on all wild empathy checks and Handle Animal checks made regarding her hawk.

Share Spells (Ex): Kretnor may have any spell she casts on herself also affect her animal companion if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. She may also cast a spell with a target of "You" on her animal companion.

Resist Nature's Lure (Ex): Kretnor gains a +4 bonus on saving throws against the spell-like abilities of fey.

Trackless Step (Ex): Kretnor leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

Woodland Stride (Ex): Kretnor may move through natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain at her normal speed and without damage or other impairment. However, thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that are magically manipulated to impede motion still affect her.

Druid Spells Prepared (caster level 4th): 0—*create water*, *cure minor wounds*, *know direction*, *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *goodberry*, *speak with animals*; 2nd—*barkskin*, *delay poison*, *hold animal* (DC 15).

Possessions: *Bracers of armor* +2, +1 *club*, masterwork sling with 10 stones, *ioun stone* (clear spindle), *Keoghtom's ointment*, *ring of animal friendship*, *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of hide from animals*.

Description: Kretnor is a red-haired beauty with tattoos of various beasts on her face and arms. She has produced three cubs for the pride, all male, and all now living with prides of their own. Beren has been actively courting her for some time, and she is flattered by his attention, but she senses something dark about him and has thus far resisted his advances.

Kretnor is a dedicated follower of Nobanion. As shaman for the pride, she keeps the worship of Nobanion alive and vital, ensuring proper sacrifices and observation of his holy days.

As the tribe's only healer, Kretnor spends much of her time making healing potions and unguents. She sometimes participates in territorial battles, but Shaq'ar prefers to hold her in reserve so that she can heal the rest of the combatants. Kretnor chafes somewhat under such restrictions because she feels that she can more than hold her own in combat. Thus, after she provides the required post-battle healing, she often disappears for a few days to hunt alone. When she returns, she invariably has a sizable kill—often some dangerous creature.

Despite Kretnor's misgivings, she is appreciated by the rest of the pride for her varied talents as well as her combat ability. She serves as spiritual advisor to the pride as a whole, and to Shaq'ar in particular. Kretnor looks forward to the day when she will be able to assume the forms of animals, but for now she relies on her hawk companion Silvin for reconnaissance information about the surrounding area.

➤ **Beren:** Male wemic rogue 2/sorcerer 1; CR 6; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 5d8+5 plus 2d6+2 plus 1d4+1; hp 39; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +15; Atk +11 melee (1d8+8/19–20, +1 *short sword*) or +11 melee (1d6+6/19–20, *dagger of venom*) or +9 ranged (2d6+1/19–20, +1 *heavy crossbow*); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+8/19–20, +1 *short sword*) and +5 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws) or +11/+6 melee (1d6+6/19–20, *dagger of venom*) and +5 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws) or +9 ranged (2d6+1/19–20, +1 *heavy crossbow*); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, familiar (snake), familiar benefits (Alertness, empathic link, share spells), trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +4, Concentration +5, Escape Artist +7, Hide +8, Jump +16, Listen +8, Move Silently +15, Search +6, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +7, Spot +8, Survival +4, Alertness*, Combat Casting, Dodge, Stealthy.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Beren deals 1d6 extra points of damage on any successful attack against flat-footed or flanked targets, or against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up

to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sneak attacks. Beren may choose to deliver nonlethal damage with his sneak attack, but only when using a weapon designed for that purpose, such as a sap (blackjack).

Evasion (Ex): If Beren is exposed to any effect that normally allows him to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, he takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Familiar: Beren's familiar is a snake named Slick. The familiar uses the better of its own and Beren's base save bonuses. The creature's abilities and characteristics are summarized below.

Slick: Male snake familiar; CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD 8d8; hp 19; Init +3; Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp -5; Atk or Full Atk +11 melee (1-3 plus poison, bite); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA poison; SQ improved evasion, low-light vision, scent; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +10, Will +7; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +9, Concentration +4, Escape Artist +7, Hide +22, Jump +0, Listen +11, Move Silently +13, Search +2, Sense Motive +5, Spot +11, Swim +9; Weapon Finesse.

Poison (Ex): Injury; Fort DC 10; initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con.

Improved Evasion (Ex): If Slick is exposed to any effect that normally allows him to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, he takes no damage with a successful saving throw and half damage if the saving throw fails.

Familiar Benefits: Beren gains special benefits from having a familiar. This creature grants him a +3 bonus on Bluff checks (included in the above statistics).

Alertness (Ex): *Slick grants his master Alertness as long as he is within 5 feet.

Empathic Link (Su): Beren can communicate telepathically with his familiar at a distance of up to 1 mile. The master has the same connection to an item or a place that the familiar does.

Share Spells (Su): Beren may have any spell he casts on himself also affect his familiar if the latter is within 5 feet at the time. He may also cast a spell a target of "You" on his familiar.

Trapfinding (Ex): Beren can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC of 20 or higher. He can use the Search skill to find, and the Disable Device skill to disarm, magic traps (DC 25 + the level of the spell used to create it). If his Disable Device result exceeds the trap's DC by 10 or more, he discovers how to bypass the trap without triggering or disarming it.

Sorcerer Spells Known (caster level 1st): 0—*detect magic, mage hand, read magic, touch of fatigue* (+10 melee touch, DC 11); 1st—*charm person* (DC 12), *true strike*.

Possessions: Bracers of armor +2, wand of magic missile (1st), +1 short sword, dagger of venom, +1 heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, dust of disappearance.

Description: Beren has always known he was different from other wemics. Born with the shadow of evil upon his soul, he has always been greedy and cruel, though he has learned to hide such feelings well and mouth the platitudes that his fellow wemics wish to hear.

Concerned about Beren's unhelpful attitude, Shaq'ar encouraged him to go forth from the pride and find adventure in his youth, and he did so. Beren ventured closer to human civilizations than most of his kind do, and he was quickly adopted by an avaricious adventuring group. From this association, he learned the ways of thievery, and he made an excellent thug on the streets of outlying cities. He also discovered the spark of magic within himself and decided to develop it as best he could.

When he returned to the pride after a particularly unprofitable season in the city, Beren hid his magical abilities as well as his roguish skills, knowing that neither fit the pride's barbarian image. Since then, he has used his sneak attack ability liberally in battle, though he always tells his fellow wemics that his blow was "a piece of good luck."

For some time now, Beren has nursed a secret desire to take over the pride. He plots and schemes constantly against Shaq'ar, planning to weaken him in subtle ways while undermining his credibility within the pride. Beren has also sought alliances outside the pride—with both rival leaders who would like to meld the Golden Mane with their own prides, and with thri-kreen, loxo, and even Sharryan humans who covet the pride's territory.

Beren appears as a golden-furred wemic with a midnight-black mane and a cruel glint in his yellow eyes. Thin and lithe, he lacks the musculature of most males, but his magic and rogue abilities make him just as deadly in combat.

A Typical Day in camp

While the Golden Mane Pride is in residence here, the males guard the perimeter by night and drive off intruders while the females and cubs sleep. During the day, the males sleep while some of the females hunt and others keep an eye on the camp, and the cubs romp and learn to use weapons. The elder members of the tribe who are not as fast as they once were make themselves useful by fashioning and repairing weapons and shields, caring for the young, and making tools, sleeping mats, shelters, and medicines for the pride.

During inclement weather, those wemics not on guard duty often take shelter under half-tents—tanned hides supported at one end by poles. The wemics rarely use fire because they prefer their meat raw and understand the dangers that fire can present in the grasslands.

The females travel considerable distances to track herds of food animals. Wrokeen often uses her *Heward's handy haversack* to bring back single kills. She also does her best to drive the herds closer to the wemic camp, so that other females need not carry their kills so far.

Adventure options

The PCs could visit the wemic camp for many reasons. As DM, you know best how to work a particular site into your storyline, but you can use the ideas below as inspiration.

- The PCs happen upon the camp while traversing the Shaar.
- The characters encounter Wrokeen hunting herd animals in the plains or charting a new course for the pride's fall migration. They may accidentally interfere with her efforts, or aid her in some way. If she learns from the PCs that some new threat hangs over the Shaar, she may take the characters back to the pride to discuss the issue with Shaq'ar.
- Shaq'ar is concerned about a band of thri-kreen that has been hunting outside its normal territory of late. A few skirmishes have already taken place, but Shaq'ar is considering taking a few of the males from the pride and seeking out the renegade thri-kreen. At present, he is considering whether to involve the local loxo herd, but the presence of adventurers may convince him to seek their aid instead.

- Beren is about to make a bid for power. For some time, he has been using his spells to degrade the leader's authority within the pride while slipping plant-based poison that deals Strength damage into his food. When Shaq'ar is sufficiently weak, Beren plans to challenge him to combat, using his spells to enhance his own abilities and his *dagger of venom* to ensure the leader's death. The PCs arrive just as the combat is starting.

About the Author

Penny Williams joined the roleplaying game industry as Game Questions Expert for TSR, Inc. in the 1980s. Since then, she has served as RPGA network coordinator, *Polyhedron Newszine* editor, and senior editor and coordinating editor for the RPG R&D Department at Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Now a busy freelancer, Penny edits for several game companies and runs the online playtesting program for Wizards products. When not enhancing the cruelty of designers' creations, Penny puts up jam, works jigsaw puzzles, and tutors students in math and science.